

Protest French Government Ban on Ligue Communiste

On 28 June the French government ordered the dissolution of the "Trotskyist" Ligue Communiste and of a fascist organization, Ordre Nouveau (New Order). Faced with the mounting struggles of workers and students, the regime resorts to savage anti-democratic methods of maintaining "law and order"—in this case outlawing left

L'EXPRESS



French leftists march against fascists.

organizations. The current ban followed a violent confrontation between demonstrators and police as the latter defended a meeting of Ordre Nouveau, the organization which is responsible for several recent violent attacks on student strikers. The purpose of the dissolution order is to smash the "far left," and the ritual inclusion of Ordre Nouveau is simply an attempt to posture in sham impartiality. Despite our numerous disagreements with the Ligue Communiste, which in no way represents the politics of Trotskyism, we vigorously protest this reactionary move, an attack on the entire workers movement. *Rescind the ban! Defend democratic liberties! For a united defense of the workers movement against Fascist attack—Towards the formation of workers militias!*

U.S./USSR Detente Doomed

In recent weeks we have been subjected to a barrage of propaganda heralding the new spirit of détente and international cooperation: Brezhnev proclaims the end of the cold war, Kissinger heralds a new Atlantic Charter, Chinese diplomats praise Western European unity. The deeds, however, fall far behind the words. They cannot do otherwise. In the epoch of decaying capitalism, a lasting democratic peace between the imperialist powers is impossible. The period since World War II has been marked by the cold war and absolute dominance of the U.S. in the capitalist camp. As this dominance ceased to be absolute, a new round of class struggle opened up which can lead either to the victory of the proletariat or to a third world war, fought with nuclear weapons. Whether the Trotskyist vanguard succeeds in winning the leadership of the workers movement on the program of proletarian internationalism will decide which of these alternatives triumphs.

The most succinct comment on the several agreements signed by the U.S. and USSR during Brezhnev's recent visit was *New York Times* editor James Reston's remark that "there is less in these documents than meets the eye." While the chairman of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was clinking glasses with the president of the United States and pretending to guarantee peace by obtaining Nixon's signature on a piece of paper, the latter continued to rain bombs on Cambodia at record intensity.

Whether in the case of a new inter-imperialist conflict or a resurgence of cold war hostilities between the deformed workers states and the capitalist powers, these agreements will not stop a desperate bourgeoisie from unleashing a nuclear war. Hitler did not stop his *Drang nach Osten* at Poland's eastern frontiers simply because of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939. Neither will Nixon and his class abandon their interests peacefully.

The "Year of Europe" Fails

The American bourgeoisie has for some time been of the dominant opinion that foreign policy priorities should be

reoriented toward Europe and the Middle East. The Vietnam "peace" settlement earlier this year was therefore the signal for the announcement of a new "Year of Europe" round of summit diplomacy, to be highlighted by far-reaching trade negotiations, Nixon's planned trip to the Continent this fall and a "New Atlantic Charter." Henry Kissinger's Europe speech this spring was favorably received even by those

Moreover, at the same time that Kissinger was speaking of a "spirit of reciprocity" on trade from the Common Market countries, U.S. Treasury Secretary George Shultz was telling Congress that the trade negotiations probably should not be "reciprocal" since "there may have to be more giving than taking as far as other people are concerned" and "we don't think present arrangements are quite fair" (*New York*

"The quarter-century period of the cold war is now giving way to relations of peace, mutual respect and cooperation between the states of the East and West."

—Leonid Brezhnev, 1973

"...the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states for an extended period is unthinkable. In the end either one or the other will conquer."

—Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, 1918

sectors of the U.S. capitalist class which have no love for Mr. Nixon. The *New York Times* (25 April 1973) commented:

"On the whole, Mr. Kissinger gave this country's European partners the kind of message most of them have been anxious to have from the Nixon administration. He restated the common goals and interests underpinning the Atlantic-Europe connection, reaffirmed the enduring character of the United States commitment to the Atlantic Alliance, and reiterated Washington's dedication to the cause of Western European integration and unity 'as a component of a larger Atlantic partnership.'"

The various European bourgeoisies, however, were not eager in their reception of this challenge, not even the traditionally pro-American West Germans. Some commented that the original Atlantic Charter was a prelude to Yalta, which confirmed American hegemony in Western Europe. This kind of Atlantic Alliance was no longer acceptable. The Atlantic Charter was a relic of a bygone age, the "American Century" (1946-1971).

Times, 10 May 1973).

Likewise, the actual practical steps toward cooperation among the European bourgeoisies were faltering. In a period of heightening inter-imperialist rivalries, even the most minimal cooperation between rival imperialist powers ultimately proves impossible. In response to popular protest against rising prices caused by Britain's entry into the European Economic Community (Common Market), the Labour Party has been making noises again about pulling out of the EEC if it is not "democratized." An attempted first step toward a common European monetary policy was taken last February when the six core countries of the EEC decided to float their currencies in common against the dollar. Washington was understandably upset, since a common float of European currencies could seriously challenge the position of the dollar as a key reserve currency and send the market crashing down as European (and American) investors rush from the dollar into a stronger reserve. But on 29 June this utopian attempt was scuttled by the Germans who revalued the mark upwards by more than five percent against the other five currencies.


A Period of Sparring

While the present period is marked by the resurgence of inter-imperialist rivalry, this is at present only in the sparring stage. No power envisions an immediate sharp break from the current patterns. A principal reason for this is that the West Europeans and Japanese are only beginning to emerge from under the protective wing of the American eagle. Some years ago De Gaulle led a French offensive for the return of the gold standard. His chief economic adviser, Jacques Rueff, held that all the ills of the international monetary system were due to the deliberate undervaluation of gold and the permanent inflation of the American economy. With the gold exchange standard and the dollar the chief reserve currency, this inflation was simply exported, being put to such use as

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ERA and the Struggle for Women's Equality

The proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has produced an incongruous factional lineup. Opposed are the John Birch Society, the Communist Party, the Right-to-Life anti-abortionists, the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the National Council of Catholic Women, the left social democrats of the International Socialists (IS) who occasionally make pretensions to Trotskyism, assorted southern swamp-alligator reactionaries and the Maoist Revolutionary Union (RU).

Arrayed on the other side, supporting the ERA, are George Wallace, the Democratic Party, Richard Nixon, the National Organization of Women (NOW), Spiro Agnew, the UAW and CWA bureaucracies, a myriad of petty-bourgeois feminist organizations, the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which would like to become the social-democratic party of the U.S., and the Maoist October League (OL).

How can we explain such striking divisions within the ruling class, the labor bureaucracy and the ostensibly revolutionary movement on what is apparently a simple statement of legal equality between the sexes?

The amendment is quite short. Its key section reads: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." The wording is similar to the Fourteenth Amendment, which called for equal protection under the law for all citizens and was directed against racial discrimination. But these simple statements of bourgeois rights are to be implemented under a social system to which racial and sexual discrimination—key means of maintaining divisions within the working class—are inherent. Thus in practice the 14th Amendment is implemented in a purely tokenistic manner, and so will be the ERA if it is adopted. Why the workers movement should bother to support it becomes, then, a logical question.

The Spartacist League has in the past called for the extension of protective legislation to men without taking a clear stand on the ERA itself. The basic principle is simple: we are in favor of equality between the sexes and races, but at the level attained through the struggles of the most advanced sections of the class: we oppose the "equality" of sweatshop ex-

ploitation. Partial gains must be extended, thereby aiding in the unification of the class. However, the ERA as it stands makes no provision for extending protective legislation. In this situation we must give support to the Amendment and continue the struggle to protect and extend gains already won rather than eliminate them. To oppose the ERA on the grounds that there is a danger of some beneficial protective legislation being nullified by the courts is to reject the fight for democracy, to deny that the principle of equality is important and hence to abandon the struggle for its implementation, thereby capitulating before the status quo. To simply ignore the question of protective legislation is to deny the need to preserve partial gains.

What is the ERA?

Recent years have seen a concerted attempt on the part of the U.S. ruling class to obscure the most blatant manifestations of sexual and racial discrimination, without of course eliminating the real substance of oppression of minorities and women, which is necessary for capitalism. Though the politics of the petty-bourgeois women's liberation groups guaranteed their harmlessness, the bosses, the 1960's wave of black protest in their minds, were concerned lest the movement spread to the masses of women workers. Consequently various laws were passed formally enacting equal pay for equal work, equal employment opportunity, etc. While the reality of women's oppression has not been fundamentally altered, some small (and easily reversible) concessions have been made; for example, token numbers of women are now being hired in heavy industry, including auto and steel, for the first time since World War II.

Company managers and union bureaucrats are clearly hoping that these newly-industrialized women will, from economic necessity and social training, be more docile and submissive than male workers. The bourgeoisie is also uneasy that the relative egalitarianism of the assembly line, economic self-sufficiency and the practical demands of industrial labor will undermine the family and women's traditional role as a passive mainstay of the status quo.

Some trade-union bureaucrats are quite explicit about their reactionary position. They object to the elimination of legislation limiting the hours of labor for women because it will undermine women's role in the home (why isn't this true for men?). And of course many "business unionists" oppose economic equality for women because, they claim, it will eliminate jobs and income for men.

Objections to the ERA

Disregarding the right-wingers' obsessive fears that legal equality of the sexes will result in the fall of woman from her pedestal into the mire of original sin (dragging man along with her), as well as the scaremongering about legalization of rape and coeducational rest rooms, opposition to the ERA focuses on the questions of alimony, the draft and protective legislation.

The ERA would make the payment of alimony less arbitrary and discriminatory by providing that it be awarded to either partner or dispensed with according to the partners' relative incomes and ability to support themselves. The Spartacist League opposes the very concept of alimony, which is a substitute for providing access to training in mar-

ketable skills and jobs for women, instead limiting their domain to home and children. Society as a whole must bear responsibility for the welfare of its members, and the costs of childrearing should be borne by the state. Domestic labor must be socialized, since women will never gain equality, much less liberation, as long as they are imprisoned in the home: thus the need for state-provided free 24-hour childcare, laundry services and dining rooms at the workplace and in residential areas.

The SL's policy on the draft can be capsulized by Karl Liebknecht's famous slogan, "For this state not one penny and not one man!" While opposing draft resistance, the SL calls for the abolition of the draft and of the bourgeois army, and "replacing" them with a workers militia. We do

working hours should be equal for all" (K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, 1847). In the absence of any attempt to organize the women workers into trade unions, they directed their energies toward the formation of groups such as the Female Labor Reform Associations of the 1840's, whose program aimed at gaining legislation for the 10-hour day for both men and women.

Title VII does not apply to employers of less than 25 workers, and thus there is a possibility that courts could interpret the ERA to eliminate the special protective legislation which applies in the small sweatshop establishments. Communists do not ignore the detrimental possibilities of the ERA—unlike the feminists and middle-class proponents of the ERA, such as NOW, who are concerned not with the plight of low-paid women workers, but primarily

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

not favor the grossly sexually discriminatory draft exemption for women (nor student exemptions), since this perpetuates sexual divisions in the class and is generally socially conservatism.

The primary argument advanced against the ERA by its opponents in the workers movement is that it will bring about the invalidation of existing state protective legislation aimed at eliminating "excessive" overtime, heavy lifting, night work, etc., for women. Though a legitimate concern, the effect of the ERA on protective legislation is greatly exaggerated. Labor Department and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines indicate that the Amendment will be interpreted to extend minimum wage laws, rest and lunch period laws to cover men, while laws limiting hours and weights which may be lifted will be invalidated. Moreover, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has already been interpreted in numerous court decisions to invalidate state hours and weightlifting laws; by 1971 only 10 states still retained such laws intact. It is interesting to note that none of the ERA's vehement opponents on the left fought against the adoption of the Civil Rights Act, which has for the most part already accomplished the evils which they claim will result from the ERA!

Many of the protective laws are real victories, won by militant strike action and with the gains soon extended to men. The fight for a shorter work day beginning in the 1820's was spearheaded by the early strikes for the 10-hour day in New England cotton mills. Led by the women textile workers, it resulted in the passage of state laws limiting the hours of employment, the first of which was enacted in New Hampshire in 1847, limiting the length of the working day for women.

Marx pointed out that the capitalists were only too conscious of the consequences of such legislation, as shown in "the dogged resistance which the English factory owners put up to the Ten Hours' Bill. They knew only too well that a two-hours' reduction of labour granted to women and children would carry with it an equal reduction of working hours for adult men. It is in the nature of large-scale industry that

with the cause of the woman doctor, lawyer or stock broker. But rejection of the ERA would not help these poorest-paid, hardest-worked women—most of the protective legislation is systematically ignored in such establishments.

Labor opponents of the ERA, such as Myra Wolfgang of the Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Employees' Union, commiserate profusely with the plight of these most-exploited workers, but their position basically amounts to a refusal to mobilize the labor movement to fight these evils, relying on the paternalism of the capitalist state as an excuse to avoid struggle. Yes, there are dangers that the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ERA or any other piece of legislation can be used to take gains from labor. The answer is to protect these gains and extend them by organizing the unorganized, by using the workers' own methods (for instance the strike) to win benefits for male and female workers alike.

The 1970 position paper of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy opposing the ERA reflects the same policies of betrayal of the workers' interests: "most working women do not have the protection afforded by trade union membership and must therefore rely on safeguards provided by law." The laws do not determine the outcome of the struggle between capital and labor; they are the product of the class struggle. Most women are not protected by trade unions primarily because the bureaucracy does not fight to build union organizations among the most oppressed sectors of the class. For the same reason, what beneficial protective legislation exists is inadequately enforced.

The Reality of Protective Legislation

It has been in fact the labor bureaucracy's policy of deliberate neglect of the most oppressed layers of the proletariat which has fostered the emergence of bourgeois-led reformist movements for the protection of women workers through paternalistic laws. Moreover, the legislation itself is usually as much restrictive as protective. Thus weight-lifting standards are frequently used arbitrarily in job classifications in order to exclude women from better paying crafts.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Women workers have on several occasions organized *against* this "protective" legislation. One notable instance is the determined fight of female mine workers in England in the 1820's: collusion between the enlightened section of the bourgeoisie and aspiring job-trusting unions forced the female workers out of the mines. Despite the grueling conditions of their work, the women miners fought bitterly against the loss of their independence as wage-earners. (They were joined, of course, by the mine owners, who sought to keep the female workers as a source of cheap labor.) The real answer would have been the organization of all miners in a single union to fight the bosses, rather than divisive attempts to raise wages by restricting jobs to males.

Similarly, women printers of New York agitated for exemption from the 1913 law prohibiting night work for women, since they lost seniority rights and the higher wages of night work. Their struggle pitted them against the state AFL apparatus, which forced the leadership of the women's printers' union, together with women reporters and newspaper writers, to found an independent organization, the Women's League for Equal Opportunity, before they could achieve exemption from the night-work laws.

The craft unions supporting the early protective laws were motivated by impulses of dubious "generosity" toward the women workers, who were consistently excluded from these unions and the trades they dominated, or occasionally restricted to the lower-paying crafts (such as binding in the printing trade) and organized into separate unions. Of the 30 national unions existing between 1860 and 1875, only two admitted women into membership! In many cases "protective" laws, such as the prohibitions against women in the core rooms of foundries, in brass polishing and other more highly-paid occupations, were designed exclusively to maintain narrow craft privileges. This forced relegation to lower-paid, "feminine" occupations is a "protection" few working women appreciate.

Marxism and Democratic Rights

Fundamentally the social and economic oppression of women is based on their subjugation to domestic slavery in the family. But the family, like classes and the state, is the product of the division of labor and can be superseded only through the elimination of scarcity and the socialist organization of society. Thus poor and working women, and, in a less clear-cut way, petty-bourgeois women as well, have a direct interest in proletarian revolution. But this does not mean there are no gains which can be won along the way.

The ERA by itself is a simple democratic demand and one that should be supported by all socialists who, as Marx remarked, fight for the most consistent democracy as an aid in smoothing the road to the workers revolution. Even relative equality between sexes and among races would eliminate innumerable frictions which work against class consciousness and solidarity. However, as long as the capi-

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U. Cal. Drive Against AFSCME

Local Leadership Won't Fight

The repercussions of the defeat of building trades workers in strikes against wage cuts at the University of California at Berkeley and the San Francisco Medical Center in 1972 are still being felt. In an obvious union-busting move similar to the attack which sparked the Berkeley and San Francisco strikes, the administration at UCLA has instituted outside contract labor in campus custodial departments in order to break United Workers Local 2070, AFSCME, which is based primarily on the janitors. The betrayals of the AFSCME bureaucracy of Jerry Wurf and Co. in smashing District Council 99, which represented UC campus organizing, and in orienting toward amalgamation with company-union formations such as California State Employees Association (CSEA), have played no small part in setting up state employees for these attacks.

The attack on AFSCME at UCLA is still in an "experimental," beginning stage, but it has ominous implications for all California public employees as well as for the local itself, which faces possible extinction. Destroying the base of unionism in the sprawling UC system has been an important goal of the Reagan administration.

The contract laborers, working in four departments, are members of the AFSCME rival, Service Employees International Union (SEIU). They are being given more work at less pay by the administration as a "test." If extended to the rest of the campus, the measure would break AFSCME, thereby removing a potential threat to organize the entire campus.

Teaching assistants in the American Federation of Teachers at UCLA and Berkeley are threatened by another union-busting move promised by the UC administration, the substitution of unpaid teaching assistants (students working in exchange for credits) for the present, paid union members. This poses the possibility of a university-wide strike against union busting by all campus employees (if janitors and teaching assistants could unite, why not everyone else?) which would in turn serve to organize the remaining unorganized campus workers. The administration, however, can rely on the conservative, business-unionist bureaucratic leaders of AFSCME and the other unions to keep it thoroughly out of danger of such an "unfortunate" fate.

The leadership of Local 2070, despite a high component of "radicals" in the leadership, has developed tactics for opposing contract labor that can only be described as a plan for defeat. On May 1st a reasonably successful rally was held, sponsored by the AFSCME and AFT locals, against contract labor and volunteer teaching assistants, but this was not followed up. Instead, after a month of virtual inactivity, the most the local leaderships could come up with was: a one-day boycott of the school bookstore and cafeteria! This "militant" action was supposed to aid an organizing drive in the student services (ASUC), yet unlike the rally, it attracted no support from the workers. Since the boycott, the Local 2070 leadership has moved on to an even more "drastic" step: a class action lawsuit seeking to use the courts to drive the contract laborers from the campus.

While the local leadership claims that it can successfully use the courts, and that serious action such as a strike is too dangerous for a "weak" local union, the real motivation for its go-slow policy lies elsewhere. The 2070 leaders have no program for uniting and bringing the masses of workers into action to settle their own

accounts with the employers. Instead, like Wurf and the other trade-union tops, they see the trade unions as an impotent agency for mediation between the workers and employers.

Wurf's strategy is to expand the basis for this mediation role by seeking amalgamation with the big company-union associations in order to control ever-larger bargaining units. To do this, he seeks to tame the militancy of the ranks, which has been spurred on by state cutbacks and other attacks, and channel it into a structured bargaining relationship with the state, thereby preserving the status quo. Thus Wurf supports the Moretti bill, which would grant collective bargaining for state employees while hamstringing the right to strike with fatal restrictions and compulsory arbitration. To Wurf, this is preferable to militant drives to organize UC workers and win for public employees the legal right to strike.

Wurf uses his base to wheel and deal with the capitalist politicians, hoping to receive a few small favors in return for passivity and endorsements. This policy is the same as that of the Communist Party, which supports Wurf's bureaucracy as "progressive" and enjoys some influence on the 2070 executive board. Like Wurf, the CP pushed McGovern in the last election and propounds a policy of passive reformism in order to secure minor advances through pressure on liberals.

At the June meeting of Local 2070, the Militant Caucus put forward a systematic, programmatic alternative for the local which points the way for all California public workers. The Militant Caucus is an oppositional grouping in the local, formed by some of its earliest organizers and founded on the basis of the need of the labor movement as a whole for a full class-struggle program—a sliding scale of wages and hours, strikes against imperialist war and the wage freeze, an end to government interference in the labor movement, workers control of industry and a workers party to fight for a workers government, among other demands (see *WV* No. 14, December 1972).

The Militant Caucus proposed immediate preparations for a strike not just to oppose contract labor and voluntary teaching assistants but in favor of a single employees' union, 30 for 40, no layoffs and parity with the best wages and conditions for all those currently employed. These points would mean fighting for more jobs, at union conditions, rather than simply driving the contract laborers (who also need work) off the campus through legal or other measures. The Caucus also proposed that the strike be extended state-wide, specifically, linking up with AFT and AFSCME locals in Berkeley and San Francisco.

In addition to calling on all campus unions and the Teamsters to honor picket lines, the Caucus' proposed strike preparations included the essential element of an approach to the SEIU ranks for a united front against the employers, on the basis of one public employees' union and jobs for all at the best union conditions available. While this means defense of AFSCME at UCLA, it does not predicate war between AFSCME and SEIU ranks or a loss of jobs by any of those currently working. It does mean unity of AFSCME and SEIU ranks state-wide for one union with a union contract, a closed shop system and a union hiring hall. The present leadership of Local 2070, in contrast, simply treats the contract janitors as scabs.

Instead of implementing these proposals, the petty would-be bureaucrats

of Local 2070 responded by seeking to impose a gag rule on the Militant Caucus in the form of a three-minute speaking limit at local meetings and a requirement that the Caucus print a disclaimer clause—"The views presented in this publication are not necessarily official union positions"—on all its literature. This was simply petty maliciousness, since Caucus members never attempted to take more than their share of speaking time at meetings nor represent their views as official.

The pattern of petty harassment continued. When Caucus members circulated a petition to the local executive board to call a special meeting to consider strike action, the bureaucrats responded with a counter-petition, the sole purpose of which was to invalidate signatures on the earlier petition! The local leadership is feeling the pressure of the Militant Caucus proposals, however, as shown by its more frequent executive board meetings and a recent leaflet "What's Happening," which hints vaguely at the possibility of a strike and of calling a conference of Council 99, which still exists, though in a powerless form, thanks to Wurf.

The attacks on AFT and AFSCME, and the bureaucratic harassment of the Militant Caucus have coincided with administration attacks on the right of student groups to distribute literature on campus and the purge of the Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth section of the Spartacist League, from Fanshen, a campus "anti-imperialist" organization influenced by the CP and Revolutionary Union (RU). RCY had participated with Fanshen and other groups in solidarity against administration attempts to prevent literature tables from operating in Royce Quad, an "unauthorized area." The RCY, however, criticized Fanshen's tailing after the impotent boycott policies of the trade-union bureaucrats (Shell boycott, Farah pants and Farmworkers, as well as UCLA AFSCME's boycott of the campus bookstore and cafeteria). A Stalinist Fanshen supporter tore up an RCY member's sign at the ASUC boycott action, despite the fact that the SL and RCY were critically supporting the action in solidarity with campus workers, and SL/RCY members were summarily expelled from Fanshen meetings. The expulsion was accomplished with the aid of Progressive Labor supporters as well as those of the CP and RU, and with the passive acquiescence of the ex-Trotskyist YSA. Thus Fanshen and the pseudo-left solidarized with the trade-union bureaucracy which is actively working within the unions to derail militancy and prevent the expression of a program of consistent class struggle against capitalism.

The historically-evolved leadership of the unions, the trade-union bureaucracy, is the agent of the capitalist class in the labor movement. From right to "left," Meany, Abel, Woodcock and Wurf are all united on the need to maintain capitalism and exploitation of labor for profit. A revolutionary leadership is needed to oust these parasites who loot the unions, invite the capitalist state to intervene in internal union affairs so as to restrain working-class struggle and who act as recruiters for every new capitalist politician and imperialist scheme.

Caucuses such as the Militant Caucus pose the only answer: a program based on the objective needs of labor and thus completely counterposed to the policies of the bureaucracy. Only under revolutionary leadership will the unions break from their present subservient capitulation to the capitalists and become what they should be—the fighting organs of the workers against the bosses and their state. ■

Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism

When General Juan Domingo Perón returned to Argentina last November for the first time since a military coup overthrew his government in 1955, thousands of workers walked for miles in a rainstorm to catch a glimpse of the "legendary leader." After an election campaign around the slogan of "Cámpora to the government, Perón to power," the FREJULI (Justicialista Liberation Front, the Peronist party) candidate won a resounding victory in the March 1973 elections. Cámpora's inauguration drew a crowd of more than one million participants and Perón's second return late last month brought out more than three million, the largest demonstration in Argentine history. The wide support for Peronism among the Argentine working class is evident. But the hopes of the workers who see in the Justicialista government a victory for their struggles during the past 18 years will be brutally shattered. The Cámpora regime is an answer to those struggles, but it is the answer of a temporarily united *bourgeoisie* (including the military), and its main task is to break the back of the independent workers movement and the guerilla groups.

In his "Message to the Argentine People" last November General Perón praised the bourgeois parties with which he had been negotiating the terms of a future Justicialista government, saying that they "have assumed before history the responsibility of establishing the bases of pacification and reconstruction of the country" (*Política Obrera*, 19 December 1972). Since the elections the president-elect Cámpora made clear that this "labor of pacification" included isolating and "crushing" the guerillas, both Peronist and non-Peronist (*New York Times*, 5 May 1973). While the leaders of the Juventud Peronista (Peronist Youth) were calling for a "socialist fatherland," the nationalization of the key sectors of the economy and a popular militia, Perón himself sacked the head of the JP (Galimberti), surrounded himself with conservative advisers and made strong law-and-order speeches appealing for reconciliation with the armed forces. The General's first command after Cámpora was installed as president on 25 May was "get the Trotskyists" (*Le Monde*, 6 June 1973).

Only those who willfully blind themselves to reality can claim, as do the supposedly "Trotskyist" groups in Argentina, that the Cámpora regime is a "victory for the working class," that there is any fundamental distinction between the "progressive" government and police on the one hand and the reactionary armed forces on the other, or that a working-class program can be forced onto the new government, since the workers voted it into office.

The Perón government of the 1940's and 1950's did carry out certain measures (wage increases, unionization, social security, nationalizations) which benefitted the working class, while at the same time outlawing the Communist Party and smashing every attempt at independent activity by the workers, even simple economic strikes. But the current Peronist regime will be a government of reaction—an instrument to carry out the job the military has been unable to do, namely to put an end to the workers' militancy which has been raging through the country since 1969. The regime will employ any means necessary to firmly establish bourgeois "law and order" even if this means outlawing all "communist" organizations, government "intervention" into militant unions and massacres of striking students and workers. To call for critical support, tolerance, negotia-

tions for a workers program or any policy other than intransigent opposition to the Cámpora government is to abandon the path of proletarian revolution and prepare the way for the massacres.

Origins of Peronism

Peronism is a bourgeois-nationalist populist movement which is based primarily on support from the working class. This rather unusual phenomenon (most populist movements are based on the petty bourgeoisie) is the product of Perón's government policies during the 1943-1955 period. Through a combination of paternalistic welfare measures and outlawing every left-wing opposition, Perón achieved wide popularity in the working class. His government was what Trotsky referred to as bonapartism *sui generis*:

"In the industrially backward countries foreign capital plays a decisive role. Hence the relative weakness of the national bourgeoisie in relation to the national proletariat. This creates special conditions of state power. The government veers between foreign and domestic capital, between the weak national bourgeoisie and the relatively powerful proletariat. This gives the government a bonapartist character *sui generis* of a distinctive character. It raises itself, so to speak, above classes. Actually it can govern either by making itself the instrument of foreign capitalism and holding the proletariat in the chains of a police dictatorship, or by maneuvering with the proletariat and even going so far as to make concessions to it and thus gaining the possibility of a certain freedom toward the foreign capitalists. The present policy [of the Mexican government] is in the second stage; its greatest conquests are the expropriations of the railroads and the oil industries.

"These measures are entirely within the domain of state capitalism. However, in a semi-colonial country state capitalism finds itself under the heavy pressure of private foreign capital and of its governments, and cannot maintain itself without the active support of the workers."

—L.D. Trotsky, "Nationalized Industry and Workers' Management," 1938

Similar regimes were those of Getulio Vargas in Brazil, Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico and Nasser in Egypt. Unlike bonapartist regimes in the advanced countries, such regimes usually build mass movements of workers, such as the Mexican PRI and the Egyptian Arab Socialist Union, which are often connected with the (state-controlled) union movement. But in spite of their leftist pretensions and working-class base, such parties are *bourgeois* and not *workers* parties, for they are in no sense based on the *independent* mobilization of the working class. Even the British Labour Party, with its purely bourgeois politics, is based on the unions, which despite increasing ties to the state remain independent workers' organizations. The unions under the Peronist regime, however, were controlled by the state and the party rather than vice versa.

Perón came to power as the result of a military coup in June 1943 which dislodged the conservative government of Ramón Castillo. The younger officers, many of whom were trained in Germany and Italy, were strongly nationalist and pro-Nazi. Perón himself had been in Italy for two years and later helped found a military lodge, the Grupo de Oficiales Unidos (GOU—Group of United Officers) which staged the coup.

At that time the labor movement was quite small (around 350,000 members) and sharply divided between two major national federations, both calling themselves the Confederación Gen-



Demonstration at inauguration of President Cámpora, Buenos Aires, 25 May.

eral del Trabajo (CGT—General Confederation of Labor). CGT No. 1 was based on the conservative railroad unions (the largest in the country), while CGT No. 2 was led by the Stalinist Communist Party and Socialist Party dissidents. These unions had been built in the course of bitter strikes and faced uniform hostility from the succeeding conservative, military and Radical regimes. The new government of the GOU promised to be more of the same. One of its first acts was to dissolve the CGT No. 2 as a "Communist-controlled organization" and to "intervene" (appoint government administrators and expel the elected officials) in the leading unions.

Colonel Perón, however, saw much more clearly the need to win popular support for the regime. His social program was summed up by a speech to the Bolsa de Comercio (Chamber of Commerce) in 1944, in which he declared that the major threat to Argentina was that of "a revolutionary general strike." To counter this he proposed "a rational organization of unions in accordance with state directives." But at the same time, "the defense of the interests of businessmen, of industrialists, of merchants, is the defense of the state itself." Perón took charge of the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare and set about building a personal machine among workers and union leaders by setting up a national social security system, supporting some strikes, raising wages and aiding the organizing of unions. During a 1944 earthquake, he and Eva Duarte (later his wife) achieved publicity by distributing emergency relief and visiting disaster areas. At the same time, he did everything possible to break strikes which did not recognize his leadership.

Perón's ability to smash independent unionism was greatly aided by the treacherous policies of the Communist Party during the war, when CP policy was "everything for the allies." The CP supported the "democratic" imperialists instead of taking a Bolshevik policy of revolutionary defeatism in

the inter-imperialist war (while defending the Soviet Union). During the 1943 packinghouse strike, one of the demands was for the return of José Peter, CP leader of the meat union who had been arrested and sent to a southern concentration camp. Perón personally sent an airplane to bring Peter back, but on his arrival Peter called on the workers to abandon the strike because it was hurting the Allied war effort! The packinghouse workers switched allegiance and continued the strike under the leadership of Cipriano Reyes, a Perón supporter.

During the campaign for the February 1946 elections the CP further consolidated Perón's position by denouncing the CGT unions as "Peronazis" and joining with the bourgeois radicals and conservatives in a "Unión Democrática" which had the open support of U.S. Ambassador Spruille Braden. Perón's campaign, around the slogan "Braden or Perón," centered on denouncing the Communist-oligarchic-imperialist alliance and resulted in a landslide victory.

During the elections the main Peronist party was the Partido Laborista ("Labor Party"), which has been compared to its British namesake. According to the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party), which is allied to the U.S. SWP:

"The importance of the Partido Laborista is that it was the best possibility the working class had to organize itself politically in a form independent of the bourgeoisie. Its leaders, although reformists, were workers' leaders... Peronism, in contrast, although supported by the workers, always had bosses' leaders."

—Avanzada Socialista, 11 April 1973

In reality, the PL was simply an electoral vehicle for Perón, with little structure or real existence. The presence of a few labor leaders did not make it a workers party. When Perón decided to unify all the Peronist groups into a single Partido Peronista, the PL simply disappeared, despite resistance

from meatpackers' leader Reyes.

Before the elections the Communist Party had consistently called for "bring[ing] together all democratic forces opposed to the dictatorship under a single command" (Victor Codovilla, "Carta abierta a los patriotas antifascistas," 1944). However, faced with Perón's overwhelming popularity and two days after the USSR's decision to recognize the government, the July 1946 CP convention announced it would "support the Perón government with reservations." The CP-led unions were promptly liquidated into the Peronist federation.

At precisely this time, Perón stepped up his drive to bring the entire labor movement under government control. Using his 1945 "Professional Associations Law," which required that unions receive governmental recognition, he proceeded to outlaw the shoemakers' union, the taxi drivers' union and others, and to intervene in the bank workers' federation, the graphics union and even the sugar workers' union he himself helped set up. By late 1946 one third of the members of the CGT council were either congressional deputies, delegates of intervened unions or government employees. Every strike from then on was brutally repressed and the union leadership arrested.

But at the same time, workers' real wages rose dramatically (80 percent between 1943 and 1948) to a level they have never reached since. Perón's economic policies centered on industrialization and nationalization, with takeovers of packinghouses and communications and power monopolies in foreign hands. The state bureaucracy increased more than fourfold during his regime while union membership quintupled. The improved welfare, higher wages and state investments depended, however, on the accumulation of \$1.7 billion in foreign exchange reserves during the war and the continued high meat and grain prices in the late 1940's. But exhaustion of the reserves and a drop in international agricultural prices led to a decline of domestic production and more conservative economic policies on Perón's part. In 1954 he began negotiating a contract with an American oil company to increase domestic production.

The Gorillas Against Peronism

Increasing dissatisfaction with Perón's arbitrary practices (he closed the principal capitalist paper, *La Prensa*, in 1951) and the growing radicalization of the working class led the bourgeoisie to give almost unanimous support to the military coup which overthrew the regime on 16 September 1955. Perón himself, however, was also afraid of mobilizing the working class even in his own support, and resigned rather than arm his supporters who had gathered in the Plaza del Mayo. His slogan during the summer of 1955 was "del trabajo a casa y de casa al trabajo" (from work to home and from home to work), i.e., don't mobilize!

The military coup led immediately to the banning of the Partido Peronista and the intervention of the major unions by the government; more than 62,000 labor leaders and activists were proscribed from union office. The immediate response of the Peronist leaders was one of the most widespread well-organized terrorist campaigns in history. The results: nothing. Gradually, in spite of military opposition, they were able to consolidate Peronist control over most of the unions, which were loosely grouped in the "62 organizations" led by Augusto Vandor of the metalworkers.

During the 1968 elections, the "developmentalist" (industrial-bourgeois) wing of the Radicals nominated Frondizi for president and received the support of the CP. Frondizi had won a leftist reputation for his opposition to Perón's oil deal (together with left-Peronist John William Cook). Now Perón decided to back Frondizi and sent his instructions by way of Cook. But within a matter of months the "leftist" Frondizi established free convertibility of the peso, asked for hundreds of millions of dollars in loans

from the International Monetary Fund (most of which was used to prop up the peso!), instituted a major austerity program which drove unemployment to record levels and cut wages by 40 percent (1958-62), and gave out a series of multi-million-dollar contracts to American oil companies!

As working-class discontent continued to rise, the military annulled the 1962 elections in which the Peronists won a plurality and ten governorships, including Buenos Aires. The Peronist labor leaders did nothing. After the Justicialista vote continued to increase in the 1965 elections, the military decided it was time to return to direct rule, installing the dictatorship of General Juan Carlos Onganía in June 1966. This time the CGT bureaucracy led by Vandor actually supported the coup. The Onganía regime proceeded to smash university autonomy, to put down strikes by army intervention, to place rebellious local unions in receivership and to fire thousands of trade-union militants. Strikes by petrochemical workers at La Plata and by railroad and port workers in Buenos Aires (October 1966-January 1967) were crushed. U.S. corporations began investing heavily in Argentina, numerous state-owned industries set up in the Perón era were "denationalized" and unprofitable industries (such as Tucumán sugar mills) were shut down, throwing thousands out of work. While several times threatening general strikes, the CGT central leadership under Vandor always ended up working out a last-minute deal with the military.

The Cordobazo and its Aftermath

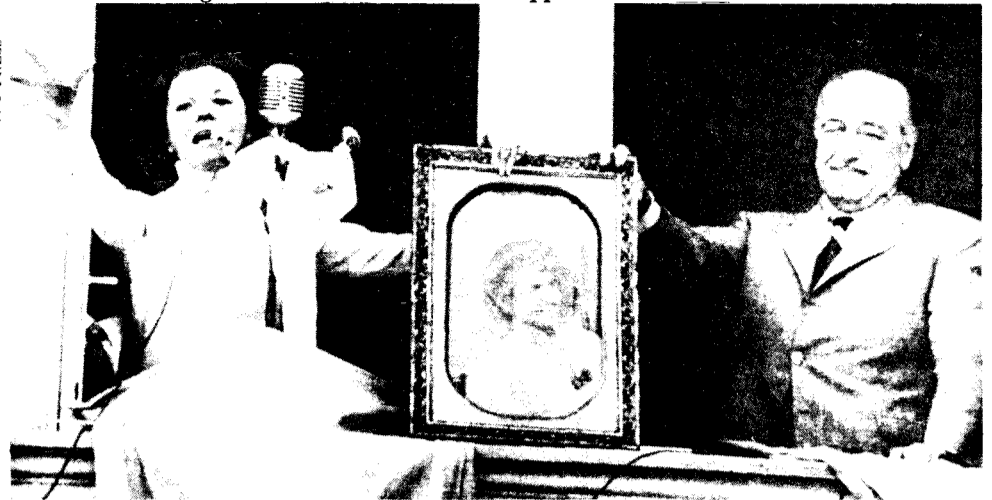
The chain of betrayals by the labor bureaucracy in the face of the government's harsh anti-labor measures began to crystallize a broad opposition force in the unions. This was expressed in the mass protests by the FOTIA sugar workers' union in Tucumán, under the leadership of left-Peronists, in 1965-68. The unrest reached a flashpoint in mid-1969, beginning with a metal workers' and transport strike in the interior industrial center of Córdoba and student protests in nearby Rosario. Due to brutal police repression, what began as a localized conflict escalated into a three-day general strike and workers' uprising. Despite foot-dragging by the local CGT, the major plants of Córdoba were closed down completely on 30 May and a massive workers' demonstration resulted in a head-on collision with the police. Only after two days of fighting, during which several police stations were burned, was the army able to re-establish control. In response to stiff sentences given to leaders of the *Cordobazo*, nationwide general strikes followed in June and August, and by the end of the year the government was forced to release the prisoners.

The workers did not become discouraged by repression, but instead continued the general strikes and mass uprisings. Three general strikes in October and November 1970 were completely effective nation-wide. In the first five months of 1971 there were 11 general strikes in Córdoba alone. After the killing of a young worker by the police, the city exploded in a second *Cordobazo* in March 1971.

Simultaneously there arose a series of oppositions to the hitherto firmly entrenched Peronist labor bureaucracy. In some cases these crystallized around popular local leftist leaders. While leading militant local actions, these leaders have never waged a frontal battle against the CGT bureaucracy.

In Córdoba, the heart of the industrial militancy, rank-and-file opposition led to a wave of syndicalism and the breakaway of two left-wing unions in the Fiat plants of Concord (SITRAC) and Materfer (SITRAM) from the CGT. In January 1971 the firing of seven workers by Fiat led to the occupation of the plants by SITRAC-SITRAM and capitulation by the management. Under the leadership of independent syndi-

calists—and with strong influence from the Maoist Vanguardia Comunista and the Partido Comunista Revolucionario, a left split-off from the CP—these "sindicatos clasistas" (class-struggle unions) became a real threat to the government, reaching a high point in the national conference of "class-struggle unionism" called by SITRAC-SITRAM in August 1971. However, because of disagreements with unions



Perón and wife with picture of Eva (Perón's first wife). During 1946-1955 the Eva Perón Foundation gave millions in alms to the poor.

led by moderate "left"-Peronists nothing came of the meetings. As labor militancy ebbed, the government was able to withdraw legal recognition of the Fiat unions in November 1971.

The Gorillas With Peronism

In response to the continued labor militancy, the *gorillas* (reactionary military officers) decided to depose the hard-line Onganía (June 1970), eventually installing General Alejandro Lanusse (March 1971) whose job was to arrange a political pact with the major bourgeois parties in order to return to a parliamentary regime. This agreement, the Gran Acuerdo Nacional (GAN), could succeed only if it included the Peronists. Perón, however, refused to be sucked into the plans for an overt military/Justicialista co-government, instead forming his own popular-front group, La Hora del Pueblo (The Hour of the People), with the participation of prominent Radicals (bourgeois liberals), the CGE (General Economic Confederation, a group of light industrialists and commercial interests) and the CGT bureaucracy.

The Peronist economic program was represented by an accord between the CGT and CGE which contains no working-class or even anti-imperialist demands, instead simply calling for credit and tax subsidies and state investment to encourage industrial development. The core of the program is the "Social-Economic Council" (CONES), made up of the CGT and CGE and the government, a classical corporatist mechanism for integrating the trade unions into the bonapartist state. In foreign policy it seeks to attract European capital on more favorable terms than those available from the Yankees, and perhaps nationalize a few firms like ITT (no doubt with compensation).

Lanusse gave his stamp of approval to this program and termed Perón's visit to Buenos Aires last November (Perón called for social peace, refused to attend mass rallies and met only with bourgeois leaders and Peronist bureaucrats) an unqualified success (*New York Times*, 23 November 1972). After the elections the military achieved an agreement with Cámpora to limit the number of forced retirements of officers and to crush the *guerrillas*.

The Moreno Group and "Left"-Peronism

The largest group in Argentina claiming to support Trotskyism is the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) led by Nahuel Moreno. Moreno's tendency has existed since the late 1940's, and at least since 1952 has exhibited the fundamental characteristics of Pabloism in a classic form. Pablo abandoned the struggle for the creation of independent Trotskyist parties: in the early 1950's he concocted the objectivist theory that Stalinism

would be "forced" to take revolutionary measures and thus revolutionaries should bury themselves in the dominant workers parties. In Latin America this revisionism was carried to a "higher" level when Pablo ordered the Bolivian POR into the petty-bourgeois nationalist MNR, which was in no way a workers party.

In Argentina the Moreno group had opposed Peronism until 1952 but then

rejected this position as "sectarian." After that "we considered ourselves a 'de facto' party of the anti-Yankee front of Peronism" (quote of an "apologist for Moreno" in *Workers Press*, 14 April 1972). According to the same source, "our innovation was that for the first time a Marxist group entered a bourgeois party." Immersion in this bourgeois party lasted for the next twelve years!

After the "Liberating Revolution" of 1955 Moreno formed the Movimiento de Agrupaciones Obreras (MAO—Movement of Workers Groupings) and put out the magazine *Palabra Obrera*, which referred to itself as the "organ of revolutionary workers' Peronism" issued "under the discipline of General Perón and the Peronist Supreme Council!"

In the 1958 elections *Palabra Obrera*, while initially opposing a vote for the bourgeois Radical Frondizi, eventually decided to "save the activist unity" by calling for a "vote for the *gorilla* Frondizi" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 9 May 1973). During this same period the Moreno group was particularly associated with a group of left-Peronist leaders of the "62 organizations" (the most prominent being Loholaberry) who had won influence during the resistance following the 1955 coup. A few years later the same Loholaberry was directly collaborating with the brutal anti-labor Onganía dictatorship.

After 1964, when *Palabra Obrera* fused with the Castroite FRIP group, Moreno switched allegiances and took on guerillaist feathers (see "Guevarism vs. Social Democracy in the U.Sec," *WV* No. 23, 22 June 1973). While achieving some influence as a result of mass work with Tucumán sugar workers, again in alliance with the "peronistas combativos" of the FOTIA leadership, the Moreno group did not itself undertake guerilla warfare. When some of the members began pushing to implement the program, Moreno split.

The trade-union work of the Moreno group has had a consistent syndicalist character, refusing to politicize the spontaneous struggles of the class. In the general strikes of late 1970 it called for an unlimited general strike for an immediate pay increase, end to the state of siege and recognition of all political parties, and for the formation of factory assemblies to lead the strike (*La Verdad*, 10 November 1970). It did not call for a workers government nor did it advocate the formation of a national strike committee to lead the mobilization. Similarly, the PST (then PSA) call for a workers' slate in the last elections did not raise any programmatic criteria! Its appeals were directed to locally prominent militants connected with the CP, left-Peronists or syndicalists, and the main demand was for a slate with 80 percent workers with an unspecified "workers' program."

Since the March elections, the fail-

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the dictatorship of the proletariat meant a bridge to revolution in the West. The conditions for the socialist revolution (creating the dictatorship of the proletariat) and for socialism (the abolition of classes) are not identical. That the dictatorship of the proletariat came first to Russia by no means implied that it would be the first to arrive at socialism.

This distinction was so clear that Stalin himself, in early 1924, wrote:

"But the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the power of the proletariat in one country does not yet mean that the complete victory of socialism has been ensured. The principle task of socialism—the organization of socialist production—has still to be fulfilled. Can this task be fulfilled, can the final victory of socialism be achieved in one country, without the joint efforts of the proletarians in several advanced countries? No, it cannot. To overthrow the bourgeoisie the efforts of one country are sufficient; this is proved by the history of our revolution. For the final victory of socialism, for the organization of socialist production, the efforts of one country, particularly of a peasant country like Russia, are insufficient; for that the efforts of the proletarians of several advanced countries are required."

—J.V. Stalin, "Foundations of Leninism," May 1924

In subsequent editions this was replaced by the opposite thesis, namely that "we have all that is necessary for building a complete socialist society":

It could not be more clear that the Bolshevik perspective was one of proletarian internationalism, completely and unalterably opposed to the doctrine of socialism in one country. The Stalinists search through volumes of Lenin's writings to pick out isolated quotations

which will "prove" that Lenin, too, believed in the doctrine of socialism in one country. But if that were true, even ignoring the many times Lenin denied this, why did Stalin write in May 1924 the exact opposite? If "socialism in one country" were orthodox Bolshevism why didn't anyone discover this until late 1924?

The Stalinists' favorite "proof," quoted by Davidson, is from Lenin's 1915 article "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe":

"As a separate slogan, however, the slogan of a United States of the World would hardly be a correct one, first, because it merges with socialism; second, because it may be wrongly interpreted to mean that the victory of socialism in a single country is impossible, and it may also create misconceptions as to the relations of such a country to the others.

"Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organizing their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise against the rest of the world—the capitalist world—attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states."

Taken in the context of all his other writings from this period, it is absolutely clear that Lenin is referring here not to a "socialist society" but to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Moreover, he was obviously referring to Europe, since in 1915 Lenin did not even admit the possibility of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia before a socialist revolution in the West!

The other main Stalinist "proof" is a quote from Lenin's 1923 article "On Cooperation":

"Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc.—is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society...?"

This article is limited to the political and legal prerequisites for socialism. Elsewhere ("Our Revolution," 1923) Lenin referred to the statement that "the development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible" as "incontrovertible," while polemicizing against the Mensheviks who concluded from this that a revolution was worthless.

The Productive Forces

During the 1930's, in a setting of high inflation, a reign of terror inside the Communist Party and a civil war with the peasants caused by Stalin's program of forced collectivization, the "complete victory of socialism" was announced. A resolution of the seventh congress of the Communist International (1935) declared that with the nationalization of industry, collectivization and liquidation of the kulaks as a class, "the final and irrevocable triumph of socialism and the all-sided reinforcement of the state of the proletarian dictatorship is achieved in the Soviet Union." In 1936 the program of the Communist Youth declared: "The whole national economy of the country has become socialist." A speaker favoring the new program argued:

"The old program contains a deeply mistaken anti-Leninist assertion to the effect that Russia 'can arrive at socialism only through a world proletarian revolution.' This point of the program is basically wrong. It reflects Trotskyist views."

The old program, written in 1921 by Bukharin, was approved by the Politburo with the participation of Lenin!

In his article, Davidson tries to maintain a pretense of orthodoxy by stating that "Marxist-Leninists, of course, have never held that the final victory of socialism—the classless society—is possible in one country." By his own admission then, the Russian Communist Party of the 1930's, under Stalin, was not Marxist-Leninist!

Davidson also accuses Trotsky of holding a "right opportunist 'theory of productive forces'" as the basis for opposition to the slogan of socialism in one country. But this "theory of productive forces" is the very basis of Marxist materialist analysis of history! It was Marx himself who wrote:

"this development of productive forces...is absolutely necessary as

a practical premise [for socialism]: firstly for the reason that without it only want is made general, and with want the struggle for necessities and all the old crap would necessarily be reproduced; and, secondly, because only with this universal development of productive forces is a universal intercourse between men established... Without this, (1) communism could only exist as a local event; (2) the forces of intercourse themselves could not have developed as universal, hence intolerable, powers...; and (3) each extension of intercourse would abolish local communism. Empirically, communism is only possible as the act of the dominant peoples 'all at once' or simultaneously, which presupposes the universal development of productive forces and the world intercourse bound up with them.

—K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, 1847

Davidson ridicules these basic Marxist propositions (ascribing them instead to Khrushchev and Liu Shao-chi!), claiming:

"Most socialist construction that has taken place in the world has been in relatively backward countries. But to call it 'socialism,' in Trotsky's view, would only 'hopelessly discredit the idea of socialist society in the eyes of the toiling masses.'"

This view, according to Davidson, is "patently ridiculous."

Just how "socialist" was the Soviet Union in the 1930's? While Russia had made great strides in industrialization, definitively proving the superiority of socialist organization of production even with the terrible restrictions imposed by Stalin's bureaucratic rule, it was still far behind the advanced capitalist countries. The most basic necessities—decent housing, adequate food and clothing—were still unavailable to the masses of the population. Inflation was rampant and a black market continued to exist. Meanwhile the bureaucracy used its power to secure its own well-being, which concretely meant high salaries, special shops, automobiles, country houses and many other privileges. Lenin had said that the dying away of the state would begin on the very day of the seizure of power. The proletarian state, which was still an organ of class rule, would cease to be a separate power above society but the instrument of the vast majority, carrying out their will and basing itself on their active participation. In the Soviet Union of 1935 the state had not begun to wither away, but had grown instead into a gigantic apparatus of suppression and compulsion.

This, Brother Davidson, is socialism? Even after Stalin's political counterrevolution the Soviet Union was still a great advance over the conditions of czarism and capitalism. It remained a workers state, in the sense of preserving socialist property forms, though badly degenerated. But the classless society (announced by Stalin's 1936 Constitution of the USSR) it was not.

Betrayal of the 1926 British General Strike

The most damning proof of the counterrevolutionary meaning of the doctrine of "socialism in one country" was in the field of Stalin's foreign policy and his systematic downplaying, and finally abolition (1943), of the Communist International in favor of blocs with the bourgeoisies of the various countries where revolution threatened. An immediate and graphic illustration of the real content of Stalinist "internationalism" was provided by the 1926 British general strike.

In 1925 British coal operators sought to terminate the 1924 contract and replace it with a new agreement which would reduce miners to a below-subsistence standard of living. After an official inquiry into the industry the government returned a report which would have placed the main burden of modernizing the coal industry on the miners. Their answer was a strike beginning on 3 May 1926. The next day the whole country was in the throes of

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Members of Left Opposition on way to exile in Siberia in 1928. Seated are Radek (second from left), Trotsky (center). Upper left is Rakovsky.



Chinese Communists, militant workers being shot by Chiang Kai-shek's troops in 1927 Shanghai uprising. Stalin made Chiang honorary member of Comintern Executive, ordered workers to lay down guns.

ERA...

talists maintain their power they will seek to utilize democratic laws and the legitimate desire for equality in ways that actually increase exploitation and division. Thus the "separate but equal" system of segregated schools was for half a century considered to be consistent with the 14th Amendment (then it was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1954, referring to the same article). Similarly the legitimate desire for equality was perverted by the ruling class into such schemes as the "Philadelphia Plan," whose real aim was not equality but the destruction of the construction unions; in fact, the plan caused deep antagonisms between white and black construction workers by proposing to eliminate the discrimination against hiring of minority workers in the building trades by taking jobs away from white workers (preferential hiring).

The principle of equality is important, if only because its legal codi-

fication would make clear the glaring abyss between the democratic pretensions of the bourgeois order and the actual reality of social oppression of women, minorities, youth, etc. How this principle is realized will be determined by the class struggle. As Marxists we know that the gains of the working class (wages, union contracts, legitimate protective legislation) cannot be defended primarily in the capitalist courts and legislatures, but by using labor's own methods of struggle. We also place class issues higher than abstract democratic demands. Thus if the probable central result of the ERA were to be the massive elimination of valuable labor laws, and if the workers movement were too weak to prevent this from happening, then we would certainly oppose the Amendment. But that is not the situation today. Although it is under the control of a corrupt, narrow-minded, self-serving, class-collaborationist, reactionary bureaucracy, the American labor movement has not suffered a decisive defeat. This is not a period of reaction down the line, but one in which the bourgeoisie is under pressure from the working class and various oppressed groups and is seeking to maneuver by giving the appearance of change with-



Myra Wolfgang of Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union testifying against ERA. According to her, ERA supporters are "dealing with fantasies ... who is going to take care of the children?" Such arguments support status quo, deny importance of legal equality for women.



Women aircraft workers during World War II.

out the substance. Though a distinct move to the right, the Nixon administration has not fundamentally broken from this pattern.

At this time, to oppose the ERA on the grounds that it could lead to the loss of protective legislation—as do the Communist Party, the International Socialists, the Revolutionary Union, the Class Struggle League and the AFL-CIO hierarchy—means declaring in advance a refusal to *struggle* to protect labor's gains. With the OL and IS this is a product of their petty-bourgeois workerism, which worships the class as it is today instead of fighting for the historic interests of the class. Inevitably this policy means accommodating to the bureaucracy as well, seeking out a comfortable niche within it as a respectable "left" critic, or attempting to replace the current bureaucracy with an alternative reformist leadership whose policies are fundamentally the same.

But let us even grant that some left-wing opponents of the ERA may

be motivated by concern for working women: the fear that one effect of the ERA will be to embolden employers to intensify the exploitation of women workers now covered by whatever pitifully inadequate legal protection exists. Even so, opposition to the ERA is a mistake. For unlike ultra-left workerists who proudly proclaim that they have no interest in legalistic reforms like the ERA, Marxists recognize that struggles for bourgeois-democratic rights are of profound interest to the workers movement. Thus the Dreyfus case in 19th-century France was not merely a denial of democratic rights to an officer in the military, but was in fact a mobilization of reactionaries and anti-Semites which conditioned the entire climate of opinion and affected every layer of society. The civil rights movement of the 1960's—a thoroughly reformist movement under bourgeois leadership—was nonetheless a reflection of the legitimate aspirations of millions of black working people. The proletarian revolutionists cannot take

U.S./USSR Detente Doomed

buying out French firms. Rueff's solution was a return to the gold standard and a doubling of the price of gold. To put pressure on to achieve such a system, the French demanded payment of gold from U.S. reserves, refusing to hold dollars. Obviously this could go only so far, until at some point the U.S. became worried that it would lose its gold reserves which would be a key asset in the event of an economic "crash"; then something would have to happen.

Rueff and De Gaulle, however, refused to understand that a rigid gold standard would almost automatically turn recessions into sharp depressions. According to their reasoning a loss in gold would automatically reduce the export prices of a particular country, thus making its products more competitive, leading to higher exports and a return of gold. However, under conditions of monopoly capitalism prices are often quite insensitive to monetary pressures. And a gold standard would make it impossible for governments to pursue expansionist monetary policies during downturns in the business

cycle. Instead they would have to deflate, restricting credit and overall demand, and in general doing just what most governments did during 1929-1932, with predictable results. To adopt such policies a government would have to virtually destroy the unions, since large wage cuts would be called for periodically, and this is fundamentally not possible under conditions of bourgeois democracy. It is no accident that only the (decaying) bonapartist De Gaulle regime seriously contemplated this solution.

Nevertheless, these maneuvers and the constantly deteriorating U.S. trade position brought the dollar under considerable pressure, to which Nixon replied by the successive devaluations of the U.S. currency since August 1971. (The value of the dollar relative to the mark has gone down by 30 percent in the last year alone.) This devaluation, however, was accomplished not by a drastic rise in gold prices and a return to the gold standard, but by freeing the dollar from any tie to gold (and thus to real value) at all. In the short run, this

strengthened the U.S. trade position at the expense of other countries, notably Japan. But in the long run, it signals a period of wildly fluctuating speculative shifts in currency values such as occurred recently during the early stages of the Watergate crisis. The effect of anarchy in the world monetary system with the economy still in a boom has been minimal. At a time of economic crisis resulting from overproduction of capital, monetary chaos will accentuate the breakdown in world trade and the tendency to protectionism and will severely compound the crisis.

Thus while the Gaullist monetary policies led to a certain relative strengthening of France's position, the Pompidou regime wisely decided not to push the policy to the point of provoking a crisis—for this would result in a crash which would hurt French capitalism as well as the U.S.

Japan has been the fastest growing capitalist power in recent years, and the one whose trade relations with the U.S. most adversely affect the latter's balance of payments. For these reasons, in the long run Japan will likely be a strong opponent of the U.S. in the imperialist blocs which are beginning to take shape. In the short run, however, Japan is tightly attached to the U.S. economy and simply cannot make a sharp break without provoking a domestic depression. Thus in 1970 roughly 34 percent of Japan's imports and exports were with the U.S., compared to 28 percent for all of Asia and the Middle East (including oil from U.S. companies in those regions). Most of Japan's exports are technologically advanced manufactures for which the principal markets are the developed capitalist countries, i.e., the U.S. or Europe, as opposed to Southeast Asia. Perhaps most significantly, the vast majority of Japan's monetary reserves is in dollars (whereas the U.S.' reserves are 70 percent gold). Moreover, until recently the political structure of the country, and particularly the army, have been clearly dominated by the U.S.

A sharp break with U.S. imperialism in the immediate future would be disastrous.

Tasks of the Workers Movement

In the immediate period, as inter-imperialist rivalries are in their developing stages, a fundamental task of the workers movement will be a consistent fight against economic protectionism of any sort. Workers must understand that the bosses' propaganda of "Buy American" is actually laying the groundwork for World War III. The axis of our struggle against economic nationalism must be around unity in action by the national contingents of the world proletariat—not support for the jingoistic trade-union bureaucracy, but for the formation of a militant international trade-union federation based on class-struggle policies.

The current situation is by no means stable. A sharp crisis of overproduction, in conjunction with the highly unstable monetary system, can lead to a sharp reduction of world trade and massive unemployment and jingoistic nationalism in every country. Proletarian revolutionaries must know how to turn the discontent arising from the misery which the capitalist crisis produces into class consciousness, by posing a program to fight the capitalists, not other workers: For a sliding scale of wages and hours; opposition to economic protectionism; international strike action; nationalization of industry under workers control; immediate withdrawal of the U.S. from Southeast Asia; dump the bureaucrats, for a labor party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government! In the words of Marx and Engels, "every class struggle is a political struggle." This basic truth of Marxism, doubly true today, must be absorbed by militants who would build a *class* opposition to the present ruling class and its bootlickers, the labor bureaucracy. ■



a hands-off attitude toward reforms like the Civil Rights Act or the ERA. Legalistic and tokenistic affirmations of equality must be transcended in struggle, not opposed.

For the edification of those who profess disinterest in democratic reforms, we would like to quote a passage from Friedrich Engels, who well understood the limited nature of formal legal equality of the sexes, but also recognized the value of official affirmations of democratic rights in exposing the actual material roots of female oppression—capitalism and its basic economic unit, the family:

"The peculiar character of man's domination over woman in the modern family, and the necessity as well as the manner of establishing real social equality between the two, will be brought out into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished."

—*The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*

After 50 years, the ERA was finally passed by the necessary two-thirds majority of Congress in 1972. It is presently in danger of defeat as a result of negative votes by southern legislatures (it must be ratified by 38 states within seven years to become law). The defeat of the ERA would be a victory for reaction. At the same time we warn against the inevitable attempts of employers and anti-union forces to use the law to eliminate protective legislation, and call on the unions to fight this by organizing the unorganized, pressing for the extension of real protections (such as a prohibition of compulsory overtime) to men and declaring political strikes if the courts rule in favor of the capitalists. The emancipation of the working class will be the act of the working class itself. ■

Continued from page 12 CWA Convention...

al (most offenses are handled locally) for:

"Wilfully supporting or assisting any and all corrupting influences or the undermining effects of Communist agencies or others who are opposed to the basic principles of our democracy and free and Democratic Unionism."

Known for his supposed "opposition" to Beirne, Kirkpatrick claimed he was the only president in his district who opposed the last contract settlement (1971), calling it a "sellout." This "militant" wanted to hand Beirne a hatchet with which to chop any oppositionist whose ideas were considered subversive—such as the idea that Beirne's contracts are sellouts! Beirne has split many locals and helped blacklist local leaders for just such ideas carried a bit too far for his liking.

The Constitution Committee found Kirkpatrick's wording a little too reminiscent of the witchhunting of the 1950's, however, so it proposed language of its own. In its version:

"Wilfully engaging in activities for the purpose of disrupting Local meetings; wilfully publishing untruths about any Local or its elected officers; or wilfully filing false charges under the Union Constitution or Local Bylaws against any member of the Union."

That its intentions were identical to Kirkpatrick's, despite the tidied-up language, was revealed in the Committee's motivation for the amendment:

"There are, however, small groups of persons who have occasionally during the history of Labor convinced themselves that they know better than the membership itself, that because they contend the members are incapable of making proper decisions about their own lives, that the Democratic procedures must be vacated and that any means to their end are the proper ones. The result, when this kind of situation is permitted to continue, is a flaunting of the members' desires, the destruction of Union Democracy, and the subversion of Local Unions to the private purposes of special interest groups."

The Constitution Committee, moreover, printed both versions of the amendment in its report, making clear the purpose of the final wording, and objecting to the original version only on grounds that it was "far too broad in scope."

But the fact is that it is not the militant oppositionists but precisely the bureaucrats who have been guilty of "flaunting the members' desires, the destruction of union democracy, and the subversion of Local Unions to the private purposes of special interest groups." In Local 9415, it is the bureaucrats who have adjourned meetings against the will (and vote) of the membership. It is the bureaucrats who refused to support a wildcat in 1971 despite its overwhelming support by the membership. It is the bureaucrats who published in the local's *Labor News* a cowardly and vicious, red-baiting, sex-baiting, "anonymous" slander letter directed against members of the Militant Action Caucus. It is the bureaucrats who involved themselves in physical attacks on union members. And it is the bureaucrats who for months have prevented the election of shop stewards despite the fact that this was voted for by the vast majority of the membership last November!

In Kirkpatrick's Local 9410, it was President Kirkpatrick himself—this splendid champion of union democracy—who declared at a meeting last month that only "over my dead body" will the members get the right to elect their own stewards.

Nothing could be more ludicrous than the claim of this rotten union leadership, which refuses to fight for even minimal contract demands and which has never shirked from violating any democratic procedure which stood in the way of its own appetites, that its concern is the preservation of union democracy and the protection of the membership from "corrupting influences."

No! The real concerns of the bureaucrats are to keep the membership ignorant and quiet, unable to protest one betrayal after another by their "leaders." Some elements of the bureaucracy wanted to begin laying the groundwork for the upcoming 1974 contract fight by getting rid of all the troublesome opposition within the union. As they gear up for another great sellout in the Beirne tradition, they are acutely aware that their ability to consummate a deal with the bourgeoisie and force it down the throats of the membership will depend on their ability to

silence militancy in the ranks, preferably through physical expulsion. And the time to start is now.

The Militant Action Caucus, *Yellow Pages* (San Francisco), *Bell Wringer* (Oakland) and the United Action Caucus (New York) backed a "No on 19-2C" Committee in order to fight this amendment. The Committee circulated a petition against the amendment and raised money to send two representatives to the convention to leaflet, petition and persuade delegates to vote against the amendment. Members of the MAC initiated the Committee and carried the brunt of the work from the outset, while others in the Committee took a more or less passive attitude. Of the \$125.00 which the Committee raised to help send representatives to Miami (both members of the MAC), *Yellow Pages* supporters contributed only \$5.00. The United Action Caucus in New York refused to take part in the struggle at all, beyond a pro-forma endorsement. Another opposition group, the Traffic Jam caucus (San Francisco) showed up for one meeting of the "No on 19-2C" Committee and left after about a half hour with no explanation. Faced with direct attack on the very right to opposition, launched by the president of their own local, they do nothing at all. Nor have recent issues of the newspapers of the Revolutionary Union, Progressive Labor or the International Socialists, who support these caucuses, seen fit to campaign against this witchhunting attack.

The two representatives of "No on 19-2C" did find support at the convention, however, particularly from some CWA members from Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Georgia. The Atlanta phone workers had, like the members of the MAC, been brought up on charges within their local for "bringing the union into disrepute" (i.e., criticizing the local leadership).

A leaflet was issued against 19-2C and all parties who wished to participate in the struggle were encouraged to distribute it and to contact potentially sympathetic delegates. By aggressively pushing the issue other CWA members were found to help distribute the leaflet and numerous delegates were contacted, several of whom later spoke on the floor against the amendment. Overall the Committee's intervention had a noticeable impact. The failure of the amendment to win approval is due in large part to the efforts of this group and, even more, to the MAC, which had initiated the fight on the West Coast and had carried it through with persistence and determination. The final rejection of 19-2C was the act of a majority of CWA delegates. The delegates had been assured repeatedly—by Beirne (!) particularly—that the CWA was the most democratic union in the world. It was to this tradition that those opposing what was essentially a gag rule successfully appealed in their remarks during the debate (which took up most of one day). Local leaders had their own reasons to oppose the amendment, however. They were faced with certain contradictions: while it would have been nice to get rid

of the militants, it would have given the International leadership an added handle to intervene in local affairs (since trial bodies under the amendment would be selected by the International).

Moreover, Beirne himself played a relatively passive role in the discussion. From his point of view there was no need to antagonize the local bureaucrats at this point by pushing the amendment through, there was the desire to project a liberal image and also a certain reluctance to deal with the flood of charges and counter-charges which would certainly engulf the International following adoption of the amendment. Much better to let the local leaders clean their own houses. Nevertheless, his concluding speech attempted to console those who had fought for the amendment and to gear them up for a fight against the militants (whom he called "commie bastards") in the coming period.

The defeat of the amendment was an important victory for all militants in CWA. The Militant Action Caucus, which led the struggle against 19-2C, has continually pointed out the need for a full political program to fight the CWA bureaucracy. This is borne out by the current red-baiting and the 19-2C amendment. The union leadership is firmly wedded to the capitalist system and will do everything necessary to protect it, from supporting wage-freezes and expelling militants on trumped-up charges to sponsoring secret CIA-funded operations (as Beirne did for years). To fight the bosses and their agents in the unions down the line the MAC calls for nationalization of the phone company under workers control, full union democracy, ousting the bureaucrats and building a labor party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government. An integral part of this program is the need for a united-front defense of victimized militants and opposition to witchhunting in the unions. MAC put this section of its program into practice by initiating the "No on 19-2C" Committee and by taking the fight to the delegates at the CWA convention itself.

For MAC, the convention experience was important also because it exposed their program and strategy to other militants throughout the entire country and indicated the need for a national Militant Action Caucus within CWA. In the immediate future, the caucus is planning a series of forums to discuss the CWA convention, as well as MAC's program and strategy for trade-union struggle in general. A regular newsletter is also planned. More information concerning these activities, as well as MAC literature, can be obtained by writing to:

Militant Action Caucus
P.O. Box 462
El Cerrito, California 94530

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WORKERS VANGUARD

...Peronism

ure to present a clear alternative to the Peronists has become actively dangerous. In late May the PST attended a meeting with Cámpora which, according to the PST itself, "was a great meeting of the parties and organizations of the Argentine bosses to give their support to Cámpora's proposals." The PST's position was that all the government's acts which develop toward the workers' interests would be given critical support. "Without confusing the banners, Dr. Cámpora can count on our proletarian solidarity" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 30 May-6 June 1973). Cámpora-Perón begin gearing up for a crackdown on the "Trotskyists" and PST leader Juan Carlos Coral promises the PST's critical support for the positive measures of the Cámpora government!

Política Obrera and the Anti-Imperialist United Front

The Política Obrera group has made a number of correct criticisms of the PST, in particular of its reformist program. These criticisms are flawed, however, by two decisive errors. The first is its evaluation of Peronism. PO constantly leaves the door open to considering Peronism, or left-Peronism, as part of the workers movement (with which, consequently, Trotskyists could form a united front). Thus the FREJULI is characterized as "a coalition of Peronism with the pro-imperialist industrial bourgeoisie, on the latter's program, and of conciliation with the key wings of the military government" (*Política Obrera*, 12 February 1973). In fact, the FREJULI is simply the Peronist party, a bourgeois party just as were the Partido Peronista and even the Partido Laborista in their times. Moreover, PO termed the FREJULI victory in the March elections "an unquestionable triumph of the working class against the military gorilla clique" (*Política Obrera*, 19 March 1973):

The second, related, error concerns PO's call for an "anti-imperialist

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REVOLUTIONARY
LITERATURE



Córdoba uprising in May 1969.

AVANZADA SOCIALISTA

united front":

"By their immediate programmatic content the political fronts which the revolutionary party establishes in the backward and semi-colonial countries are anti-imperialist fronts. It could not occur otherwise, as long as the axis of the class alliance which the working class leads is effected around the democratic tasks, uncompleted by the bourgeoisie, and national independence."

—*Política Obrera*, 23 October 1972

The fundamental error of this analysis is simply that it throws Trotskyism overboard. The essential point of the theory of permanent revolution is that the struggle cannot be limited to the democratic tasks, that even to achieve agrarian reform, national independence and other democratic demands it is necessary to establish the dictatorship of the *proletariat*, supported by the peasantry. It is possible to form a front with bourgeois forces who are willing to fight against a particular imperialist power, but such a front is essentially military and is sharply distinguished from the tactic of a *working-class* united front.

The most concrete realization of the "anti-imperialist front" which PO envisions is the so-called "Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front" which was entered in early 1972 by the Bolivian POR, with which the PO is in close political agreement. This front, which expressly proclaimed its purpose as the taking of power, included within it General Juan José Torres (the previous president) and the former chief-of-staff of the Bolivian Army! Despite a few words about socialism in the program, this is a clear *popular front*, a coalition of the workers parties with the bourgeoisie and a direct betrayal of the struggle for working-class independence.

This is no academic discussion in Argentina. In response to General Lanusse's call for a Gran Encuentro Nacional and Perón's La Hora del Pueblo, the Communist Party was pushing its own popular front, the Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos (ENA—National Meeting of the Argentines). In its articles on the CP, *Política Obrera* consistently criticizes the ENA for its bourgeois program (essentially unity of all forces opposed to the mili-



tary dictatorship, defense of private property, etc.) and for its leading candidates (the bourgeois Radicals Sueldo and Alende), but not for its character as a popular front! Instead, PO proposes a more militant "anti-imperialist" popular front with candidates selected by "a general assembly of the parties which claim to fight against imperialism and the dictatorship" which would also determine the program! The whole discussion clearly implies that a bloc with the bourgeoisie in backward countries is a permissible tactic for a Trotskyist party, a position which will eventually result in a bloc with Peronism ("Por que el Partido comunista vota una alternativa reaccionaria," 1973).

In Argentina, the struggle for the independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie is above all the struggle against Peronism. In this struggle we cannot simply ignore the Peronist labor bureaucracy. We can propose united fronts in struggles for particular objectives; we can call on the CGT to fight for a revolutionary program of transitional demands. But we cannot extend this front to include Perón/Cámpora and the Peronist party (at present the FREJULI), for the purpose of the united front is to separate the working class from the bourgeoisie. A *popular front* with Perón (or Torres in Bolivia) has precisely the opposite effect, leading to betrayals for which the working masses pay with their blood. ■

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SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

a general strike. Councils of action were set up in the workers' districts to keep up morale and control the issuing of permits for emergency work or special transport. This was not simply an industrial dispute but a direct attack on the bosses' state.

The General Council of the Trades Union Congress, which had been entrusted with the conduct of the strike, called it off after nine days and at the height of its effectiveness, frightened by its revolutionary implications. Men going back to work found themselves blacklisted or accepted back only on terms including reduction in wages, loss of seniority or leaving the unions. On 13 May a second general strike occurred over the victimizations, but after conciliatory speeches from the TUC leaders—and *having no alternative leadership*—the men again returned to work. The miners stayed out until a series of separate agreements made between 23 and 29 December, but they were forced by the treachery of the trade-union tops to fight alone. The owners won on all counts: the national contract was lost and miners had to work longer hours for lower wages.

During the temporary retreat of the class struggle in Europe during 1924-25 Stalin decided to try and make peace with the reformist trade-union leaders, possibly abandoning the Red International of Labor Unions. The keystone to this policy was the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee, a bloc between the Soviet trade unions and the General Council of the British TUC, formed in May 1925. After the General Council betrayed the 1926 general strike, Trotsky demanded an immediate rupture with these strikebreakers. Stalin and Bukharin refused. (Zinoviev had at this point joined the Opposition, though he was to capitulate to Stalin two years later.) In 1926 the General Council supported British imperialism's repression of the Chinese revolution. Trotsky again demanded the denunciation of the Anglo-Russian Committee. Again Stalin refused.

When it finally succumbed in 1927 it was the *British* leaders who dumped the Committee. Its principal aim had supposedly been to oppose British intervention in Russia. As a logical extension of the doctrine of socialism in one country, this mythical aid from the labor fakers was sufficient grounds for sacrificing the 1926 general strike.

Stalin Orders Chinese Communists to their Graves

Another even more horrifying example of the meaning of socialism in one country was Stalin's policy in the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. As early as 1924 the Chinese Communist Party

Continued from page 12

... Jersey Ford

mum of support from the ranks. In leaflet after leaflet, Reilly denounced "outside organizations" which he claimed were seeking to "get control of and use this to further their own alien ideas." Only a month earlier, Reilly's guns had been aimed at his own vice-president, Gardner. Reilly tried to link Gardner with alleged perpetrators of "the lowest form of unsigned, union-busting lies; being paid for by outside forces..." Reilly continued:

"This lying filth is written by the ex-President Resnick with the assistance of my Vice President, who have joined forces together to try again to take control of this Local."

—undated leaflet signed by Reilly

Such bogey-man smear tactics come naturally to bureaucrats like Reilly, who use them to stay in power despite their records of inaction, betrayals and complete lack of program. In such a situation, the attitude of Progressive Labor and the PL-supported Workers Action Movement (WAM) was absurd to the point of being criminal. WAM leaflets at the plant urged the handful of militants to shut the plant down no matter what, as though a few relatively unknown militants (especially to the day shift) could substitute for recognized leadership and the participation of the bulk of the workers, in the face of official sabotage. Meanwhile, PL's *Challenge* helped the company find its victims by bragging that WAM members had led the walkout!

While PL was urging the militants to self-destruct, the Rank and File Committee, which is supported by the Communist Party's *Daily World*, also sought to bypass the question of leadership, although in a different way, by appearing indistinguishable from the official leadership. A leaflet inspired mainly by the RFC said, "A Saturday meeting at the Hall which was attended by the top officers and 150 members expressed the same determination [to close down production]." It was unsigned, except for a "Local 906" designation, and while it didn't explicitly call for a strike, it thus implied of-

ficial support for a strike—which is exactly what Reilly had allowed the militants at the meeting to think so that they would over-extend themselves and fail to make their own preparations! This attempt to pressure the local bureaucracy only helped build Reilly's trap.

The *Daily World* summed up the same approach later (28 June) in its report of the 23 June union meeting:

"Spurred by membership action, the leaders of Local 906 of the United Auto Workers at the Ford plant here have pledged to win the reinstatement of Dave Gardner, its fired vice-president."

What they actually did was concentrate on Gardner and dodge the issues, after having sabotaged a strike which alone could have secured action on all the victimized militants. In the end, the "militant" Gardner had only the same program to offer as his red-baiting rival: not militant action, in defiance

of the International if necessary, but passive reliance on the International to carry out the usual impotent bureaucratic procedures to save some of the victims. The only difference between Gardner and Reilly was that many of the militants would listen to Gardner. As for the other grievances, such as the heat in the plant, only more of the same old promises!

What It Takes to Win

For a strike in defiance of both the local and International bureaucracies to succeed, mass mobilization of the workers is required, so that their support for the action is unquestionable, and a truly authoritative leadership can be elected. To bring this about, there must exist the nucleus of a leadership with the correct orientation to conduct the initial propaganda and mobilization. But such a nucleus, or caucus, will make mis-

takes if it fails to recognize in advance that the bureaucracy will sell out sooner or later, for the bureaucracy is committed to the maintenance of capitalism and must betray the workers in order to survive. The goal of replacing the reformist bureaucracy with revolutionary leadership must be clearly in the caucus' sights. Otherwise it will inevitably try to go around the established leadership, through the adventurism of small handfuls, or build false confidence in a section of the bureaucracy, thereby enabling the bureaucrats to better disarm and smash the movement.

The CP disagrees. Complaining of what it calls "'Left' groups" whose sole purpose is to expose the leadership rather than "treating the company as the enemy," it continues:

"Some of our own comrades have the same hangup. They say that the main obstacle of taking on the company is the union leadership and that until you get rid of the leadership you can't fight the company. The trouble with this approach is that with no struggles against the company no rank-and-file leaders emerge in whom the workers can have any confidence."

—Political Affairs, June 1973

But successful struggle against the companies and the capitalist system as a whole depends on the replacement of the treacherous trade-union bureaucracy, which otherwise will use its control of the unions to derail all struggles —by everything from sitting on wage boards to smashing wildcat strikes. So long as the sellout bureaucracy remains in power, the union ranks cannot be welded into a united fighting force against the class enemy. If militants attempt to substitute themselves for an aroused union under class-conscious leadership, they will merely set themselves up to be picked off by the company and the bureaucracy in tandem. Their determination will bear fruit only if it is joined to a struggle to construct a new union leadership to coordinate their struggles instead of sabotaging them. The road to victory lies through the formation of a caucus based on a full class-struggle program which can offer leadership in concrete struggles in the context of a full program, directly counterposed to that of the bureaucracy, to turn the union movement toward a revolutionary struggle against capitalism. ■

Defend Workers Democracy

On 12 June salesmen of the *Bay Area Worker*, a paper supported by the Maoist Revolutionary Union, physically attacked *Workers Vanguard* salesmen outside the Fremont, California GM plant. *BAW* supporters approached with rocks and pieces of glass, trying to grab papers away from *WV* comrades. Embarrassed to be seen by the workers, the cowards stopped their attacks during the shift change, afterwards resuming the harassment and finally following the *WV* sales team to its car to try to prevent it from leaving. *RU* supporters had previously threatened *WV* salesmen at Fremont in April and have physically excluded the *SL/RCY* from several recent Bay Area demonstrations.

These violent tactics are simply a manifestation of the frustration resulting from this organization's inability to politically defend its betrayals especially its trade-union policies. The *RU*'s present strategy is to seek the absorption of its members into the local bureaucracies by uncritically supporting the local leaderships, thus cooperating in their sellouts of the membership. *Workers Vanguard's* exposure of the nature of these betrayals has become so threatening to the *RU* that it attempts to keep auto workers from reading our paper.

While the *SL* stands unconditionally for workers democracy and does not initiate attacks on the left, we are hardly pacifists and will defend our right to distribute our literature; acts aimed at our intimidation will result only in the further discredit and regret of their perpetrators. We call on all tendencies in the labor movement to condemn the *BAW/RU* attacks and to aid in the physical defense of our comrades. It is once again necessary to firmly establish the precedent of workers democracy and unity to ensure the free exchange of political ideas—the life-blood of the workers movement. From the struggle for program will emerge the road leading to proletarian power.

had entered the populist bourgeois Kuomintang party of Sun Yat-sen on orders from Moscow. Trotsky objected when the matter was discussed then at the Politburo. The Chinese CP leadership under Chen Tu-hsiu likewise repeatedly objected. In October 1925 they proposed preparing to leave the Kuomintang; the plan was turned down by the Comintern Executive on Stalin's instructions. Stalin's line was that the revolution must be restricted to a bourgeois-democratic stage, under the leadership of a "bloc of four classes" including the national bourgeoisie, urban petty bourgeoisie, workers and peasants. The political expression of this bloc was the Kuomintang, to which the Chinese Communists were to subordinate themselves. They were directed to hold down the class struggle against the "anti-imperialist bourgeoisie" in the cities and seek a balance between them and the peasant movement in the countryside, above all maintaining the unity of all anti-imperialist forces.

Stalin's main interest in China at the time was not to foster revolution but to achieve a diplomatic bloc with the Kuomintang government. In early 1926 this bourgeois party was admitted to the Communist International as an associate party, and the CI Executive Committee, the "General Staff of World Revolution," elected Sun's successor General Chiang Kai-shek an honorary member! Only a few weeks later, on 20 March, Chiang carried out his first anti-communist coup, barring CP members from all leadership posts in the Kuomintang and demanding a list of all CP members who had joined the

Kuomintang. Under orders from CI representatives, the Chinese party leadership agreed! In October 1926 Stalin actually sent a telegram urging the Chinese CP to call off a peasant revolt in Kwangtung province. Trotsky commented on this:

"The official subordination of the Communist Party to the bourgeois leadership, and the official prohibition of forming soviets (Stalin and Bukharin taught that the Kuomintang 'took the place of' soviets) was a grosser and more glaring betrayal of Marxism than all the deeds of the Mensheviks in the years 1905-1917."

—L.D. Trotsky, "Permanent Revolution," 1928

This was bad enough, but after a challenge from the Left Opposition headed by Trotsky and Zinoviev, and during the crucial days of the Shanghai insurrection which began in March 1927, Stalin again and again reaffirmed the policy of capitulating to the nationalists while the latter were preparing to liquidate the communists. A March 1927 editorial in the *Communist International* said the main task in China was "the further development of the Kuomintang." On 5 April Trotsky warned that Chiang Kai-shek was preparing a quasi-bonapartist coup against the workers and called for the formation of workers councils to frustrate this aim. At the same time Stalin boasted at a party meeting in Moscow that "we would use the Chinese bourgeoisie and then throw it away like a squeezed lemon." Also at this time the Chinese CP leadership was appealing to Moscow, trying to impress the CI with the significance of the Shanghai events, the greatest workers' rising in Asia, and

with the need to break with the Kuomintang. They were ordered to surrender Shanghai to Chiang's armies, and on 12 April the Kuomintang army carried out a massacre which cost the lives of tens of thousands of Communists and militant workers who had laid down their arms at Stalin's orders. This was "socialism in one country" in practice!

But still Stalin would not abandon his policy and, declaring that the alliance with Chiang had now lapsed (!), he now ordered a bloc with the left-Kuomintang which had set up a government at Wuhan. Again Chinese Communists were ordered to hold back the peasant movement in order not to antagonize the "anti-imperialist" bourgeoisie. And again the bourgeois nationalists turned on the CP. At the end of the year Stalin moved to head off criticism of his Chinese policy from the Left Opposition by ordering an uprising in Canton by telegraph in a tactical situation where it was bound to suffer defeat, which it did despite the heroic defense of the "soviet government" by the Canton workers.

According to Davidson, "the Comintern advocated a policy put into practice independently by Mao and ignored or opposed by both Chen Tu-hsiu and Chang Kuo-tao." In actual fact Mao did not criticize the line followed by Chen in this period. At one point (fall 1924) he was expelled from the CP Central Committee for his too-close cooperation with the right-wing Kuomintang leaders!

While the Opposition's line on China had been firmly defeated in the thoroughly bureaucratized Russian Com-

munist Party and the Comintern, it was still dangerous to Stalin to have Trotsky at freedom in the Soviet capital. In consequence he ordered the arrest of the organizer of the October Revolution and founder of the Red Army, exiling him to Alma Ata in Central Asia and deporting him from the USSR two years later. The Bolshevik party had been transformed from the leading revolutionary force in the world into a mere appendage of Stalin's bureaucracy. When Davidson and the Maoists today support the doctrine of socialism in one country, it is this history of betrayals that they are defending. ■

Class-Struggle Alternative for the Trade Unions

Speakers:

KATHLEEN BURNHAM
Militant Action Caucus, CWA

MARK SMALL
SL Central Committee

Sunday, 22 July at 7:30 p.m.
Auspices: Spartacist League
For further information:
653-4668

PLACE TO BE ANNOUNCED

MAC LEADS STRUGGLE CWA Convention Rejects Gag Rule Amendment

A vicious assault on union democracy, spearheaded by California local bureaucrats of the Communication Workers of America, was defeated by a close vote at the CWA convention in June. The local officials, headed by the "militant" Kirkpatrick of San Francisco, proposed to give Joe Beirne's die-hard anti-communist International bureaucracy the constitutional power to persecute "reds" and "disrupters" in any local of the union, thereby greatly expanding the International's disciplinary powers. The defeat of this red-clause constitutional amendment was a victory for all union militants.

A crucial role in stopping this atrocity was played by the Militant Action Caucus (MAC) of Oakland Local 9415. MAC initiated a "No on 19-2C" Committee which was joined by other oppositional groupings and individuals, and attended the convention in order to muster support against the proposal.

While the red clause was drafted by Kirkpatrick, it was eagerly supported by the other California local bureaucrats. One of their chief targets was MAC, which had recently defeated a lame attempt by discredited bureaucrats in the Oakland local to bring some of its members up on phony charges of "bringing the union into disrepute" (see *WV* Nos. 16 and 17, February and March 1973). These elements and others like them wanted a new club with which to beat down oppositions which exposed their rotten role. So armed, they hoped to be able to cling to office no matter

what. Most delegates correctly saw this as a threat to them, however, since it could be used by the International to stifle any opposition.

Anti-Communism and Class-Collaboration

The posh Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach was the scene of CWA's 35th annual convention—an appropriate setting for bureaucrats to ignore the pressing problems of the membership. While some of the 2,600 delegates had been elected by the membership of CWA, most attained delegate status merely by virtue of their positions in the local hierarchy. Thus the Militant Action Caucus waged a pre-convention struggle within Local 9415 for elected delegates, but bureaucratic manipulation prevented the issue from coming to the floor.

While profuse lip service was paid to democracy and freedom of expression for all points of view, the convention reeked of the vicious anti-communism of the CWA bureaucracy and its staunch support for the capitalist system in general and the cold-war liberals in particular. Telegrams from Senators McGovern and Humphrey, leading supporters of government wage controls and compulsory arbitration, as well as from other similar "friends of labor" were read from the rostrum, while awards were given to those CWA members who had raised the most money for the Democratic Party through the



Opponents of anti-red clause leafletting at CWA convention.

WV PHOTO

CWA's Committee on Political Education (COPE).

In discussing Nixon's wage freeze, a violation of every union contract in the United States and an attack on the union's position as sole bargaining agent for its members, CWA President Joseph Beirne, who has publicly called for Nixon's impeachment, commented only that the controls should be fair! The CWA bureaucracy has never taken up a struggle against the wage freeze and, in fact, the AFL-CIO executive board, of which Beirne is a Vice-President, actually called for wage controls even before Phase I was announced. Until the spring of 1972, Beirne also sat on the government's Productivity Advisory Board, which concerned itself with devising new and more efficient ways to exploit workers, and it was not until February of this year that the *C.W.A. News* called for an end to the Economic Stabilization Act—Beirne and the rest of the labor bureaucracy helped to create this act and

now Beirne asks that the controls be "fair"!

One of the gravest threats facing the membership of CWA at this time, as it is facing the working class as a whole, is increasing automation, which under capitalism, because of the widespread unemployment it engenders, must take the form of a curse instead of a blessing. Not one of the resolutions placed before the membership even touched upon this critical problem. The delegates were instead encouraged to discuss and vote on such issues as year-round daylight saving time, testimonials to the memory of Presidents Truman and Johnson and support for Radio Free Europe.

The politically most controversial convention discussion centered on the "anti-red" amendment, clause 19-2C of the International Constitution.

According to the proposal originally put forward by Kirkpatrick, union members could be fined, suspended or expelled by trial set up by the International

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Walkout Defeated at Jersey Ford

UAW Leaders Set Up Militants

As the ponderous bureaucracy of the United Auto Workers moves slowly toward the opening of formal bargaining in mid-July with the Big 3 auto companies, rank-and-file auto workers around the country are increasingly restive. Walkouts and wildcat strikes over heat, speed-up grievances and firings have increased, and local union elections in many locations have indicated growing dissatisfaction with existing leadership. The cornerstone of the UAW leadership's policy, however, has been to curb militancy through breaking strikes locally, refusing formal strike sanctions and red-baiting militants, so that Woodcock's gang can enter the negotiations with the "proud" boast to the companies: "Our union has proven its responsibility..." (Woodcock to UAW Forge and Foundry Conference, *UAW Solidarity*, June 1973).

Wildcat strikes have mushroomed briefly at Jefferson Ave. and Hamtramck Assembly Chrysler plants in Detroit, Chrysler in Fenton, Missouri, Ford at Mahwah, New Jersey and GM

at Norwood and Lordstown, Ohio, in past months. A formal strike vote taken at Lordstown Local 1112 over an accumulation of over 4,000 speed-up grievances was approved by 88 percent of those voting. Brief walkouts over heat and other grievances have occurred at many more plants. At Dodge Main in Detroit, 11 workers were fired after a walkout over a speed-up grievance. The local leadership attempted to finger some militants as "revolutionaries" a few days later, as if "revolutionaries" were the cause of the discontent. The local struggles have been consistently frowned on and squelched by local leaders at the behest of the International, which holds up as examples the long, demoralizing Lordstown and Norwood strikes (which the International sabotaged through isolation) to discourage militancy.

Company Provocations at Ford

This strategy plays into the hands of the companies. Managements have been taking advantage of the situation

to fire militants and provoke hopeless confrontations which serve only to expend the energies of the best militants, demoralize them and reinforce cynicism and disgust with the union. Ford, still projected as the target company for a possible strike when the contract expires in September, has scored heavily in this way at its Mahwah plant, thus weakening in advance one of the best potential centers of strike militancy.

A walkout in April led to suspensions for 84 participants. Around the same time there were three firings and two disciplinary layoffs of militants in the plant. Despite massive sentiment for a militant defense of all the victims throughout May, the Reilly leadership of Local 906 restrained the ranks from taking any action. Two walkouts over heat in early June resulted in the firing of two more workers, Larry Goldbetter and Local Vice-President Dave Gardner, for allegedly leading the walkouts. Gardner had already been trying to groom his image as a "militant" alternative to Reilly, and as the spokes-

man of the more militant black and Latin workers concentrated primarily on the second shift. His firing set off a move for a strike to defend all the accumulated victims, which succeeded in shutting down the second shift for one day (see *WV* No. 23, 22 June 1973).

From that point on, however, it was all downhill. An unofficial meeting attended by the union officials was marked by hostility to the bureaucracy and demands for union action directed at Reilly. In a conscious provocation, Reilly let it be understood that while he formally opposed the strike, he would publicize Gardner's firing and the decision of the meeting—which was a unanimous vote to strike—thereby implying passive support for the action. But on the next regular workday, he was out at the gates encouraging the workers to go in!

No more than 10 percent of the plant had ever been mobilized for a strike meeting, and there was no recognized strike leadership. For two days, a handful of the best militants threw themselves into a vain effort to keep the shifts from working, despite the lack of leadership or preparation. Meanwhile, the company took pictures and Reilly noted individuals. At least 20 workers have since been seriously disciplined, including several more firings, while many others, possibly over 100, are still receiving lesser penalties for the one-day shutdown and strike attempt.

Official Red-Baiting

While sabotaging the strike, Reilly attempted to isolate the militants with red-baiting, thereby setting them up for firing by the company with a mini-

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