

# the TORCH

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 Newspaper of the  
**Revolutionary  
 Socialist League**

Reconstruct the Fourth International!

Vol 1

March, 1974

No. 6

## THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

by Paul Benjamin

MARCH 3—The British general election, held February 28, has thrown Britain into its greatest political crisis in 45 years. After three years of attacks on the British working class, the Conservative government of Prime Minister Edward Heath has gone down to defeat.

The opposition Labour Party, whose election campaign represented nothing more than a retreat from the reality of the class struggle, also failed to win a majority. Neither one of the two major political parties can provide a stable parliamentary government to preside over British capitalism. The general election has served only to reveal the bankruptcy of British parliamentary democracy in the face of economic crisis and proletarian revolt.

The post-election division of parliamentary seats is:

Labour	301
Conservative	296
Liberal	14
Others	24
TOTAL	635
Needed to rule	318

The Labour Party has come out of the elections with a slight plurality in Parliament. The Conservatives, who lost 26 seats, retained a slight plurality in the popular vote —38.5 per cent of the vote, compared to the Labour Party's 37.5 per cent. As we go to press, both Heath and Labour Party leader Harold Wilson are attempting to form a minority government.

### PETTY-BOURGEOIS REVOLT

Their fate lies in the hands of the Parliamentary representatives of an embittered and frustrated petty bourgeoisie. The Liberal Party won fully 19.6 per cent of the popular vote. The Scottish nationalists, the Welsh nationalists, and the hard-line Ulster Protestants control 20

seats in Parliament, although they captured less than five per cent of the popular vote.

The Liberals, together with these parties, hold the balance of power in Parliament; neither Heath nor Wilson can rule without them. Yet their strength represents only a protest by the British petty bourgeoisie, a declaration of no confidence in the ability of either major party to solve Britain's problems. The next government of Britain, in other words, must lean on the very voters who have condemned that government in advance. No such regime can hope to survive for more than a few months.

Nevertheless, those few months will be critical ones for the British working class. A Conservative government can only attempt to renew its attack on the workers. A Labour regime would in all likelihood result in total paralysis of the parliamentary government. In either event, the parliamentary crisis can only lead to intensified class struggle in Britain.

The British general election is the product of the Heath government's failure to either rebuild British capitalism or restrain the anger of the proletariat.

Heath has resorted to inflationary economic maneuvers to stimulate the British economy. He has attempted to force the working class to pay the expenses of "modernization" through wage cuts, productivity drives, and the elimination of thousands of jobs. He introduced the Industrial Rela-

Cont'd. p. 6



British engineers march in support of miners and against capitalist attack

## The Truckers and the Class Struggle

by Jon Myers

Representatives of the independent truck drivers and the government have made a deal and ended the strike. But a deal in Washington is not a settlement over-the-road.

The fuel crisis has not ended, and the proposed rationing will not do so. Prices will continue to rise. The frustration of the owner-operators runs deep. Just as important, no Washington settlement will eliminate the bitterness and distrust which now exists between the independents and the Teamster drivers.

### FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL

The ranks of the independents are part of the exploited in this society. They fight

against the policies of big business and the government which grind them to dust, reduce them from petty-bourgeois to semi-proletarian and then from semi-proletarian to proletarian.

They fight to keep their bodies out of the factories. Their plight is like that of small gas station owners. The

diligence, long hours, and other sacrifices they make in the hope of "getting over" are all mercilessly exploited by the giant capitalists.

The ruling class uses the hopes of the independents to squeeze them dry in the same way that Las Vegas uses the fantasies of the workers to rip

Cont'd. p. 15

## Now 20 Pages

### THE ROOTS OF THE CAPITALIST CRISIS

By Ron Taber page 10

NEW YORK—As management on January 31 dumped 62,000 gallons of beer into the East River, workers at Brooklyn's Rheingold brewery began a sit-in to defend their jobs. The 119-year-old brewery, one of the largest in the world, was scheduled to be shut down permanently the following day. Rheingold, now a subsidiary of Pepsico, the giant beverage firm, dumped the beer down the sewers declaring that this was the most profitable way to dispose of the beer.

If the brewery closes, 1,500 workers will be left with no pensions and little prospect of finding new jobs. (The average age of the workers at Rheingold is 53.)

#### THINGS TO COME

The Rheingold sit-in provides a clear illustration of the problems which will face workers in the immediate future. In the coming recession increasing numbers of smaller companies will be bankrupted, clearing the field for the country's largest and wealthiest corporations. In still other cases, work forces will be slashed in half, with the remaining workers told to work twice as hard.

The alternative? "Hit the street!" This is the "cleansing" process that capitalism is now demanding. Millions of jobs will be lost unless workers are organized around a program which puts workers' needs ahead of profits. The life-or-death question is whether a leadership to spearhead such a fight can be built in time.

Rheingold's brewery workers, by seizing corporate property for three days, took a militant step in defense of their jobs. In the face of today's mounting offensive against the standards of living of millions of workers across the country, many similar explosions which burst the barriers of "normal labor relations" are likely. Yet, despite their dramatic actions, the Rheingold workers were incapable of defending their jobs.

The occupation of the brewery, voted for by the workers, was sabotaged by their union representatives of Teamster Locals 3 and 46. At first pledging support with militant-sounding rhetoric, these misleaders spoke of "occupying the plant for years if necessary" to prevent its closing. One official remarked, "If the court orders us out they'll have to carry us out."

But these hacks had no intention of leading a real fight to defend the brewery workers' jobs. They never demanded that Rheingold and Pepsico open up their financial books so that the workers could see the real story behind the shut-down. No efforts were made to force the Central Labor Council to organize a city-wide defense of the brewery workers' jobs. There were no calls by the union leadership for a nationwide strike of Teamster-organized Pepsico workers. Isolated, the Rheingold workers became demoralized.

#### O'DWYER'S ROLE

After three days in the brewery, the workers were sabotaged by a second bunch,



Brewery workers and their families occupy closing-down Rheingold plant in Brooklyn to defend their jobs.

of "friends." The sit-in was called off when a group of Democratic politicians (led by City Council President Paul O'Dwyer) claimed that they had found a potential buyer for the brewery.

Actually, prospects for a sale are dim. But even if the brewery is sold, the best the workers can hope for is that some of them will keep their jobs—with sharply cut wages and with many other rights and benefits eliminated. O'Dwyer, darling of the liberals, who himself represented the now-disbanded United Brewery Workers twenty-five years ago, hinted at the truth when he said the workers would have to "knock a little off their price" to make it worthwhile for a new buyer.

The Teamster "leaders" chimed in that they were ready to "make any conces-

# WORKERS SEIZE BROOKLYN PLANT

by Rod Miller

sions necessary." O'Dwyer pointed out that "if there isn't any profit to be made, there's no point in talking about it at all." No point for O'Dwyer and the financial interests he represents, that is.

#### NEEDED PROGRAM

What is necessary to save millions of jobs is a massive political movement to nationalize industry under workers' control. The work week must be shortened to provide employment for all, but with no loss in pay. Since the capitalists will cry bankruptcy, the demand to open the books of corporations like Rheingold and Pepsico, to lay bare the corporate finances, must be part of such a campaign. The workers must be prepared to seize plants, as the Rheingold workers did, and to defend them against police and

troops.

The current union leaderships, and capitalist politicians like Paul O'Dwyer, will never lead the necessary fight. If a company cries "No money!" they roll over and play dead. They are completely incapable of defending workers' jobs.

But the real tragedy at Rheingold is the fact that the workers had no alternative to their bankrupt leaders. Willing to engage in a plant seizure in defense of their jobs, still they could produce no leadership from their own ranks which stood on a program that could bring victory.

Like so many workers today, the most politically conscious workers at the Rheingold brewery have not yet come to grips with the depth and meaning of capitalism's deepening crisis. In an interview with *The Torch*,

one worker said, "You go and fight for your country and you come out and Nixon doesn't give a damn. He talks about law and order, but let me tell you if you take jobs away from people there'll be more killing and raping." When we asked what could be done to save his job, he replied, "People have to stick together and take over this country. If the people don't take over, this country's going to have a civil war."

More and more workers today are reaching these conclusions. But they have not yet recognized that the concerted ruling-class attack can only be fought if revolutionary-minded workers organize and fight around a socialist transitional program which points the way to victory and wins less politically conscious workers to their leadership.

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PITTSBURGH, PA.— Until recently, coal mining was considered a dying industry in the U.S. Mines were being abandoned as cheaper energy sources were exploited; the work force had been declining for years due to automation and mine closings; and the miners' union was in a state of decay—ossified, bureaucratized and the ranks terrorized.

Today, the energy crisis has turned this situation around. Coal is on the way up. Rising oil prices and the demand for energy resources have increased the profitability of coal mining. The coal companies have become part of giant corporate combines. The miners have been thrust into the center stage of the U.S. labor movement.

#### CHANGE IN UMW

Reflecting this change, the United Mine Workers (UMW) is no longer the backward, gangster-ridden union of the 1950's and '60's with a leadership tied to the most reactionary elements within the ruling class and its political agents. Instead, it is a "reformed" union with a leadership that is tied to the liberal establishment and allied with the liberal wing of the national labor bureaucracy.

This new "left" leadership is the result of a rising wave of discontent throughout the 1960's that took the form of virtual guerrilla warfare in southeastern Kentucky, wildcats over safety and working conditions, the Black Lung movement, and increased oppositional activity of all kinds within the UMW itself.

By 1969, this pressure of the miners was sufficient to force long-time UMW bureaucrat Jock Yablonski to launch a campaign to unseat ten-year President W.A. ("Tony") Boyle. The threat of Yablonski's campaign threw Boyle into a panic. The murders of Jock Yablonski and his family was the result.

#### "MINERS FOR DEMOCRACY"

Utilizing the mass outcry that resulted from the killing, the pro-Yablonski organization, plus the leaders of the rank and file insurgencies, formed the Miners For Democracy. This organization, through an elaborate legal campaign and with growing liberal bourgeois support, overturned the Boyle victory. In December, 1972, in a heavily publicized Labor-Department-run election, the Miners For Democracy, headed by Miller, Harry Patrick and Mike Trbovich, was swept into office.

In their campaign, Miller and company promised many things, including the democratization of the union, the reforming and replenishing of the depleted Welfare and Retirement Fund, and a multitude of demands concerning mine safety and working conditions generally. In power, leading an activated and militant rank and file, and facing coal operators (and their conglomerate parents) which have gained tremendous profit increases in the past year, Miller, Trbovich, and Patrick now have the opportunity to prove themselves in practice. The miners, particularly the revolutionaries and the advanced militants among them, have the chance to expose the pretensions of this left-talking bureaucratic leadership.



These women were arrested last month after organizing a defense squad to keep scabs out of Harlan County, Kentucky mines.

# MILLER SETS UP MINERS SELL-OUT

by Pat McCarthy

But it is not just this leadership that will be tested. Miller and the Miners For Democracy organization (recently dissolved by the Miller leadership in order to eliminate a potential pole for opposition organized enough to hold them to their promises) represent the growing left-reformist current within the labor bureaucracy nationally. This tendency's function is to co-opt leftward-moving and subjectively revolutionary elements within the ranks of the labor movement in order to more effectively confuse and disorient them and thus to bind them to capitalism. It is actively nourished by leading corporate liberals and social democrats. Joseph Rauh, Jr.—lawyer, long-time leader of the Cold-War-liberal Americans For Democratic Action—was one of the leading strategists of the Miners For Democracy. He was also behind the

"reform" candidacy of James Morrissey in the recent National Maritime Union elections and now has his hands in the efforts of Ed Sadlowski to unseat Sam Evett, an I.W. Abel agent in the recent District 31 (Chicago-Gary area) elections in the United Steel Workers.

#### CONVENTION

The UMW contract with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association expires on November 30, 1974. In preparation for this, the 46th Constitutional Convention of the UMW was held in Pittsburgh, Pa., from December 3 to December 11. This Convention is the first held under the new leadership.

Under pressure to live up to the promises of democracy, this Convention had the trappings of democracy. Although still bureaucratic (delegates, for example, were not allowed to present resolutions from the floor and left-wing organizations were not allowed to distribute or sell their literature), there were enough openings for the militant aspirations of the miners to make themselves felt.

Instead of limiting themselves to the proposals of the leadership, the delegates voted for a series of demands, all of them essential, that Miller and Co. (along with the bourgeoisie) clearly consider to be "pie in the sky." These demands included: six-hour work day with one-hour paid lunch (miners pres-

thirty hours pay per week and made it clear that the six-hour day was a "low-priority" demand.

This was on a par with the leadership's much-vaunted "support" for the miners' rights to walk out of unsafe mines. Since coming to office, Miller and company have waged a campaign in the pages of the *UMW Journal* against wildcat strikes and for "making the grievance procedure work" (denying what every militant worker knows, that the key to "making the grievance procedure work" is to convince management that the strike weapon is well-oiled and ready at a moment's notice).

#### THE "CRITICAL SUPPORT" TACTIC

While still inside the International Socialists, the future Revolutionary Socialist League (then in the process of organizing into the Revolutionary Tendency) urged the policy of "critical support" to Miller and the MFD in the UMW elections. We argued that the Leninist policy of critical support was necessary in order to expose the MFD as a

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bureaucratic force which aimed at binding the miners to capitalism.

In effect, we said to the miners: "You want the elimination of the gangster Boyle and a fight for the legitimate needs of the miners. We revolutionary Marxists think that these goals require a revolutionary leadership for the UMW, committed to a program of transitional demands and prepared to struggle through to the end. You believe that reforms within the capitalist system are possible and are therefore prepared to follow a leadership which is fighting. Boyle and promising a struggle for such reforms. We will help you to remove Boyle and replace him with Miller. But we warn you now, and believe that you will see in the course of the struggle, that Miller will sell you out and that only a revolutionary leadership committed to the overthrow of capitalism can lead you and the rest of the international working class to victory."

In offering this kind of support—critical support, or in Lenin's terms "support, the way a rope supports a hanged man"—we proposed to stand

# «Editorial» SOLZHENITSYN AND CAPITALISM



On February 14, writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the U.S.S.R. on charges of "performing systematically actions that are incompatible with being a citizen of the U.S.S.R. and detrimental to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." The whole affair—from the nature of Solzhenitsyn's work to the bureaucratic actions of the Russian ruling class—speaks volumes about the nature of Russian state capitalist society and the stage which it is passing through today.

## SUPER-SENSITIVE

The Russian capitalist class is super-sensitive to any kind of dissent whatsoever. The reasons for this do not lie in the personal psychological problems of the ruling class but in its material class position.

Capitalism *everywhere* is torn by contradictions, most fundamentally the conflict between propertyless workers and the capitalist class which exploits them. The capitalist class takes the product of the workers' labor and transforms it into a power alien and hostile to the working class itself.

This conflict (and the other contradictions which arise from it) is sharpened dramatically during this, the epoch of capitalism's death agony, when the capitalists are forced to step up their murderous exploitation of the workers in order to preserve themselves. This stepped-up economic attack fuels the class struggle and makes it necessary for the capitalists to open up a parallel attack on the democratic rights of the working class as well.

## STATE CAPITALISM

If this is true throughout the capitalist world in general, it is all the more clear in the state-capitalist states. Under state capitalism, these conflicts are even more pointed than usual precisely because there, as Frederick Engels explained, "the capitalist relationship is not abolished; it is rather pushed to an extreme."

The sham separation between politics and economics which *seems* to exist in the U.S., for example, evaporates when the state itself is the sole employer. Then (again in Engels' words) the state "becomes the *real* collective body of all the capitalists." All workers labor for the single collective capitalist. Outbreaks of class struggle which are allowed to develop therefore become openly political in character with all the greater speed.

Total political repression—totalitarianism—becomes a life-or-death necessity for the state-capitalist ruling class. All expressions of dissent must be driven underground. By the same token, every instance of dissent or indiscipline which does emerge threatens to become a pole of attraction—a lightning rod—for all the accumulating electricity of proletarian anger.

Today, world capitalism is caught in a new period of crisis. This crisis is expressed everywhere through the stagnation of production. The oil shortage is only one example of this over-all stagnation. Symptoms of the same thing are found daily within Russian state-capitalism. Thus, in the December issue of the Russian monthly *Novy Mir*, Nikolai N. Smelyakov (Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade) complained bitterly about the declining productivity of the U.S.S.R.'s economy and the shortages and low-quality of commodities which this stagnation produces.

Capitalism's solution to this stagnation is the same everywhere: further attacks on the living standards of the workers. This, once again, requires an even greater crackdown than usual on democratic rights. In Britain, this attack takes clear form in Heath's police-state law, the Emergency Powers Act. In the U.S.S.R., this requires a renewed suppression of all currents of dissent, Solzhenitsyn's among them.

## SOLZHENITSYN'S WRITINGS

Solzhenitsyn's writings have a contradictory character. On the one hand, they vividly document the horrors of life under Stalin, in particular the nightmare-world of the forced labor camps. Revelations like these are valuable to the proletariat's cause; they expose the face of the enemy.

On the other hand, Solzhenitsyn's own political program—the answer which he gives to Stalinism's atrocities—is a reactionary capitalist program itself. Solzhenitsyn's ideal alternative to Russian capitalism is U.S. capitalism. Just as so many opponents of the U.S. bourgeoisie look to Russian capitalism for allies, so do many opponents of Russian capitalism (like Solzhenitsyn) look to the U.S. for rescue.

## STALINISM AND BOLSHEVISM

Solzhenitsyn's most recent book, *Gulag Archipelago*, is fundamentally hostile to socialism and is filled with religious mysticism. It traces the origins of present-day Russian society not back to the state-capitalist counter-revolution which Stalin led in the 1930s but to the socialist revolution of 1917 itself led by the Bolshevik Party. Solzhenitsyn thus stands squarely on the false equation cherished by all capitalists, East and West: Lenin = Stalin. It is the brutality of Russian life today and the state capitalist ruling class's *masquerade* as the heirs of the Bolshevik revolution which gives rise to mysticism and reactionary illusions such as these.

Revolutionary socialists are the most determined opponents of the Lenin-Stalin equation and the reactionary program which it stands for, but we also stand foursquare against all the Russian ruling class's suppression of freedom of speech and freedom of the press and to keep the Russian working class enshrouded in state-imposed ignorance of state capitalism's bloody record.

## LEAGUE FORUMS

### Chicago

#### CLASS STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

3:00 p.m. Sun., Mar. 24

SPEAKER: RON TABER

RSL National Secretary  
160 NORTH HALSTED

### Los Angeles

#### CLASS STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

8:00 p.m. Fri., Mar. 22

SPEAKER: BRUCE LANDAU, TORCH editor  
1910 SOUTH VERMONT AVE.

### New York

#### FASCISM IN THE U.S.

ITS HISTORY, ITS FUTURE, & HOW TO FIGHT IT

7:30 p.m. Fri., Mar. 22

22 EAST 17TH STREET ROOM 927

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## LETTERS

Send letters to:  
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ROAD TO REVOLUTION  
IN BRITAIN

Dear Editor,

Paul Benjamin is right to stress the importance of Heath's attack on the miners as being a decisive battle for the whole working class in Britain. The miners are very much in the "front line" of workers' resistance to the Tory attacks.

I would not like to say how near we are to the six million unemployed and Depression conditions predicted in the article—although the trend is definitely downwards. The miners, however, are in a strong position. Despite years of propaganda carried out on behalf of the international oil companies by successive Labour and Tory governments to the effect that coal was a "dying industry," etc. (in order to justify the closing of coalfields and depress miners' wages with the threat of unemployment), despite huge increases in productivity in the industry, Britain's coalfields are desperately short of manpower.

The 81 per cent vote in favor of giving the NUM executive the power to strike shows the miners determination and confidence. Yet the Heath government dares not take the risk of awarding a reasonable increase to the miners. So far, the Tories have refused all the initiatives for a shabby compromise proposed by the TUC leaders.

Paul Benjamin is quite right about how the TUC and NUM leaders strengthen Heath's hand by accepting the ideology of Phase III and the "special case." His arguments for united class action on the basis of Councils of Action and the call for a general strike under their control are most important.

It is important that transitional demands of the kind Benjamin outlines should be to the forefront of this campaign. It is within the context of such a programme that the call for a Labour Government should be made. Revolutionaries must bear in mind the grip which reformist thinking still holds on the majority of British workers despite past betrayals.

Particularly important is the fight to expose the left reformists, at present led in Parliament by Wedgwood Benn. At a recent mass rally of trade unionists in support of the miners and against Phase III, NUM leader Lawrence Daly scathingly attacked the "Right-Wing" Labour MP Reg Prentice who has said the miners should accept Phase III, but Daly added that Prentice "should follow the line of Wedgwood Benn" and received a huge ovation.

The development of revolutionary consciousness among the British workers, through the fight for transitional demands, may well take place under the banner of forcing the "Left" MPs and union leaders to fight. The "centre" Labour Party leaders, Wilson and Callaghan, are terrified of a movement to force them into power on the basis of industrial action.

A manifestation of this anxiety is the motion signed by 74 Labour MPs, including Wilson and Callaghan, condemning Mick McGahey, Communist Party member, President of the Scottish NUM and Vice-President of the NUM nationally. McGahey was supposed to have said that one aim of strike action was to bring down the Tory Government and replace it with a "Labour Government pledged to socialist policies." The motion—and various speeches by Labour leaders have said the same—condemns McGahey for allegedly saying that if soldiers were used to break the strike, miners should ask them to disobey orders on the basis of "class solidarity." McGahey has spent most of his recent public appearances saying that he never really said these things, that a Labour Government should only be returned "through the ballot box" and that he would never ask a soldier to disobey an order.

The "untold opportunities" for revolutionaries which Paul Benjamin speaks of must be taken. This will depend on the construction of a revolutionary party which will provide the leadership necessary to enable workers to break politically with reformism. The current "would-be" leaderships at the top of the International Socialists, International Marxist Group and Workers Revolutionary Party are inadequate for this task, their policies leading in one way or another to tying the working class to the reformist bureaucrats.

Fraternally,  
C.J.  
London, England  
February 5

## AFRICAN FAMINE

Dear Editor,

Paul Benjamin's article on famine in West Africa (*The Torch* #3) shows how imperialist "aid" does nothing to develop the economy, but instead ensures that the West African people are kept in economic backwardness and poverty. What Cde. Benjamin's article does not show sufficiently is

how West Africa has been systematically "underdeveloped" by Western capitalism.

The process began with the slave trade which turned Africa, in Marx's words, "into a warren for the commercial hunting of black skins." Then, as now, European capital found an ally in the West African ruling classes, who collaborated in the export of this basic raw material—the labour force.

The Muslim *jihads* ("holy wars"), which took place mainly in the nineteenth century, have often been represented by "radical" African leaders as "anti-imperialist". Much of the support for these wars did stem from popular resistance to the strata of warriors and nobles who profited from the slave trade, but often the new castes and classes who came to power on this basis proved themselves as willing to deal in human traffic as their predecessors.

With the defeat of the last major *jihads* leader, Samori Touré, and the imposition of direct colonial rule, Islam ceased to be an ideology of resistance. Muslim Dyula traders, once the backbone of the *jihads*, found collaboration more profitable. Although the African elites now used their people as a force of production and not as an exportable commodity, this meant that whole national economies were turned over to the production of single export crops—groundnuts, cocoa or coffee.

The policy of the collaborating African ruling classes has meant making a quick profit instead of developing the economy. Hence the roots of the current crisis.

In Senegal, for example, a major cause of the drought has been the policy of the landowners of turning whole regions over to groundnut production. This has destroyed the fertility of the soil, as well as tying the economy entirely to the needs of imperialism. President Senghor's recent talk of "reforestation" should fool no one. The "African Socialism" of this poet and philosopher has, since "independence", provided a smoke-screen for the export of thousands of Senegalese workers to provide cheap

labour for French capitalism in return for "technical advisors."

The economics of capitalism in West Africa have from colonial times forced Mossi workers to leave their Upper Volta homeland in tens of thousands to provide migrant labour for the coffee and cocoa plantations of Ghana and the Ivory Coast. In the latter, this enables Houphouët-Boigny's reactionary regime to control the Ivory Coast workers by turning them against their class brothers from Upper Volta in the scramble for jobs.

The bourgeois African "leaders" are totally tied to imperialism and will not and cannot oppose its oppression. On his visit to Paris last summer to request more "aid", Upper Volta's Gen. Lamizana did not criticise the policies which have brought misery to his people, but instead praised the "great generosity" of the French Government, whose policy of nuclear tests he defends.

In the coming struggle of the African masses against imperialism the struggle will also be fought against imperialism's African allies, currently surrounded by "Cadillacs and whisky" while their people starve.

These comments are intended to supplement Paul Benjamin's article—they do not alter my opinion of *The Torch* as the revolutionary paper in the U.S.A.

Yours fraternally,  
C. Beckett  
Glasgow, Scotland

## WORKERS UNITY IN CHILE

Dear Editor,

I would like to suggest that *The Torch* may be doing the masses of Chile a disservice by attacking the Popular Unity government as you do while the blood is not yet dry and armed battle is just starting. Massive unity on the left is now needed to mobilize opinion against the junta.

Fraternally,  
T.R.  
New York City  
November 27, 1973

## REPLY:

Unity is indeed necessary—unity of the working class on the program of the working class! Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government stood for the *disciplining* of the working class by the capitalists and their Stalinist henchmen. It was the Popular Unity government which disarmed the Chilean workers, left the reactionary general staff in command of the armies, broke working-class strikes, and even brought the military butchers into its own government! It is precisely now, when the working class is again mounting resistance to the junta, that revolutionaries must point out the lessons of the Popular Unity betrayals in order to lead the Chilean workers onto the revolutionary road and thereby make sure that history does not repeat itself.

This is the lesson taught by our pamphlet, *Chile: Never Again!*

**Chile:  
Never Again!**



HOW  
THE REVOLUTION  
WAS BETRAYED

ALSO AVAILABLE IN SPANISH

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160 North Halsted Street, \$25  
Chicago, Illinois 60606

# BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Cont'd. from p. 1

tions Act, designed to curb the labor movement by breaking the back of the militant shop stewards' movement and chaining the unions to the capitalist state.

Every element of his strategy ended in failure, and this failure is the root of the present political crisis.

By creating an artificial boom through providing easy money and credit, Heath was able to win acceptance for entry into the Common Market. But the artificial nature of this boom produced a roaring inflation, which brought British workers out in their greatest strike offensive since the 1926 General Strike.

## WORKERS COUNTER-ATTACK

In 1972 British workers, led by the miners, ripped Heath's labor policy to shreds. Heath refused to make any concessions to the miners, hoping that by defeating them he could discourage other workers from fighting for higher wages and stiffen the resistance of private industry to the workers' demands.

The miners, joined by thousands of trade-union militants who realized the importance of the strike, responded by setting up mass picket lines to stop coal deliveries. They created flying squadrons of pickets to shut down power stations and other key industries, preventing the government from using its stockpiles of coal to keep industry going and thus break the strike. In this way, the miners and their supporters were able to smash Heath's policy of "confrontation" over wage demands and force him to retreat.

British workers also defeated Heath's attempt to use the Industrial Relations Act to break their wage offensive. Dockworkers struck in 1972 against the introduction of containerization on the docks, which threatened thousands of longshore jobs.

The government used the Industrial Relations Act to arrest militant pickets. Workers across Britain replied with strikes and demonstrations amounting to a near general strike which forced Heath to beat another hasty retreat.

## HEATH'S "PHASES"

Heath came into office proclaiming "We utterly reject the philosophy of compulsory wage control." In fact, the success of the British workers' wage offensive forced him to resort to a government-imposed wage-freeze (Phase I) and then, in early 1973, to strict wage controls which cut average wage gains in half (Phase II).

The reformist trade-union leadership refused to take on the govern-



ment directly by organizing the class against Phase II. British workers, betrayed by their own leadership, and seeing no alternative to Heath's promised that "equal sacrifice" would produce a five per cent growth rate and prosperity, finally went down to defeat in a series of isolated strikes.

Heath also sought out new weapons to intimidate working-class militants. He dug up the 1875 Conspiracy Act to break the mass pickets which were the workers' most effective strike tactic. With this law the government was able to convict and imprison building workers arrested on the picket lines during a successful strike in Shrewsbury the previous year.

## HEATH PROVES BANKRUPT

But last year demonstrated the bankruptcy of Heath's economic strategy. Despite the fact that the proletariat was in retreat, despite the fact that industry rolled up record profits, British capitalism was near collapse by the end of the year. Its record profits were not nearly sufficient to rebuild the British industrial structure. The ruling class found it more worthwhile to put its profits into overseas investment or domestic speculation.

European capital failed to enter Britain, too. The inability of British industry to produce cheaply and efficiently led to the flooding of British markets with foreign goods and a catastrophic balance of payments deficit.

The Heath government was forced to begin a drastic slowdown of the economy. After three years in office, Heath has left British capitalism even worse off than he found it.

## The Torch

These were the circumstances within which the working class renewed its struggle against Heath's recently imposed Phase III wage controls. Railway workers, power industry workers and others began slowdowns and bans on overtime in a fight against Phase III.

Most important have been the miners, who supply 70 per cent of Britain's energy needs. Heath answered this challenge by declaring a state of emergency and ordering British workers onto a three-day week, swearing he would never give in to the miners.

But by this time, Heath's position was weak. Once his promise of prosperity had collapsed, he no longer had the political strength with which to confront the workers' resistance. Much of the ruling class no longer had confidence in its own government's ability to rule.

## BUREAUCRATS EXPOSED

The workers' confrontation with the Heath regime has brought the rot in the union bureaucracy to the surface. In an earlier issue of *The Torch*, we characterized the historic role of these union tops:

"The reformist labor bureaucracy can no longer deliver the reforms which once gave it prestige in the eyes of the rank and file. Despite the 'socialist' talk of its phony left wing, the labor bureaucracy remains the servant of the bourgeoisie, tied to its interests, tied to its hopes. It accepts the ever narrower limits permitted to the labor movement by a dying capitalism, and has neither the will nor the ability to challenge the system itself." (*The Torch #2*)

The bureaucracy's response to the fight against Phase III and the government crisis is the living proof of this characterization.

The Trades Union Congress (Britain's AFL-CIO) flatly refused to call an emergency Congress of Labor to organize the resistance to Phase III. It refused to mobilize class-wide support for the miners. Instead, it whined that the miners were a "special case" and promised that a miners' victory would not be used as a model by other unions negotiating their wage demands. The TUC tops acted as a conscious partner in the government's divide-and-rule strategy towards the trade union movement.

## THE NUM AND GORMLEY

The efforts of Joe Gormley (head of the National Union of Mineworkers) to derail the militancy of the workers he represents is the most blatant example of the bureaucracy's treacherous alliance with the bourgeoisie. Gormley never had any intention of waging a serious fight against Heath. He considered taking a strike vote when he thought the vote would be "no." He had second thoughts when the miners seemed ready to take on the government.

Gormley joined the TUC hacks in claiming that the miners were simply a "special case," thus contributing to the isolation with which the miners were faced in the early stages of their resistance. After the strike vote, he proclaimed to workers who were anxious to aid the miners and who were aware of the threat of repression that "We as an executive have not discussed anything about troops

or enlisting help from other unions."

At present, Gormley is continuing his divisive maneuvers. He had refused to sanction mass picketing; the union executive has ordered picketing restricted to six man teams of miners only. Nonminers may not join in.

In the meantime, Gormley still begs the government's Pay Board to consider the miners a special case. He begs for government concessions instead of mobilizing the power of the miners and their allies in the working class.

The so-called "left-wing" of the union-bureaucracy is a full participant in the TUC capitulation. Hugh Scanlon, head of the powerful Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, spouted a forest of rhetoric against Heath, then announced he would restrict his own wage demands within Phase III limits.

Jack Jones, of the Transport and General Workers Union, declared that the TUC must fight Phase III by proclaiming that "If the Tories will not listen then our campaign will have to go as far as industrial action: I do not know what it will be—one hour, half a day—but if it has to, it will have to be taken."

There is no substance to the leftist pose of Jones or Scanlon. Like their openly right-wing cronies in the TUC, they too will accept—and enforce—the continuing misery of the working class rather than use the opportunities offered by the government crisis to finish off a dying capitalism.

The British labor hacks welcomed the announcement of new elections as an opportunity to derail the growing militancy of the workers. The train drivers' union executive voted to end their union's slowdown so as not to "embarrass" the Labour Party in its election campaign.

Gormley immediately recommended—in vain—that the miners postpone their strike until after the elections. The NUM ranks ignored him. These attempts were simple sabotage, an attempt to channel the workers' anger into the safe harbor of Labour Party electoral maneuvers.

## BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

The Labour Party attempts to present itself to the ruling class as the best and most efficient managers of British capitalism. In 1964, when Labour Party leader Harold Wilson was elected Prime Minister, he proudly declared that, "We begin from the need to strengthen Britain's economy, to secure a steady and purposive expansion in industrial production."

In practice, this meant the introduction of productivity deals, the introduction of wage controls. The Labour Party's program for disciplining the unions, entitled "In Place of Strife," provided Heath with 25 out of the 29 clauses of his own Industrial Relations Act.

But while selling itself to the bourgeoisie, Labour must also win the votes of an aroused working class. While capitalism demands full-scale attack on the workers, the working-class voter demands a counter-attack on capitalism. The Labour Party is caught in the middle, and the squeeze sharpens divisions within the Party itself.

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#### LABOUR PARTY

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would-be "managers," make no secret of their belief in the need for "austerity" and the necessity of disciplining the labor movement. The Labour "lefts" like Anthony Wedgewood Benn, Scanlon, and Jones, simply by giving cheap verbal support to the miners are able to appear like revolutionary firebrands in contrast. Party leader Harold Wilson, in trying to balance himself between the two wings of the party, has succeeded only in angering both of them.

#### WHAT CLASSES?

Wilson is embarrassed by the militancy of the union ranks and prefers to ignore it. Not Heath. Heath has not only sharpened the class struggle, he has also called it by name. He ran his campaign for re-election on the slogan, "Who rules Britain?"

Wilson and the Labour Party do not dare answer Heath in kind. Instead they retreat into sell-out "classless" politics, declaring, "Needed above all, if everyone in this country is to put the national interest first, is an all-out, one-nation effort to conquer our problems." Wilson does not want to do away with classes, of course; he simply pretends they don't exist.

#### THE STALINISTS' MANEUVER

The British Communist Party has used the blatant capitulation of the open reformists to win a cheap reputation for militancy. In fact, the CP is attempting to lead British workers into the arms of its worst enemies.

The CP's program, *The British Road to Socialism*, makes this plain. Rather than smash the bourgeois state, the CP program maintains that "Parliament can be made into an effective instrument of the people's will, able to carry through major

legislation to challenge capitalist power, and replace capitalism by socialism." Its chosen instrument for this transformation is the same Labour and trade union "left" which continues to betray the workers' movement: "As Communists we sincerely desire the strengthening of the left trends within the Labour Party."

In practice the CP freely sacrifices the interests of the working class to its own search for "respectability" in the eyes of union bureaucrats and Labour Party hacks. In the case of the miners' strike, the CP (which has six delegates on the NUM executive committee) was originally not only *against* calling a strike, but also opposed a complete ban on overtime, for fear of offending its hoped-for allies. Despite its claimed goal of electing enough CP candidates to Parliament to force a Labour government "committed to its present left-wing program" to carry it out, the CP actually ran fewer candidates this year than it did in 1970.

These opportunist maneuvers are only the first signs of the greater betrayals to come. The CP strategy can only open the road to a British repetition of the Chilean disaster, an alliance between the proletariat and its own executioners.

#### BUT WORKERS FIGHT ON

Despite its sell-out leadership, the working class has demonstrated an increasing willingness to fight. The miners voted by 81 per cent to strike. This was the largest strike vote in their long history. Their refusal to postpone their strike in the teeth of the general election is a clear warning to the ruling class that *no* government which ignores their demands can expect to rule in peace. As one miner put it, "He [Heath] can go to the country, but they'll still have to settle with the miners when

it's over."

Nor are the miners isolated any longer. Workers are turning out in ever larger rallies in support of the miners. Dock workers have refused to unload seab coal imported from "socialist" Poland. Workers have answered the Shrewsbury picketing convictions with massive protests and one-day strikes. Their response to the increasingly political nature of the struggle is reflected in the growing membership and activity of the various centrist groups in Britain who are parading themselves as revolutionaries.

The Conservative Party has failed to subdue the working-class upsurge. The TUC hacks and Labour Party reformists have failed to contain it. The British petty bourgeoisie has responded to the bankruptcy of the two major parties by rejecting both. The Conservative share of the total vote declined 7.9 per cent from the 1970 elections; the Labour Party's share declined 5.8 per cent. Fully one-fourth of the British electorate has rejected its traditional parties.

The various petty-bourgeois parliamentary parties have no independent strength of their own. They have no program, they have no future. Reactionary right-wing Tory demagogues like Enoch Powell and openly fascist groups like the National Front will attempt to whip the petty-bourgeoisie's frustration into a frenzied attack on the very existence of the proletarian organizations—both the parties and the trade unions themselves.

Revolutionaries in Britain must warn the working class against any slackening of its defenses against the capitalist attack. A retreat will only encourage the reactionary and fascist elements, will only demoralize the less advanced workers who are only beginning to join the struggle.

The revolutionary forces in Britain must call for Councils of Action to organize a general strike to support the miners' claim against compromise or defeat, against the Emergency Powers Act, against the Industrial Relations Act and anti-picket laws, against the system of wage controls which remains in effect. They must urge the creation of workers' defense guards to protect both the general strike as well as all proletarian demonstrations and struggles—protect them against police repression and fascist goon-squad attacks. They must plainly state the bankruptcy of Labour Party reformism, which (through its class collaborationist policies, its cowardly retreat before the capitalist assault, its refusal to defend the workers' struggle) has opened the way for reaction and defeat.

In doing all this, the revolutionary forces will carry forward the fight to build the revolutionary party which can unite the class and win the petty bourgeoisie to the support of the proletariat.

#### INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The political struggle now under way in Britain is only the most advanced example of the crisis which is undermining the foundations of bourgeois rule in the advanced capitalist countries. Throughout Europe, the parliamentary regimes are faced with an economic crisis which they are unable to solve.

Throughout Europe, the petty bourgeoisie is rejecting its traditional political allegiances in a desperate attempt to preserve its historic way of life. And throughout Europe the working class is demonstrating both its anger and its power in a series of massive strikes.

In the U.S., this has taken the form of the bourgeoisie's crisis in leadership over the Nixon regime. Nixon's series of attempts to paste the economy back together again have all ended in failure. As with Heath, this failure weakens Nixon's ability to crack down on the working class. His incompetence in leading the U.S. ruling class towards a "strong state" which the capitalists need to preserve their profits and their rule has threatened the very basis of the bourgeois regime.

#### SAME SCRIPT IN U.S.A.

It is precisely in such moments of political crisis that the character of the workers' leadership is most important. It is precisely when the working class must pose itself as a positive alternative to capitalist decay that the reformist friends of capitalism in the labor movement demonstrate their own political bankruptcy most clearly.

The U.S. labor bureaucrats are hopelessly tied to the U.S. bourgeoisie—not through a reformist workers' party, as in Britain, but through the two bourgeois political parties themselves. In the face of the crisis, the labor bureaucrats hide behind the Democratic Party and prattle about "veto-proof Congress," refusing to break with the bourgeois politicians and form a labor party.

The workers' growing disgust with reformist sell-outs is pushing forward the U.S. counterparts of Jones and Scanlon. Fake-left hacks like Patrick Gorman of the Meatcutters; Arnold Miller of the miners; and Paul Schrade, the United National Caucus, and similar types in the UAW use a militant rhetoric to conceal their own refusal to fight capitalism.

The U.S. Communist Party shamelessly promotes these hacks and the "progressives" in the Democratic Party as the true representatives of working-class interests. The "anti-monopoly coalition" hawked by the CPUSA is nothing but the application of the *British Road to Socialism* to U.S. politics.

The program of the CPUSA is crowned with the promise: "Of course, we advocate social change by peaceful means, through political institutions and people's organizations within the American Constitutional framework." Like their British partners, the U.S. Communist Party can lead workers only to crushing defeat.

Only an international revolutionary leadership can prepare the workers' defense against the bourgeoisie's attacks, can pose the socialist reconstruction of society as a practical task—and as the only road for the international working class. In fighting for this program, the revolutionaries will expose the reformist betrayers and drive them out of the labor movement. In fighting for this program, they will construct the world revolutionary party—the Fourth International—which alone can lead the working class to power.

## Where We Stand

# THE HEARST KIDNAPPING

The kidnapping of Patricia Hearst reveals again the bankruptcy of individual acts of violence as a substitute for the revolutionary action of the proletariat.

The "Symbionese Liberation Army" thinks it can blackmail the bourgeoisie itself into abolishing capitalism with the Robin-Hood-like ransom demand of "food for the poor." Unfortunately, the bourgeoisie has other ideas. So the original demand of \$400 million in food (which itself would have been no more than a few crumbs) quickly melts to \$4 million.

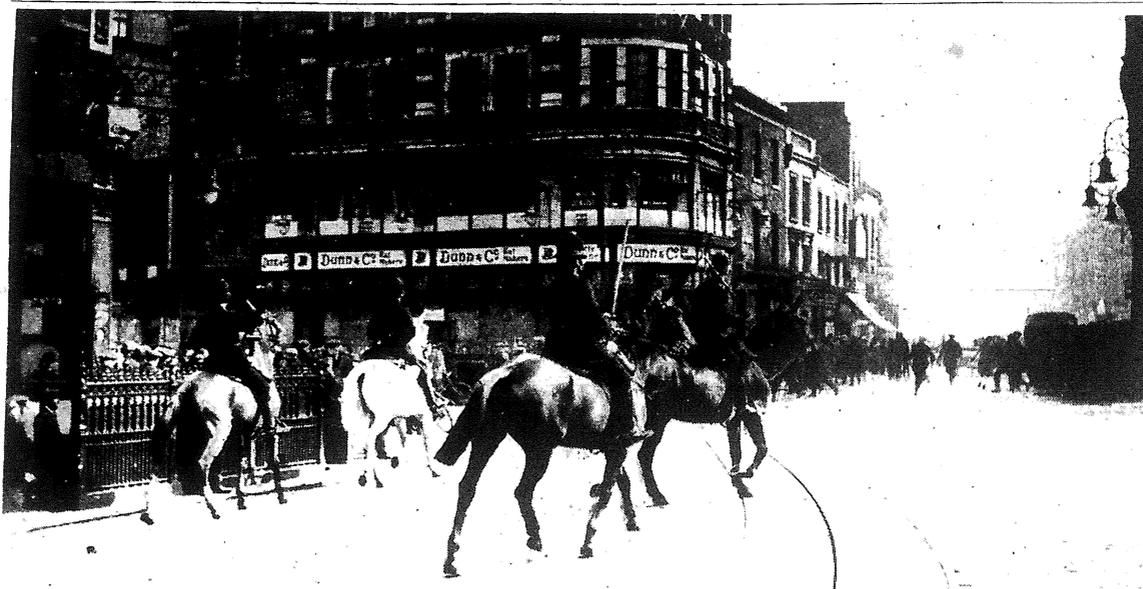
The demand itself reflects the worst kind of liberal moralism, reduced in the end to a plea to the bourgeoisie to intervene more forcefully to redress grievances which it has created itself. It's FDR's New Deal on a smaller scale.

Kidnappings of this sort are not a new idea. The Tupamaros of Uruguay used the same tactic for years, treating the proletariat as passive spectators, as an inert mass, too ignorant to act in its own self-inter-

est. While giving the ruling class a pretext for repression, the Tupamaros taught the workers to sit back and rely on saviours. When the bourgeoisie launched an all-out attack on the Uruguayan working class last summer in the form of a military coup, the Tupamaros were of course no defense at all.

The Hearst kidnappers likewise can only imbue the proletariat with a feeling of helplessness—a feeling that it is at the mercy of "great events" and "great actors" and can itself play no independent role. In fact, the opposite is true—the destiny of humanity lies in the hands of the proletariat.

The proletariat must be prepared to meet and decisively smash the violence of the bourgeoisie, but this can only be done through the construction of a revolutionary leadership and the mobilization of the working class as a revolutionary force. Individual acts like those of the "Symbionese" only serve to disarm the proletariat and make it more vulnerable to attack by the bourgeoisie.



The British General Strike of 1926: mounted police wielding sabers attack strikers. The "Workers Revolutionary Party" calls for a general strike today, but refuses to issue the call for workers' defense guards.

# Workers' Defense VS. Democratic Pacifism

BY BRUCE LANDAU

Caught up in the most acute class struggles in almost fifty years, the British working class is still crippled by centuries-old reformist prejudices. One of the most deep-rooted and dangerous of these is *pacifism*—the refusal to meet the force and violence of the enemy with force and violence of your own.

Pacifism is the creed of defeat. It is always dangerous. In the present circumstances, it is the deadliest poison in the labor movement's blood stream.

## THE RULING CLASS PREPARES

The British bourgeoisie has no qualms about using selective and mass repression and violence to enforce its will. The incredibly brutal history of the British Empire is by itself the most vivid proof of this fact. That history is written in the blood of colonial peoples—Indians, Irish, Arabs, Africans, and Asians.

More recently, the British capitalists demonstrated their savagery just across the Irish Sea in Northern Ireland (Ulster). There, under the direction of Mr. William Whitelaw, British troops imposed virtual martial law, shooting down unarmed civilians at will. When the Chilean military junta herded thousands of political prisoners into a sports

stadium, they were only copying the example of Britain's notorious Irish concentration camp at Long Kesh.

Today, the rulers of Britain face a challenge to their power at home, within their own borders. The bourgeoisie knows what is at stake. Heath's election campaign rode on one slogan: "Show the unions just who *does* govern Britain!

To defeat the miners and break the back of the working-class resistance in general, techniques tested and refined in Ireland are now re-imported to Britain itself. The Emergency Powers Act gives the government sweeping police-state powers. It is an open secret that the army's show of force at Heathrow airport in January was not a "defense against Arab terrorist threats" (as the government pretended) but a warning to the British workers' movement.

In the meantime, the government and the courts have cracked down on picketing rights and have clamped three striking building workers into prison for up to three years, as examples to others. The *Manchester Guardian* of January 28 reported:

"Police forces have thousands of men available to deal with any picketing trouble if the miners vote for a strike. Mobile police squads will be ready to deal with mobile pickets; hundreds of men will be available to converge on potential trouble spots; and a centralised intelligence unit has been set

up at Scotland Yard to act as a clearing house for provincial forces and give early warning of unrest which may turn into violence."

Supervising the Tory government's anti-labor preparations has been none other than Mr. William Whitelaw, fresh from the military occupation of Ulster.

## WORKERS' DEFENSE GUARDS

The bourgeoisie feels its back to the wall. It is ready to use whatever bloody and repressive measures are necessary to discipline the workers and force them to accept impoverishment. The workers have only one alternative—to arm and prepare to defend themselves against strike-breaking gangs, vigilante squads, police provocations, and military attacks.

Any program today which "forgets" this is a pacifist program. A pacifist program for the labor movement is not a program to prepare the workers but to serve the bourgeoisie and its lackeys. As Leon Trotsky explained in the Transitional Program ("The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International"):

"In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers' groups for self-defense. It is necessary to write this slogan into the revolutionary wing of the trade unions. It is imperative wherever possible, beginning with the

youth groups, to organize groups for self-defense, to drill and acquaint them with the use of arms."

Revolutionaries in Britain must pound away ceaselessly, relentlessly, at the urgent need for the workers to arm and defend their mass organizations, their rights, their strikes, and their picket lines.

*This must begin long in advance of the actual immediate need for armed self-defense—or risk beginning too late.*

Every aggressive act by the bourgeoisie, its state, and its private gangs of thugs must be used to drive home the need for workers' self-defense guards *now*.

By preparing the workers today to arm for self-defense, revolutionaries lay the basis for expanding the defense guards tomorrow into a full-scale workers' militia, able to take the offensive, aid in the disintegration of the standing army, and spearhead the fight for state power itself. This is precisely how Lenin and Trotsky were able to lead the Russian proletariat in 1917 from the tasks of self-defense through the October revolution.

## THE TEST

Tumultuous conditions like those which exist in Britain today cast the brightest light on the working class's need for revolutionary leadership, for a Leninist combat party. Only such a leadership can prepare the working class for the struggles of the present and the future.

The struggles of the proletariat do not automatically awaken the class to its tasks, such as the creation of workers defense guards. Those lessons of struggle, those tasks must be taught by the vanguard. The revolutionary socialist program must be courageously and tirelessly fought for.

Those would-be revolutionaries who fail to provide this kind of leadership thereby betray the fight to build a Leninist party. They condemn the workers' struggle to defeat at the hands of the treacherous reformist misleaders.

In Britain, a number of organizations claim to stand for and fight for a revolutionary program. These groups present themselves to the British workers as alternatives to the TUC tops, the Labour Party chiefs, and the Stalinist Communist Party.

## THE WRP

The most imposing of these groups is the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), formerly the Socialist Labour League.

The WRP publishes a daily newspaper, *Workers Press*, and claims a wide circulation for it. The WRP claims a membership of 4,000 and strength in a number of unions. It has the ear of many revolutionary-minded workers and an "industrial arm," the All Trades Unions Alliance (ATUA). The WRP proclaims itself to be the Trotskyist party in Britain.

But a newspaper, an organization, a membership, and a periphery are not enough to constitute a revolutionary party. For this a revolutionary program is necessary, plus the principles and courage to fight for it. And here the WRP has proven itself bankrupt.

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#### THE WRP

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lishes a daily news-Press, and claims a for it. The WRP rship of 4,000 and ber of unions. It has any revolutionary-and an "industrial des Unions Alliance P proclaims itself to t party in Britain. er, an organization, nd a periphery are onstitute a revolu-or this a revolu- is necessary, plus courage to fight for WRP has proven

#### PACIFIST BLEATING

Day after day, the WRP and *Workers Press* underline the seriousness of the present situation. Indeed, they exaggerate. They flatly predict open military dictatorship in Britain in the immediate future. This is certainly a possibility, but unlikely until the British bourgeoisie becomes convinced it cannot crush the workers through a combination of Labour Party treachery and parliamentary strong-man governments.

But all the WRP's journalistic leftism is only a cover for a wretched pacifist program of defeat. Never—not once—do they draw the necessary programmatic conclusions. They refuse to call on the working class to defend itself against the ruling class's assaults.

*Workers Press* of November 11, 1973, for example, carried a statement by the WRP's Political Committee, declaring that the British bourgeoisie plans "to break the resistance of the working class through the use of special detachments of police and the military." The statement observes, "Such preparations bring Britain to the verge of dictatorship."

Two weeks later, on November 24, *Workers Press* stated that "Britain's working class now faces the same threat as that which faced the working class of Greece just prior to the 1967 military coup."

On November 30, *Workers Press* carried a story entitled "Police Prepare for Civil War," reporting details of police mobilizations. The article concluded:

"With the lesson of Northern Ireland behind them and the experience of civil war in a dozen overseas countries on hand, the ruling class is now actively and rapidly preparing for a similar situation in Britain." It continues: "Whole sections of the British ruling class have already accepted and steeled themselves on the inevitability of civil war. . . . The time for talking is over."

The obvious burning question for the working class is "What to do?" What is the WRP's concrete strategy for averting or winning civil war? How does the WRP propose to avoid another Greece? How, according to the WRP, can the workers defend themselves against military dictatorship?

#### STRIKES AND BALLOTS ALONE

Here is where the WRP's verbal leftism dissolves into the thinnest pacifism. The November 30 article, quoted above, concludes that "These civil war preparations must be nipped in the bud immediately." But *Workers Press* then explains how: "All sections of the working class must be mobilized to force this Tory government to resign." Period! And workers' defense guards? Not a word. Silence. The message is clear: Simply remove Mr. Heath from No. 10 Downing Street; that will "nip" civil war "in the bud"!

Surely this is just one slip, one isolated case? Unfortunately not. Read *Workers Press* throughout the months of the present crisis. You will find not one single, solitary word about the need for armed self-

defense. Everything is staked on unarmed strikes plus an electoral victory for Labour.

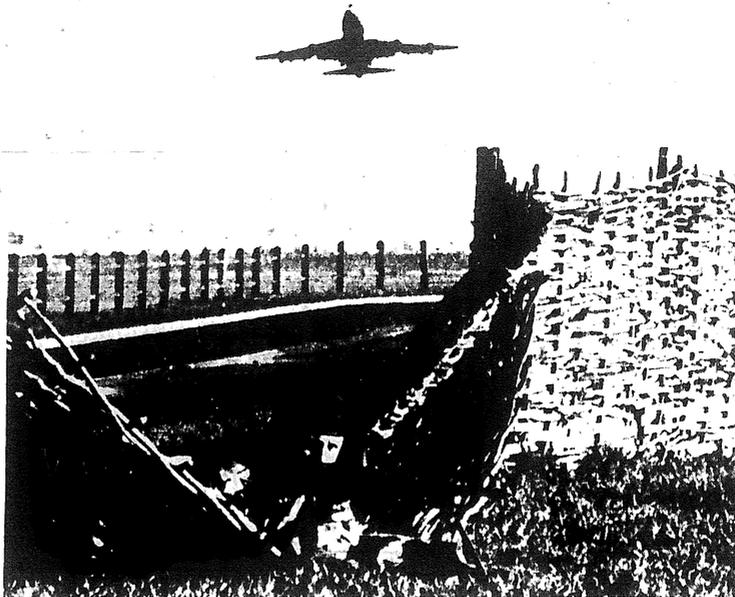
Read the November 11 statement by the WRP's Political Committee, the one which argued that Britain was on "the verge of dictatorship." What to do? "Demand an immediate election! Mobilize with the miners to force the Tories to resign! Join the WRP and the All Trades Unions Alliance!" How easy it seems to be to defeat dictatorship! The statement by ATUA, carried by *Workers Press* of November 24, had nothing more to add.

On December 3, the WRP's Central Committee issued a statement, published in their newspaper the following day under the front-page banner headline, "Our Policy for the Crisis." Declaring that at stake was "not

mittee statement has only a void. They have reduced the fight for socialism to a hollow, pacifist abstraction, just as fake revolutionaries have always done, from Karl Kautsky and the German Social Democrats to Salvador Allende and the Chilean Stalinists.

To be precise, the Central Committee Statement *does* contain two sentences on the future of the bourgeoisie's police and army. The WRP promises to demand of a Labour government that "All secret police and M 15 organizations must be disbanded and fully exposed." So much for the secret police! Also: "Withdraw all British troops from abroad and disband the present standing army." So much for the army!

The WRP warns against civil war



The British army made a show of force at Heathrow Airport in January as a warning to rebellious British workers.

simply a wages question" but "a socialist solution to the crisis, the question of power," the statement proceeds to lay out the WRP strategy: a general strike, Councils of action, factory committees, Labour to power.

Within the councils and committees, the WRP pledges to fight for the leadership of the working class "on a socialist programme."

The program which follows is lengthy and covers everything from fighting-plant closures through nationalization of industry under workers' control to the smashing of NATO under a workers' government. But search high and low, there is not even an indirect reference to arming the workers, workers defense guards, or a workers militia.

#### DEMOCRATIC PACIFISTS

On the one hand we have a general strike and embryonic soviets (Councils of Action); on the other hand we have a list of tasks which a workers' government must carry out. But bridging these things—in the place where we should have a program of armed struggle against capitalist violence, to destroy the bourgeois state—here the WRP's Central Com-

can smash the ruling class's apparatus of repression. Trotsky effectively characterized the WRP's type of behavior thirty-five years ago. He explained: Those who call for revolutionary measures (like a general strike, Councils of Action, and so on) but refuse to connect them "with the consequences" (bourgeois resistance, armed struggle, workers' defense guards and militia) stand revealed not as revolutionaries but "only as pacifists with democratic illusions."

#### THREE EXPLANATIONS

There are three possible explanations for the WRP's disgraceful betrayal of the fight for socialism:

(1) *Pacifism*: The WRP honestly believes that the bourgeoisie is preparing violence but also believes that unarmed strikes and peaceful elections will foil those preparations. Or,

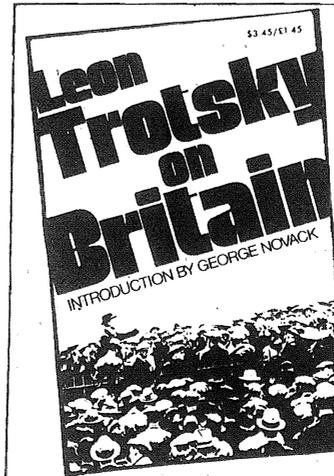
(2) *Tailism*: The WRP honestly foresees civil war but fears to demand workers' defense guards because the workers "are not ready" for such a slogan. (This is the classic formula of Menshevism.) Or,

(3) *Cynicism*: The WRP considers its own words about the threat of violence and civil war to be lies—and therefore feels no need to arm the workers for self-defense.

Whichever explanation applies, the impact of the WRP's pacifist line is this: to strengthen pacifism, to build the workers' illusions about the so-called "peaceful road to socialism," to reassure the working class that the forces of capitalist repression can be dealt with simply by throwing the Tories out through industrial action and election ballots.

A real revolutionary party—a Trotskyist party—must be built in Britain. Otherwise pre-revolutionary conditions will give way not to revolution but to defeat, demoralization, and the lightning-quick growth of reaction and fascism.

To build such a party, revolutionaries must speak boldly, clearly, and frankly to the proletariat about exactly what needs to be done. They must make use of the glaring capitulation of the WRP to destroy it and win its honest members and periphery over to the banner of Bolshevism, of Trotskyism. In such a struggle, whether Heath or Wilson runs Parliament, the urgency of the need for workers' defense guards cannot be over-emphasized.



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1925-28 writings  
on questions of  
revolution in Britain

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The fundamental cause of the epochal crisis of capitalism is the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.

This falling rate of profit is the expression in economic terms of the basic contradiction of capitalist society: the domination of labor by capital and the struggle between them. The capitalist class is constantly pressed (by the requirements of maintaining its own rule and under the impact of competition) to accumulate capital as rapidly as possible. As a result, it pays the workers merely enough to maintain them and to enable them to raise offspring as replacements.

Incapable and unwilling to unleash the suppressed creativity of the workers (to do so would require the abolition of capitalism itself), the capitalists are forced, as the major remaining means of raising productivity and hence accumulation, to apply more and more machinery and other materials of production to the production process. Meanwhile, the labor process is simplified, and the workers are ground down and degraded.

This increase in machinery and other materials of production relative to labor is what is called the rise in the organic composition of capital. Since labor is the source of surplus-value (and hence profit), a diminishing proportion of outlay for labor-power in the total investment outlay leads, despite partially offsetting factors, to an overall fall in the rate of profit.

With the onset of World War I, international capitalism entered a period of world wars, international crises, and revolutions which threatened to destroy capitalism altogether and replace it with the rule of the working class or with the "mutual destruction of the contending classes" (barbarism). The impact of the falling rate of profit was clear-cut and obvious.

#### POST-WAR BOOM

After World War II, however, came a period of apparent stability for capitalism, a long-term boom that has lasted, despite relatively mild fluctuations, for thirty years. During this time, capitalism's public relations men sang about the new "people's capitalism" which had supposedly solved, or was in the process of solving, all problems. No more depressions; no more crises. The victory in the war against poverty, they promised, was just around the corner. Revolutionary socialism, they snickered, was obsolete, out of date.

In fact, many who claimed to be Marxists echoed a similar tune. Capitalism, these "Marxists" claimed, had changed. It was a new capitalism, a "neo-capitalism." The law of value, the falling rate of profit, and the other laws of motion of capitalism analyzed by Marx no longer held.

And they drew the appropriate reactionary conclusions from these reactionary ideas: e.g., that the working class in the advanced capitalist countries was completely "bought off," was fat and rich and no longer a force for revolution.

Now, after thirty years of boom and prosperity, international capitalism is again in the throes of a severe crisis which threatens to plunge the entire world into anarchy and chaos. This crisis is forcing all the bourgeois psalm-singers and their counterparts on the Left to re-revise their revisionist views in order to explain what their theories cannot explain.

But this current crisis did not spring from nowhere. It did not fall from the skies. It is not an "act of God." It is based in and was nurtured by the very conditions that made the post-war boom possible.

The basis for the post-war boom was the defeat of the working class, represented by World War II itself, and the derailing of the post-war workers' upsurge. After thirty years of repeated attempts to storm the capitalist fortress, the international proletariat was disarmed, disoriented, and demoralized by the betrayal of the Stalinist and Social Democratic Parties.

It was this defeat that made possible the reorganization of world capitalism under the leadership of the dominant capitalist power, the Uni-

ted States. This reorganization was based upon and served to reinforce the United States' dominant position. It brought about a tremendous centralization of capital in the hands of the giant monopoly firms that dominated and still dominate the U.S. economy.

#### THE ECONOMICS OF LOOTING

Fundamentally, the boom was based on an organized system of looting, the unequal transfer of value from the backward nations into the more advanced, and from the more advanced in general to the United States in particular. The techniques through which this looting operation was accomplished varied; the content remained the same.

After World War I the victorious powers simply pulverized the defeated nations' economies and tried to squeeze as much out of them as fast as possible. After World War II, on the other hand, the U.S. had a more farsighted approach.

Motivated by the need to rebuild Western Europe and Japan as buffers against the Russian rival, the U.S. aided in the reconstruction of the war-torn Western European and

Japanese economies through a variety of means. The most notable of these, for Europe, was the Marshall Plan.

Western Europe and Japan were rebuilt from the ground up with the most modern plant and equipment while the modern, skilled working classes in these countries remained paid at poverty-level wages until well into the post-war boom. The result was a tremendous increase in the rate of exploitation of the European and Japanese working class and high profits, which were the basis for the long-term economic upswings in these countries.

But Marshall Plan aid and related devices were not the product of charitable aims of the U.S. bourgeoisie. No. They were exchanged for a price. This price was the recognition that the U.S. was the "leader of the Free World" which would be allowed to dominate and police the world as it saw fit, without the interference of its "Free World" allies.

In economic terms, this not only meant that the U.S. capitalists had free rein of Western Europe's old colonial empires but also that the

European economies would be wide open for penetration by U.S. capital.

The entire post-war system set up by the U.S. particularly the international system set up by the U.S. through the agreement of 1944, was designed to enable U.S. capital to invade the capitalist world which had been the agreement. It enabled U.S. capital to get in on the ground floor of the reconstruction of Western Europe and to take advantage of the high-profit conditions created there. (This was especially true after the establishment of the European Common Market and U.S. investment in Western Europe shot way up). It also enabled U.S. capital to take over the U.S.'s takeover of the U.S. economy and to facilitate the invasion of the U.S. by the developed part of the world, the milking of these economies for labor and natural resources to produce the "American home."

#### ARMS PRODUCTION

The key to making the U.S. work was the tremendous increase in military spending within the U.S. in state of the economy, largely in the form of military spending and of waste production. Not only did it provide the arsenal to the U.S.'s worldwide empire, but it provided a mechanism, at first, for the temporary stabilization of the U.S. economy.

Arms production, over the years, centered in the largest sectors of the economy. It subsidized the earnings of the U.S. through guaranteed profits by the state. With the position of these corporations up and with profits centralized in the hands of the U.S. capital while their relatively stagnant production helped to maintain "full" employment and other sectors of the economy, the mechanism was the key to the seeming success of Keynesian economic policy throughout the world.

#### DRAINING RESOURCES

In a "free enterprise" system, however, state intervention to maintain production is a sign of weakness. Generally speaking, a capitalist state will only intervene where private capital cannot obtain profitable production in a given sector.

The production of armaments, that is, it does not give society's productive forces. In fact, arms production drains on the society's resources. The products are blown up in space or simply discarded or are made obsolete, with no positive side-effects.

In order for this kind of production to actually act as a stimulant to the economy for more than an fleeting moment, the costs of the destruction of resources must be shifted away from the center of the economy in space or in time. In practice, the costs were shifted from the sectors of the U.S. capitalist economy directly onto the U.S. colonies.

## Thirty Years of Plunder

# THE ROOTS OF THE CAPITALIST CRISIS

by Ron Taber

European economies themselves would be wide open for direct penetration by U.S. capital.

The entire post-war setup, particularly the international monetary system set up by the Bretton Woods agreement of 1944, enabled U.S. capital to invade that part of the capitalist world which was party to the agreement. It enabled the U.S. to get in on the ground floor in the reconstruction of Western Europe and to take advantage of the high-profit conditions described above. (This was especially the case after the establishment of the European Common Market when direct U.S. investment in Western Europe shot way up). It also furthered the U.S.'s takeover of the main branches of the Canadian economy and facilitated the invasion of the underdeveloped part of the world and the milking of these economies of their labor and natural resources to help produce the "American Dream" at home.

#### ARMS PRODUCTION

The key to making this system work was the tremendous increase within the U.S. in state intervention in the economy, largely in the form of military spending and other forms of waste production. Not only did this provide the arsenal to maintain the U.S.' worldwide empire, it also provided a mechanism, unwittingly at first, for the temporary stabilization of the U.S. economy itself.

Arms production, overwhelmingly centered in the largest monopoly sectors of the economy, in effect subsidized the earnings of these firms through guaranteed profits paid for by the state. With the monopoly position of these corporations shored up and with profits guaranteed, capital was centralized in their hands while their relatively smooth functioning helped to maintain relatively "full" employment and stimulated other sectors of the economy. This mechanism was the key to the seeming success of Keynesian economic policy throughout this period.

#### DRAINING RESOURCES

In a "free enterprise" economy, however, state intervention to maintain production is a sign of decay, not of strength. Generally speaking, the capitalist state will only intervene where private capital cannot maintain profitable production in the given sector.

The production of arms is unproductive, that is, it does not add to a given society's productive capabilities. In fact, arms production is a net drain on the society's resources, since the products are blown up, shot into space or simply discarded when they are made obsolete, with only minor positive side-effects.

In order for this kind of production to actually act as a stimulant to an economy for more than an extremely fleeting moment, the costs of this destruction of resources must be shifted away from the center, either in space or in time. In practice some of the costs were shifted onto other sectors of the U.S. capitalist class and directly onto the U.S. workers

through taxes. Most important, much of the cost was shifted outside the U.S. altogether while some were deferred to the future and are now claiming their due.

#### STATE DEBT

Key to the apparently stimulating effects of arms production is a shell game that works through the state debt.

A substantial portion of the money paid to the arms manufacturers is funded through deficit financing—that is, government borrowing. The state pays the arms companies from money borrowed from private individuals, capitalists.

In theory, deficit financing is intended to stimulate the economy in the present so that production and profits in the future will be sufficiently increased to pay off the debt so incurred. But where deficit financing maintains mainly unproductive production, the economy can never be stimulated sufficiently to repay the debt, not even to hold the debt at the same level. The costs of the debt in the long run will far

outrun the stimulating effects in the present. The result is an ever mounting state debt.

As long as an economy remains healthy or can manage to pass off the costs of the mounting debt through imperialist devices, this arrangement appears to work. However, one effect of arms production guarantees that stagnation cannot long be hidden.

Since arms production represents an actual destruction of resources, it further hinders the modernization of the industrial apparatus which is necessary to maintain profitable production. This creates, over a period of time, an economy whose basic sectors and infrastructure are increasingly worn out and outdated. And it is this same weakened industrial apparatus which is burdened by a constantly mounting debt and other forms of commercial paper (stocks, bonds, etc.) which represent claims on the surplus value produced—surplus value which does not grow as fast as the claims. These artificially swollen claims are otherwise known as fictitious capital.

One ingenious way through which

the costs of defense spending were shifted away from U.S. capitalism was the functioning of the international monetary system.

The U.S. held 75 per cent of the world's gold reserves and accounted for 65 per cent of industrial production at the end of World War II. The Allied capitalist powers, "led" by the U.S., felt it necessary and desirable that the U.S. dollar be established as the official reserve currency and "as good as gold." The price of gold was set at \$35 per ounce while the other currencies were pegged to the dollar.

The other governments party to the agreement were obligated to maintain the fixed relationships (parities) between the dollar and their respective currencies through various financial and monetary operations. Holdings of U.S. dollars were to be convertible to gold at the legal rate upon presentation of the dollars to the U.S. Treasury.

The tremendous flow of dollars out of the U.S. in the form of foreign investment, foreign "aid," and military spending overseas (such as in the war to subjugate Vietnam), led to a tremendous build-up of U.S. dollars in Europe (Eurodollars) and elsewhere. Although legally required to pay to holders of these dollars one ounce of gold for every \$35 if the holders desire, the U.S. (faced with a steady depletion of its gold reserves) urged its allies not to present dollars for conversion if they wished to avoid a monetary crisis that would snap the whole arrangement. The result was the further growth of this pool of dollars. By 1971, there were approximately 70 billion U.S. dollars in Europe.

#### INFLATION

Meanwhile, within the U.S., the effects of increasingly obsolete plant and equipment, coupled with the steady growth of the state debt and other forms of fictitious capital, led to a mounting inflation. This meant that the heap of dollars piling up in Europe was depreciating in value, was worth less and less. The European capitalists were in effect granting their U.S. counterparts a loan with negative interest—that is, a gift.

In fact, the Bretton Woods agreement placed the dollar in a privileged position which the rest of the capitalist class was obligated to maintain regardless of the dollar's actual value at any given time. This functioned like a form of monopoly price structure. Value produced by other capitals elsewhere was drawn to U.S. capital out of proportion to the relative total size of U.S. capital itself. The Bretton Woods agreement was simply the linchpin at the center of an imperial apparatus that served to loot the rest of the world in the interests of U.S. capital.

While U.S. capitalism was actually stagnating, while the rate of profit was actually declining, these facts were hidden under a veneer of prosperity increasingly based upon blundering the rest of the world and



French workers occupy factory during May-June 1968 and "hang" capitalism. They refused to keep paying the price of capitalism's post-war stability.

Cont'd. next page

# THE ROOTS OF THE Capitalist Crisis

Cont'd. from p. 11

cannibalizing the flesh of the U.S. economy itself.

## THE WORKERS REVOLT

By the mid-1960's, the devastating effects of the post-war arrangements were already beginning to be obvious. Arms and other waste production and the outflow of capital had produced a decided backwardness in the basic structure of the U.S. economy. Whole sectors (such as steel and metalworking in general, railroads, shipbuilding) were plagued with outmoded plant and equipment.

The growth of public debt at all levels and the resulting tax burden on the workers and other oppressed sectors led to the "tax-payers' revolt," the so-called fiscal crisis of the state, and the general rot of the cities and essential social services. Comparable to the failure to invest in new plant and equipment was the destruction of the environment and the failure to develop new energy resources—which is merely another form of the general inability to reproduce sources of constant capital.

Finally, an actually stagnating



economy which gives the impression of continued boom became ever more prone to all sorts of wasteful speculation which rendered it even more susceptible to crisis.

The form which the present crisis is taking is largely the result of the unravelling of the international monetary system. As noted above, this structure led to saddling Europe with billions of steadily depreciating dollars. As long as the costs of this could be passed off onto the European workers in the form of inflation, currency devaluations, etc., without seriously impairing the profitability or political stability of European capitalism, the arrangement was relatively stable.

But as the European economies began to suffer from the impact of falling profit rates, aggravated by U.S. monetary plundering, the European working class began to rebel. When this rebellion hit a peak in the 1968 May-June events in France and the strike movement in Italy in the fall of 1969, the European capitalists confessed their inability to carry the

burdens required to maintain the international system. They threatened to cut themselves loose.

By mid-1971, the Bretton Woods agreement was a shambles. Nixon had already closed the "gold window"—had refused to exchange dollars for gold—and had instituted wage controls (which in different form we are still living with).

Since then, no new permanent monetary system has been established. Instead, *ad hoc* arrangements have been implemented, while the U.S. has bludgeoned the other capitalist powers into accepting a substantial devaluation of the dollar, significantly increasing the competitiveness of U.S. goods on the world market and substantially improving the U.S.'s balance of payments situation.

In effect, we see a return to an every-man-for-himself arrangement which can only increase the shakiness of the international capitalist economy, while the international bankers and monetary experts search in vain for a new permanent set-up.

## THE CRISIS TODAY

Today, the international capitalist economy is collapsing under the weight of its previously hidden contradictions. The international economy is plagued with increasingly obsolete sectors, a lack of capital sufficient to recreate conditions of profitable production, and a continually mounting burden of debt and fictitious capital.

In such conditions, Keynesian "solutions" will be increasingly ineffective, even on a temporary basis: increasing doses of deficit financing and other forms of credit expansion will be necessary just to modernize the stagnation. The result will be galloping inflation even during downturns, until a world depression intervenes with its own deflationary "solution"—or until the workers intervene with the socialist revolution. The shortages of crucial resources, themselves the result of the dynamic of the post-war period will only further aggravate the instability of the economy.

Briefly, the state of the world capitalist economy can be expressed as a contradiction between stagnation in the production of surplus value and continually mounting claims to it. Holding this together is an *ad hoc* monetary system which can fly apart at any minute and provoke an abrupt halt in international trade, throwing the world into a depression.

## CAPITALIST "SOLUTION"

To restore profitability requires (1) a substantial concentration and centralization of capital and an accompanying elimination of debt and fictitious capital, and (2) a tremendous increase in the exploitation of the working class.

The first means an intensified struggle among the capitalists over investment opportunities, natural resources, and the world market, which in turn leads to fascism, depression; and world war. The second means an intensifying drive to force the workers back to living and

working conditions of the 1930's, to smash their organizations and tighten the yoke that holds them to the decrepit capitalist chariot.

The overall direction of the capitalist economy is down, although not necessarily without fluctuations along the way. The failure of capitalism to develop the productive forces, which have stagnated throughout this epoch, is taking its toll.

## FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

The only alternative to war, depression, and the unspeakable barbarism that they will produce is the socialist revolution, the destruction of capitalism itself. After smashing the capitalist state and replacing it with the dictatorship of the proletariat, the workers will reorganize the economy on an international scale and recreate the conditions for the forward development of mankind—by unleashing the productive forces from capitalism's chains. First and foremost among these productive forces is the creativity of the producers themselves.

# WHY BLACKS DIE YOUNG

A U.S. government report just released states that the life expectancy of "non-whites" in this country is ten years shorter than that of whites. What the report "Social Indicators 1973" didn't explain is the reasons for this. There are three major reasons:

1) High infant mortality, due to rotten medical care and poor nutrition for both pregnant women and their babies. Between 1955 and 1965, the proportion of all American families with inadequate diets rose from 15 per cent to 21 per cent, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Among blacks and Latins, the fraction is even higher.

2) Blacks work in the dirtiest industrial jobs, and they are therefore exposed to the highest concentrations of the industrial poisons which cause cancer, heart disease, and lung disease—the three major killers of Americans today.

3) Working-class people generally live in the most decayed urban areas, exposed to industrial pollutants. They suffer from inadequate heating, high concentrations of automobile pollution (lead, nitrogen oxides, and carbon monoxide), and all the other life-destroying stresses of crisis-ridden capitalism.

"Social Indicators 1973" also demonstrates what has happened to the ability of black workers to improve their lives over the past 20 years. Unemployment among young black men and women has soared sharply since 1954, according to the report.

No report on medical conditions can pretend to be complete which ignores the fact that capitalism itself is the greatest medical problem facing the working class.

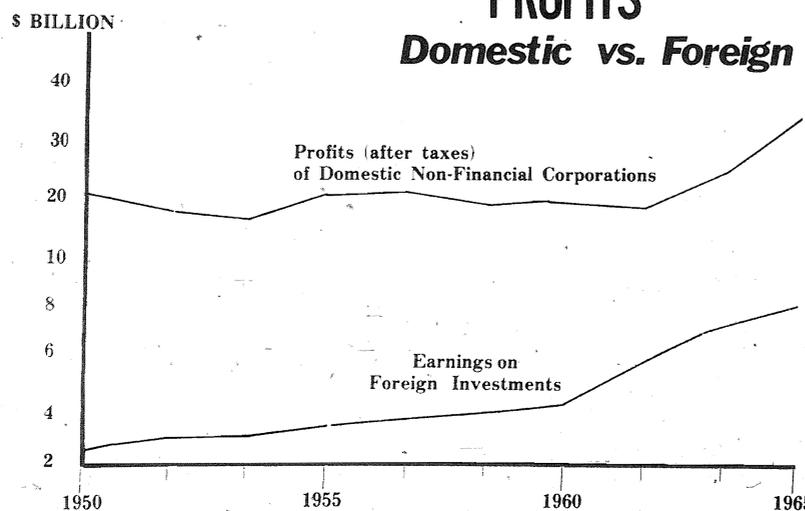
## GROSS DEBT

Percent  
Gross Debt  
of Commodity  
Production

1929	484
1937	545
1948	407
1953	417
1957	459
1960	507
1969	583

charts from Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism*, [1969], p. 184, and Perlo, *The Unstable Uneconomy*, [1973], p. 69

## PROFITS Domestic vs. Foreign



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## LIST REVOLUTION

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## BLACKS YOUNG

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# ILLINOIS WELFARE PURGE

Illinois Governor Dan Walker, attempting to prove he is "Presidential timbre," has launched an attack on the state's welfare recipients. He hopes to show that he is capable of combining support from the most corrupt leaders of the important unions (UAW, Steel Workers, Teamsters) with brutal attacks on all sections of the class.

In late August of 1973 the state approved a new "flat grant" system of determining welfare allotments. The new system applies to 205,000 families in Illinois who are on the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program.

These families number 775,000 people, 562,000 of them residents of Chicago's Cook County. A family's size and county determine the monthly allotment. For instance, a family of four in Chicago will now receive a \$288.00 "paycheck" a month. Says Joel Edelman, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Aid, "... We recognize that the grants are at a low level."

## PLAIN ENGLISH

The purpose of the new system of uniform payments based on a simple chart became clear later in the year, when the system went into effect. With 80 per cent of the paperwork eliminated, the Department ordered caseworkers to begin doing "investigative work" in the "field." In plain English, to start spying on recipients to see if there was a way to cut their payments.

On December 11, 1973, the Chicago *Sun-Times* announced in a blaring headline the arrival in Chicago of a special task force of 115 downstate caseworkers to review 30,000 cases in order "to suspend and cancel as many as possible in the next few weeks."

A few days later, a study from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) was released, claiming that fully one-third of those receiving aid were legally ineligible or overpaid. The state must reduce this to 8 per cent, says HEW, to continue receiving money.

Walker and Edelman are ready. "After January, we will really go to town," says

the exuberant Edelman, referring to his task force.

In fact, the whole roll-cutting campaign is a completely cynical and calculated move by Walker. Faced with inflation (which means rising costs for construction and maintenance), increasing salaries for the police and bureaucracy, and even higher prices for office supplies for the welfare bureaucracy, Walker is solving his financial squeeze by attacking the weakest, most unorganized section of the class—welfare recipients.

Even by the government's own doctored figures, the "anti-welfare-cheaters campaign" is a farce. Early in 1973, HEW issued a study saying that only 10 per cent of welfare rollers did not qualify, and only 1 per cent were purposeful cheaters.

In fact, the government's own figures show that many who *should* be on welfare are *not*. Of the 25 million people earning less than \$4,000 a year per family of four, only 15 million are getting assistance. Of these, 8 million are children under 16; two million are old people; 1 million have a total and complete disability or are blind; 3 million are mothers, many with small children; approximately 150,000 are able-bodied males; and just under 1 million have full-time jobs that pay so little that they must get some aid to bring their incomes up to the welfare level.

## GROWING ATTACK

In the coming recession more and more workers will find themselves on welfare. Unemployment compensation and Supplemental Unemployment Benefits (SUB) disappear quickly [See Terry Shephard's expose of the SUB in *Torch* #5], and many low-seniority workers aren't eligible at all.

As the welfare rolls get longer and the money runs short, capitalist politicians like Walker will step up their attacks on welfare recipients. The Walkers cannot place the burden of welfare on their own bosses (the corporations), so they make other workers pay and then use their resentment against high taxes to help attack the ranks of the workers whom the

corporations themselves have forced onto welfare.

When the talk turns, to "welfare cheaters," revolutionaries must point out that this is a phoney issue promoted by capitalism's paid stooges. Make the bosses pay for the unemployment rates they created! Spread the work around through a 30 hour work week with no loss in pay to give jobs to all who

can handle them! Support those who can't work from corporate profits! To help the Walkers is the path to disaster. They attack welfare rollers today because they are the easiest to attack. When they need to "save" even more money tomorrow, these same swine will turn their full fire on the "workingman" they pretend to befriend today.



Laid-off workers in Detroit line up before sunrise to apply for meager unemployment pay. "Rumblings of uneasiness" are growing louder in the unions.

# UNEMPLOYMENT MOUNTS

DETROIT—Workers in Michigan are suffering from especially severe unemployment. In January 300,000 were without work, giving the state an unemployment rate of 8.1 per cent. This rate is already up 2 per cent from December, 1973. The last three months have seen a 200 per cent increase in unemployment benefit cases handled by the Michigan Employment Security Commission. At this rate, by June Michigan will have a higher unemployment rate than during the 1958 recession.

The outlook for the future is not good. Michigan depends on car production, and the auto companies have cut output by 30 per cent from last year at this time.

Going into 1974, there was a surplus of 1.6 million cars. This, despite heavy downtime for the assembly lines in December. This surplus was an all-time record, up 22 per cent from last year. At present sales rates, all auto companies could go two full months without producing a single car and still not run out!

Falling sales and profits indicate more layoffs are

coming. Sales are down 13 per cent. Final quarter profits for GM in 1973 were down 22.5 per cent from 1972. For Chrysler, they were down 12 per cent. And for Ford they were down 76 per cent!

Workers in Detroit have been hit especially hard. The UAW estimates that 40,000 of its members in Detroit and Pontiac have been laid off.

Chrysler Corporation, the auto company employing the most workers in Detroit, has laid off 10 per cent of its work force. The massive Chrysler Jefferson Assembly plant has been forced to indefinitely layoff an entire shift. *Torch* sales have been steadily increasing at Chrysler plants, with many more workers stopping to discuss revolutionary politics and the League's program to fight unemployment.

The situation for autoworkers in Flint, Michigan is even worse. Unemployment there is 12 per cent, the worst since the 1958 recession. GM has laid off 21,000 autoworkers in Flint alone, mainly from the Buick and Chevy plants. UAW Local 599's hall has been turned into a temporary unemployment of-

fice to handle the heavy load of unemployment benefit claims.

Flint autoworkers say that if it weren't for their SUB pay they would be in depression conditions. With massive layoffs in the auto industry the SUB fund is sure to run dry shortly.

In the Buick plants the word is that this summer's change-over will last sixteen weeks. The SUB fund was not even meant to meet this kind of heavy unemployment.

Flint workers have a fighting history going back to the 1936-37 sit-down strike. The mood in the GM-owned town is angry. Don Dills, UAW Region 1-c Director, said of Flint, "We've got rumblings of uneasiness in the plants that we haven't had in years. They are just completely disgusted with the whole god-damned political process."

A reflection of this mood is extraordinary *Torch* sales in Flint. One team sent to Flint sold over 100 copies in one afternoon. Workers there were enthusiastic about getting a revolutionary newspaper and interested in how they could fight unemployment.

# STRIKES CLOSE N. Y. SCHOOLS

by Mary Robinson

NEW YORK—City schools reopened on January 21, after strikes of two custodial unions closed 730 schools. The striking unions—Local 74 of the Service Employees International Union and Local 94 of the International Union of Operating Engineers—won an 8 per cent wage increase, larger monthly pensions, improved sick leave provisions, and longer vacations.

The struggle between the two unions and the Board of Education arose over wages. The Board of Education offered the custodial workers a meagre wage increase within the 5.5 per cent guidelines set by the federal Pay Board. The custodial workers retaliated by shutting most of the city's schools within three days and won wage increases which broke the 5.5 per cent guidelines.

These strikes brought a partial victory: they forced the Board of Education to abandon the government guidelines. Of course, the settlement must now be approved by the Cost of Living Council.

Yet even if upheld this 8 per cent increase will not keep pace with New York City's 10 per cent inflation. Already underpaid custodial workers will be worse off in a year than they are now.

Paraprofessionals and school aides, who make less than custodial workers, will also see their earnings

slashed by inflation in the coming year. Full cost of living escalator clauses are needed to protect workers from soaring inflation.

## LABOR SUPPORT

The two strikes against the Board of Education received wide-spread support throughout the city. Teachers, paraprofessionals, students, and parents, who have been divided for the last five years, were united for the first time in a fight against the Board of Education.

For years, school workers, parents, and students have been divided by the racist leadership of the New York City teachers' union, the United Federation of Teachers, and by demagogic povertycrats. The povertycrats have misled black and Latin parents in their fight for quality education by calling on them to attack teachers and their union in order to improve education. Both Albert Shanker, the UFT Pres-

ident, and the povertycrats prefer to fight each other rather than to lead a fight against the real enemy of decent education for all: decaying capitalism and the slashing of school budgets which it produces.

During the custodial strikes, school districts with large numbers of working black and Latin parents gave overwhelming support to the striking workers. Teachers and students throughout the city joined picket lines in support of the strikers. The stage was set for the forging of a real alliance between the most oppressed workers in New York City and the United Federation of Teachers.

## SHANKER BREAKS RANKS

But Shanker, who claims he is for united action, blocked

any attempt to forge these alliances. At the UFT Delegate Assembly meeting on the first day of the strikes, Shanker proposed that the decision whether to honor picket lines would be left to "the individual conscience of teachers!"

Motions to call out all UFT members in support of the custodial workers were defeated at every point by the Shanker leadership. Left without support from the UFT, large numbers of teachers and paraprofessionals nevertheless closed individual schools and districts in defiance of Shanker's refusal to extend organized support to the strikes.

Shanker's refusal to call out the UFT demonstrates that the present UFT leadership cannot lead a united fight of school workers. Shanker's ties to Democratic Party

politicians like Mayor Beame and Senator Jackson reveal his strategy to build the UFT into merely a big lobbying machine in order to win special gains for teachers at the expense of other workers. What Shanker does *not* want is unity based on militant mass action, an industrial union of all school employees, and a working class offensive that can beat back the capitalist attack.

## Bourgeois Idiot

In a recent article for the *Toronto Star*, Arnold Toynbee, a famous bourgeois historian, analyzes the current crisis in Great Britain. Toynbee claims the strikes and slow-downs are ruining the British economy and that these are caused by *high-paid* workers seeking increased status.

The high-paid workers he is talking about are the miners, who rarely earn even \$100 a week. If Toynbee's analysis of the crisis seems stupid, listen to his solution:

"If all miners were made baronets, all locomotive drivers knights, all ambulance drivers esquires, all dustmen were left to remain plain misters, nobody's status would be eroded by the inflation of monetary currency."

Toynbee has taken to its absurd but logical conclusion the bourgeois theory that history is made of "status fears" rather than class struggles.

That the most prominent bourgeois intellectuals are reduced to this sort of idiocy says something about the whole capitalist class. As Marx said almost 100 years ago, "On the level plain, simple mounds look like hills, and the imbecile flatness of the present bourgeoisie is to be measured by the altitude of its great intellectuals."



Union militants get ready to picket schools for their rights.

# Detroit Supermarket Strike

by Jim Raskin

After a virtual lock-out of truck drivers and warehousemen by five Detroit-area grocery chains for 13 days, members of Teamster Local 337 gave in on January 28 to the treacherous agreement written by their "leaders". Since September, when the old contract ran out, Robert Holmes, President of the Local and an IBT Vice President, has been trying to force the 2500 workers to accept the union-busting demands of the grocery bosses.

## RANK AND FILE STRUGGLES

But the workers have steadily resisted—throwing out a tentative agreement in November and organizing a wildcat in December. Holmes urged workers to avoid a strike, even though the "Food Association," the coalition representing the bosses, refused to withdraw its demands.

But rank and file unrest was too great. As one warehouseman told *Torch* reporters, "If we give in to them [the bosses] now, then next time. . . ." There may not be a next time!

On January 23, just as stores were beginning to feel the effects of the strike, Holmes announced another tentative agreement. This, too, was rejected by the workers. By now, however, it was clear that Holmes would never offer any resistance to the capitalists' attack. So when Holmes came back with a new "compromise" agreement two days later, workers felt they had no choice but to accept it.

The new contract lengthens the probationary period for new workers (up from 30 to 60 days), and reduces the wages of the new workers to 25 cents below union scale.

In addition, the agreement increases the number of

workers on split work-week schedule, so weekend work gets done without anyone getting weekend pay. Most drivers and warehousemen must already depend on their overtime pay to meet their bills, since the union hacks meekly follow Nixon's 5.5 per cent wage guidelines while prices are skyrocketing.

In return, the companies kindly "agreed" to drop their demand that absentees be replaced by the lower paid probationary workers instead of union workers. As one worker said, "Today we have to fight just to keep things we won 20 years ago."

## STRIKE SUPPORT

Spontaneous labor support in the Detroit area began to develop during the strike. Drivers for independent distributors refused to deliver to the struck stores. Clerks and store employees, too, expressed a desire to join the

Teamsters' strike.

But the union hacks refused to organize this support to beat back the bosses' attack. When questioned about the bureaucrats' refusal to defend the strike, one Teamster replied, "Sometimes what you and I see as important, they don't!"

Although Local 337 workers tried to force Holmes and his gang to defend the jobs and living standards of union members, the struggle was unorganized. No move was made to organize to throw out the union bureaucrats.

## NARROW OUTLOOK

In addition, many of the workers thought the union was strong enough to win without support of other workers in the Detroit area. They showed little interest either in other labor struggles or in the fact that their struggle was a part of a general attack by the capitalists on the working class. This kind of narrow outlook must be rooted out if the Teamsters are to help lead the working class against the attacks of the bosses.

# TRUCKERS AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Cont'd. from p. 1

off their savings. The odds are stacked against them and the majority lose the gamble. But their stake is enough to the casino-owners to let a few make it big and keep the game going. If you protest the odds and get rowdy, the owners will call in their goons, the State and the National Guard, to take care of you.

Behind the limited demands for a roll-back in fuel prices and an increase in freight charges is the desire of the vast majority for a society which will allow them a decent existence.

## TERRORISM AGAINST TEAMSTERS

The strikers' acts of terrorism directed against union drivers must be condemned, but they must be understood as a result of the treacherous policy pursued by the Teamster bureaucracy. Using this policy as an excuse, the independents representatives refused to fight within the labor movement, refused to make any attempts to win Teamsters or the working public to the struggle politically.

They chose instead what was, in reality, only a more militant form of the same lobbying with the government for the narrowly-defined special interests of the independents which they have been conducting for years. Isolated terrorist acts can be a useful club in such lobbying. What was a misdirected expression of just rage for the majority of independents was an integral part of the strategy of their "reps."

## FITZSIMMONS

The support that this strategy has found among the independents is a direct result of the weakness and betrayals of the reformist leadership who today fight against all attempts to unify workers and the oppressed masses against their common enemy. The blame lies with the leadership of the Teamsters and its president Frank Fitzsimmons.

In December, many Teamsters were either sympathetic to the independents or

month, the union leadership cynically used the changed mood of Teamsters (from one of sympathy to opposition) to justify itself.

At one Chicago terminal the steward went around saying to everyone, "See, we told you those people [the independents] were scab motherfuckers." Playing on the feelings of pride which Chicago Teamsters have for the leadership role they played in the 1970 IBT strike, he added: "These are the same people who were running day and night on us in '70."

No one said in front of this hack what they have said among themselves a hundred times before. That it was Fitzsimmons who was the real scab in 1970. That he kept the Chicago locals isolated from the rest of the

at least neutral. They saw in the actions of the independents an expression of their own anger against the "energy crisis."

Fitz moved quickly to head off any possibility of Teamsters joining the protests. He fears the power of his union



The ruling class called in the National Guard to break the truckers' strike. Here, U.S. Route 22 in Pennsylvania is patrolled.

more than anyone else, so he ordered members back to work and made a few poney promises: a fight for a "universal 60 m.p.h. speed limit" and gave a 60-day notification to the trucking companies of his "intent" to ask for a wage-reopener. (The government has given the trucking companies the right to raise their rates on only 24 hours notice.)

When the violence against union drivers occurred this

country for three months, ordered sympathetic locals around the country back to work, and did everything he could to break the strike.

## THE REAL SCAB

No one said that it is Fitz who is the real scab today. He made no attempt to organize the owner-operators behind the Teamsters. Instead, he drove them out of the union and into the arms of the

"militant lobbyists" who traffic in the anti-union sentiment that the Fitz's create.

Fitzsimmons ran to the bosses in Washington during the strike and supported the mobilization of the National Guard, the Guard which will be used tomorrow against his own union. This mobilization was an open threat to the working class by the capitalists, and Fitz has demonstrated his usefulness as a cop in the labor movement for such mobilizations.

Fitz must be driven out and Teamsters must propose to the independent drivers a program of action, a program of unity against the exploiters on the basis of a revolutionary workers' solution to today's crisis. They must show the independents that they have more in common with workers than with the bosses and capitalist politicians in Washington.

## PROLETARIAN PROGRAM

The settlement hardly touches the problems of the independents. The establishment of a commission to investigate hoarding of fuel and of price-gouging on the roads (with hot-lines to Washington for rapid communication) has been proposed and agreed to. Thieves will investigate thieves.

Teamsters and independents must demand that the oil corporations open the books and make public the wholesale prices of fuel oil. Price committees must be organized to find out who is lining their pockets by jacking up retail prices of fuel, and appropriate measures must be taken against these types.

Against the government's plans to reallocate a limited amount of fuel to the inde-

pendent truckers, workers and independents must fight for nationalization of the fuel industries under workers' control in order to expand production and insure necessary distribution. Why should the workers fight among themselves over the shortages and "equally share" the poverty that the capitalists create?

## FIGHT INFLATION

A proposal to allow the truckers to pass on higher costs to the shippers has been accepted. Fine. But the shippers will attempt to pass on their increased costs to the working-class consumer. Truckers must fight for a sliding scale of wages so that all workers can keep up with inflation. Let the prices rise as they will, but make the bosses pay for it!

Since the independents are at the mercy of the banks who own their trucks and the owners of large fleets who attempt to cut them out of the most profitable work, it is necessary to nationalize the banks and large truck fleets under workers' control to insure cheap credit and steady work for the independents.

In the face of the inevitable resistance of the exploiters to proletarian measures, it is necessary to form workers' defense guards. Today the independents are armed, but they do not know which way to aim their weapons.

## ON THE ROAD

Only a decisive revolutionary policy will convince the independents that to travel the road forward they must follow the lead of the working class.

# COPS SMASH HARD-HAT PROTEST

by James Arthur

On January 25, 72 construction workers picketed a dinner-meeting of the Associated Builders and Contractors (A.B.C.) held in Madison Heights, Michigan (a northern suburb of Detroit). The workers blocked cars and attempted to stop people from attending the dinner-meeting and dance. The workers were opposed by 85 police.

The picketers' anger was directed against the A.B.C. for their extensive use of non-union, scab workers. The A.B.C. plans to expand into the Detroit metropolitan area by driving out union labor with "low-cost" non-union labor.

One of the most notorious

of Michigan's anti-labor politicians, Representative Robert Huber, was in attendance at the A.B.C. dinner. An avowed right-winger, Huber threatened to take legislative action against the workers' right to assembly.

It is obvious that the A.B.C. plans to forge an alliance with such reactionary elements as Huber to break the unions and drive the wages of construction workers into the ground. There has been an increase in the use of non-union construction workers in Michigan since the Kalkaska project of Shell Oil which saw pitched battles between union and scab labor and sent the National Guard to that small northern Michigan community. This fight sparked a boycott against Shell Oil throughout the state.

Cont'd. next page

## UNITY NEEDED

# LANSING AUTO WORKERS STRIKE

LANSING, MICH.—Local 182 of the Allied Industrial Workers went on strike on February 4 against Motor Wheel, a subsidiary of Goodyear Rubber Co., when the contract expired.

The two key demands of the strike are for a cost of living escalator (the previous contract includes no cost of living protection whatsoever) and 30-and-out. The strike is confined to the Lansing plant.

Motor Wheel workers nationally are in three unions: International Association of Machinists, UAW, and Allied Industrial Workers. Contracts expire at different times, allowing the company to direct its attacks against the workers at one plant at a time.

### COMPANY TACTICS

The tension and hostility which are obvious on the Motor Wheel picket lines are in part a legacy of a 69-day losing strike of 1971. Then the union lost because foremen were allowed to enter a companion plant. The foremen passed underground to the main plant and maintained production at 20 per cent.

During the present strike, the company has varied its tactics—attempting to force an early end to the strike. On Friday, February 8, the fifth day of the strike, a Circuit Court judge in Lansing issued an order restraining Local

182 from barring the entry of scabs in the struck plant.

### POLICE ESCORT SCABS

On Monday morning a group of scabs arrived, escorted by Lansing Police with

East Lansing and Michigan State University Police waiting in reserve around the corner. Without asking pickets to allow passage, the Lansing riot police waded into the pickets.

The police dispersed the

picket line after a fist-swinging melee in which ten strikers were injured, two requiring hospitalization. Police then escorted the scabs into the Motor Wheel plant under a barrage of ice chunks and rocks.

Later Monday, the company escalated its strike-breaking activities. Frank Willoughby, a well-known member of UAW Local 652 (Oldsmobile Main) and a former negotiator, has reported to the police that he was approached on Monday by two representatives of Goodyear Rubber (Motor Wheel's parent corporation) who offered him a well-paid position if he would foment trouble on the picket line Tuesday, permitting the company to get an injunction against the strike. According to Willoughby, the Goodyear representatives said they had 400 men prepared to run the plant.

### SOLIDARITY

Local 182 responded to these attacks by calling a solidarity march to Lansing City Hall to protest the police action on Monday. UAW Locals 652, 602, 724, and 1618 participated officially in the march.

Though inter-union solidarity actions are a positive step, the march in Lansing is, nevertheless, a poor example. It was inadequately publicized and there was little attempt to reach any workers except the Local union presidents.



## FLINT, 1936 AND NOW

FLINT, MICHIGAN — 37 years ago, on February 11, 1937, workers in the Flint, Michigan Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants forced the GM corporate giant to bow to their demand to recognize and negotiate with the United Auto Workers.

During 44 days of militant strike activity, workers took over the plants, threw out the foremen and company sympathizers, and welded themselves inside the plants to prevent the company from sending in either scab workers or the army. The Flint

sit-down strike spurred the growth of the CIO and paved the way for a new wave of further sit-downs in many industries.

To commemorate the great Flint strike, present-day union "leaders" in Flint and Detroit treated each other to a day of reminiscence on February 11, flattering themselves with thoughts that they are the legitimate heirs to the struggles of the 30's. They even had the audacity to invite some of the original organizers back to help the image.

Genora Dollinger recalled that the UAW Women's Auxiliary brought not only food and encouragement to the men inside the plants during the strike, but also marched outside the plants by the hundreds, carrying lengths of two-by-four to defend themselves against company goons.

Robert Travis spoke of his underground work in getting the union organized. He is retired now, living without a pension because he was run out of the UAW during the McCarthy era by men like those who listened to him on February 11.

The UAW bureaucrats' celebration of the anniversary of the Flint strike rings hollow coming just six months after the UAW tops themselves organized a 1,000-man "flying squadron" to attack workers sitting-in at the Mack and Jefferson plants in Detroit. It rings hollow, too, coming after the "Big Three" 1973 auto contract sell-outs which they



1936-37 Flint sit-down strike. Union "flying squads" in those days fought bosses, not workers.

engineered, sell-outs which proved once again that the bureaucrats are out to protect the bosses' interests rather than those of the workers.

The work begun by the UAW 37 years ago has yet to be completed. Auto workers must again take their place in leading the working class

forward. To do this they will have to throw aside the present union bureaucrats and replace them with a revolutionary leadership armed with a revolutionary program. Only this will constitute a fitting commemoration of the events which took place in Flint 37 years ago.

### Hard-Hat Protest

Cont'd. from p. 15

The police called in by the A.B.C. arrested picketers for loitering. These police came from some seven suburbs near Madison Heights. They were alerted in advance of the demonstration and had thoroughly coordinated their mobilization against the demonstrating workers.

The police are ready, as

they always have been, to give full support to any scab labor effort. As capitalism's crisis deepens, the police and the army, too, will be called in to defend scab labor and thus "cut costs" for the bosses.

Workers must prepare themselves for the battles ahead. They must start now to organize defense guards to protect themselves from such attacks, which will come with greater frequency the more desperate the bosses get.

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Flint 37 years

March 8 is the 64th anniversary of International Women's Day. International Women's Day was founded by the world socialist movement as a tribute to the struggles of working women in the proletariat's fight against capitalism.

But in the United States, the celebration of International Women's Day has most recently been given a different meaning. The women's movement of the 1960's and 1970's in the U.S. has been overwhelmingly middle-class in composition and has been led by political tendencies militantly loyal to capitalism and its preservation, like the National Organization for Women (NOW).

#### FRUITS OF LOYALTY

This year capitalism shows the result of such loyalty. Capitalism is celebrating International Women's Day with heavy doses of unemployment, starvation wages, soaring consumer prices, and union-busting for all. As economic crisis rips through the superficial prosperity of the last two decades, working-class women are once again the first to feel the effects.

The unemployment rate for women in the U.S. has steadily risen from 4.7 per cent in November, to 5.0 per cent in December, to 5.2 per cent in January. These figures are based on Labor Department statistics which do not even account for job downgrading or for the number of unemployed women who have given up their hopeless search for work.

Even based on these statistics, at least 310,000 adult women over 20 years of age are without jobs and unable to support themselves and their families. And since women have always occupied the lowest-paying jobs, their unemployment benefits (if they even manage to qualify) will be dwarfed beside the skyrocketing cost of living.

The majority of women, relegated to unorganized, marginal jobs, do not even enjoy union representation. All in all, International Women's Day this year signals a rollback of even the limited gains which women valiantly won in struggle over the past few years.

*Business Week* magazine, one of the U.S. ruling class's leading mouthpieces, is forced to record this fact. The February 16 issue reports the huge lay-offs and firings of women who only recently won employment



Arnold Miller: his first loyalty is to capitalism

## MILLER

Cont'd. from p. 3

with the miners in struggle, while at the same time exposing Miller, exposing his ties to capitalism and warning the miners of Miller's capacity for treachery. We wished to help Miller to power in order to show the miners in practice that he cannot fulfill his promises.

# International Women's Day



Armed policeman arrests striking woman textile worker near Durban, South Africa.

in the automobile industry. The article clearly ties the fate of women directly to capitalism's decay:

"The fuel crisis that had slashed demand for cars had wiped out equal employment opportunity at the St. Louis [Ford] plant—and wreaked havoc with women's job gains throughout the auto industry. Like

low-seniority blacks in previous auto slumps, low-seniority women are the first to go in current massive layoffs."

Clara M. Atkins, divorced and a mother of a small boy, is one of the women recently hired and then laid off at Ford's Mercury assembly plant in St. Louis. When first hired, "she could hardly believe her luck," says

anxious for a fight. The rampant inflation promised for the year ahead will build the miners' anger. The miners will try to hold Miller to his promises. Yet these promises, which come nowhere near answering the real needs of the miners, cannot be fulfilled under capitalism. A six-hour day, with no wage cut; voluntary overtime; replenishing a Welfare and Retirement Fund, in order to guarantee pensions of \$500 per month; the right to walk out of unsafe mines; etc., cannot be won without nationalizing the mines under a workers' government.

Despite the energy crisis and the enormous profits of the coal and oil companies, the latter still lack enough capital to fully renovate the mines and make them safe places in which to work, to pay the miners decent wages and to fully protect the miners from the ravages of inflation.

*Business Week*. "Riveting windows into rear doors paid \$5.01 an hour, more than twice the \$2.20 she had earned as a Sears saleswoman—the highest-paying job she had previously held in the six years since her divorce. Mrs. Atkins and her nine-year-old son moved into a pleasant \$135-a-month apartment, with new furniture. 'It really was fantastic,' she says."

Today Clara Atkins "is back living with her mother, and her son shares a bedroom with three uncles. She cannot find a job. Her \$51-a-week unemployment compensation does not go far, especially with \$35 a month still due on new furniture. The 'fantastic' days seem far away."

Women have always been the first victims of the capitalists' crises. Capitalism, "heroic" from its birth, always demands that the poorest, least organized workers take the worst beating.

#### FIGHTING SPIRIT

But time and time again the capitalist class has underestimated the fighting spirit and class consciousness of women workers. From the 1910 New York textile strikes, which marked the first International Women's Day, to the 1917 textile strikes which catalyzed the February revolution in Russia, to pitched battles between proletarian women protesters and police in Bolivia today, women have played a leading role in organizing the working class's resistance to the capitalists' vicious attacks.

Because capitalism makes women the most exploited of the exploited, degrades and humiliates them, denies them even the semblance of equality, capitalism creates within working-class women a contradiction which will contribute to its downfall. Women of the working class feel in every fibre of their being the oppression of capitalism, and this innate "feeling" can transform itself overnight into an anger and militancy which knows no bounds.

After witnessing the limitless sacrifice and heroism of women who fought for the Russian Revolution, Leon Trotsky predicted that "just because of this [oppression], in the years of the colossal world revolution this section of the proletariat can and must become the most active, the most revolutionary, and the most audacious section of the working class."

Just to rebuild the Welfare and Retirement Fund to guarantee \$500-per-month pensions and to protect these pensions from inflation will punch gaping holes in the profits of the coal companies.

To be faithful to his true program (the well-being of capitalism), Miller must betray the UMW ranks. As the energy crisis worsens, the demand for cheaper coal will produce a full-scale ruling class assault on the miners and their union. The situation of the coal miners in Britain today shows the future of American miners tomorrow.

The spectre of armed troops invading the coal fields to discipline striking miners is no pipe-dream. In the face of this, Miller used the UMW's Convention to demonstrate clearly that he is ready to surrender the field and abandon the miners as soon as he is put to the test.

# WORKERS, PEASANTS ROCK BOLIVIA

by Shelley Kramer.

In January and February the class struggle in Bolivia erupted with new fury. The Banzer dictatorship's announcement of a 100 per cent boost on prices of food staples triggered widespread strikes and militant protests.

Six thousand peasants and farmworkers in the Cochabamba province barricaded major roads to call attention to their demands. They demanded not only lower prices but also Banzer's resignation and the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government.

## SOLIDARITY

Workers in the cities showed their solidarity with the Cochabamba rebels and their own opposition to Ban-

zer through massive strike action. Virtually the entire working class of the capital city of La Paz joined in a series of strikes and demonstrations against the government's economic policies.

Led by the militant Mine Workers Federation, workers continued to press demands they have been fighting for since the fall of 1972: wage increases of from 100 to 300 per cent, freedom for workers' organizations, full democratic rights, amnesty for all political prisoners, workers' control of nationalized industries, and an end to the Banzer dictatorship. Shantytown dwellers, led by angry housewives, gathered at street barricades to battle with the police.

## THE ARMY

Banzer ordered the army

against the protesters. Planes, tanks, and infantry divisions descended on Cochabamba sweeping aside barricades and slaughtering unarmed workers and peasants. Peasant leaders claimed more than 100 died in the fighting. Banzer tried to cover up this bloody repression with a contrived story about an "international communist conspiracy" about to invade Bolivia and forcibly impose socialism.

Like Tory leader Heath in Great Britain, Banzer blames "red agitators" for the class war unleashed by his own brutal rule. While jet fighters bombed Cochabamba,

soldiers in La Paz rounded up "anti-government conspirators", including well-known union leaders and leftists.

## FIGHTING ALLIANCE

The fighting alliance that was established between workers and peasants in the recent strike wave marks a highly significant stage in the Bolivian class struggle. Since the 1953 land reform, act which granted peasants small plots of land, the peasantry has grown more dependent on the government and less sympathetic to the cause of the working class. Recent governments have successfully used peasants to break the strikes of the mine workers.

When the Cochabamba peasants rose up in January, Banzer issued a personal appeal for them to defend his government "because it is the only one that can give you what you want." He could not, however, appease the peasantry after doubling food prices the day before.

Raising food prices forced the peasants of the highlands, who had marketed their produce, to buy this produce back at twice the price they were originally paid for it. Add to this the increase in the price of imported foods, which are an ever-larger share of the national diet due to low agricultural productivity, and you have a food-producing peasantry pushed to the brink of starvation.

By squeezing the peasantry to salvage the economy, Banzer helped open the peasantry's eyes to who its real friends are.

The doubling of food prices is the latest blow in Banzer's onslaught against the working class. Bolivian workers are already condemned to the lowest standard of living in all South America. Low industrial productivity, inefficient agricultural techniques, fluctuating export prices, imperialist plundering, corruption and graft have all contributed to the stillbirth of "modern" Bolivian capitalism. U.S. aid, including food exports, rather than bailing out the economy, has contributed to the country's uncontrollable inflation and the collapse of the agricultural sector.

Bolivia's rate of inflation shot dramatically upward during the first M.N.R. (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement) government of 1952. From that time on, every Bolivian government has pledged itself to halting inflation. Every capitalist measure was employed without success. Every government passed on to its successor an even higher rate of inflation.

The causes for the inflation included huge government debts and deficits and a chronic lack of investment in capital goods to modernize production. In 1940, 40 Bolivianos (Bolivian currency units) exchanged for one United States dollar. By 1967 the dollar was already worth over



# Defend Workers' Democracy

by Paul Aldrich and S. Rojas

CLEVELAND, OHIO—On January 30, UAW Local 1250 (Ford Casting and Engine Plants) held its ratification meeting here on the local Ford settlement. As the meeting was about to begin inside the hall, the union goon squad was busy enforcing its particular brand of "union democracy" outside in the parking lot. Two members of the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) were severely beaten and kicked for distributing their newspaper.

While taking no responsibility for the insane, petty-bourgeois politics of the NCLC, the Revolutionary Socialist League condemns the local bureaucrats' consistent denial of the basic democratic rights which the UAW has always claimed to defend.

The tactics of Wayne Medders, Local 1250 president and member of the UAW national negotiating team, are but one typical example of the leadership's frantic efforts to root out every worker who dares raise his voice against the leadership's betrayals and retreats.

## SHOOTING IN MICHIGAN

In Michigan, UAW Local 600 chairman David Mundy

drew a revolver and started shooting at William Harrell, a skilled worker who opposed the ratification of the sell-out Ford contract, at the ratification meeting held last November. After Harrell ducked into a gas station and got an attendant to lock the door, Mundy pumped three shots through the window, wounding Harrell. Top UAW hack Leonard Woodcock would only say, "I have the greatest respect for his [Mundy's] integrity and the competence he has shown in his line of duty."

Woodcock's goon squads, first mobilized last August to discipline striking auto workers at the Mack plant in Detroit, have since been used to ensure passive acceptance of each new sell-out. And they will continue to be used so long as the UAW is led by the faithful servants of the ruling class.

Leon Trotsky pointed out that in this epoch, when capitalism is no longer capable of expanding the forces of production, the trade unions would either transform themselves into the economic police of capital or become the instruments of the proletarian revolution. There is no middle choice. Woodcock and his toadies, in accepting and working within the limits of the capitalist system, are compelled to use increasingly

violent methods in forcing the ranks of the UAW to pay the costs of rebuilding capitalism. In carrying out this task, trade-union democracy has been smashed as a luxury they cannot afford.

The right to argue, distribute literature, and organize openly in the trade unions is the means through which union members sort out their leadership and test it in struggle. Union democracy is a key weapon in the fight to oust Woodcock and build a leadership which is capable of fighting for the real interests of the working class.

## DEFEND WORKERS' DEMOCRACY

Revolutionary workers must call on every trade-union militant to defend the right to express and organize around political views in the trade unions. They must urge the formation of defense squads to protect the right of every political tendency to present its views to the workers, and the right of every worker to learn and examine these views for himself. In doing so, revolutionary workers will have the opportunity to explain the motives which underlie the UAW hacks' terrorist campaign, to counterpose the program of socialist revolution to the program of reformist repression.

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## INFLATION

In 1972, Banzer tried to control inflation by devaluing the currency. The result, not surprisingly, was only a new inflationary surge which robbed workers of two-thirds of their wages.

At the same time, food production steadily dropped due to antiquated agricultural methods. Much of what was produced was smuggled over the border into neighboring countries where food prices were even higher.

To stop this outflow of food, which was producing serious shortages, Banzer doubled prices in January. But this, again, only fueled the fires of inflation.

Banzer's frantic attempts to heal Bolivian capitalism have all been at the expense of the working class. He has slashed wages and consumption by driving up prices. At the same time he has stripped workers of the right to defend themselves through their unions and political action. He is intent on accumulating capital and scraping together profits by squeezing workers and peasants to the limit.

But Banzer's strategy has not achieved its intended results. Far from driving workers and peasants into submission, he has driven them into renewed alliances.

Today Banzer faces opposition from all political quarters. The M.N.R., an ex-partner in Banzer's ruling coalition, recently pulled out of the government. Eyeing the rising level of working-class discontent, the M.N.R. has moved to disassociate itself from the discredited Banzer

regime.

Like the Peronists in Argentina and the A.P.R.A. in Peru, the M.N.R. parades itself as a nationalist "people's party" based on a "democratic anti-imperialist" program—while all the while drawing up plans, together with imperialists and local military interests, for the subjugation of the working class. When Bolivian capitalism cannot afford constitutional rule at all, the M.N.R. steps aside to let the military butchers try their hand again.

## FRIENDLY ENEMIES

The real interests of the M.N.R. were unmasked by its participation in the joint military-fascist coup against the "leftist" military government of General Juan José Torres in 1971. The M.N.R.'s reward for its cooperation was a seat in Banzer's government, right alongside that of the fascist *Falange* party, the M.N.R.'s historic "enemy." Now that the working class is on the march the left-wing of the M.N.R. sees the possibility of ruling on its own again by channeling the class struggle into a pro-M.N.R. insurrection as in 1952.

## NATIONALIST OFFICERS

Young, nationalist army officers are also dissatisfied with Banzer. His concessions to the imperialists, particularly his negotiations with the Brazilian government surrendering oil and natural gas concessions, has wounded their militaristic national pride. Documents highly critical of the government are circulating in army quarters.

la rápida comunicación). Ladrones investigarán a ladrones.

Los Teamsters y los independientes tienen que exigir que las corporaciones de petróleo abran los libros y digan al público los precios al mayoreo del petróleo combustible. Tienen que organizarse comités de precios para averiguar quien está llenándose los

This caste of young officers has repeatedly produced figures like General Torres, leader of the short-lived 1970 government, who, like the M.N.R., seek to stabilize Bolivian capitalism through rhetoric and minor social reforms. Last year, exiled representatives of the M.N.R. and "left-wing" military chiefs concluded the so-called Madrid Pact which promises their mutual cooperation in bringing down Banzer.

The rise of the class struggle has also produced right-wing opposition to Banzer. The extreme right is disgusted with Banzer's inability to beat down the working class and is outraged by his attempts to discipline his right-wing political rivals. Rightist anti-government plots have been uncovered in Santa Cruz, Banzer's political base and the center of Brazil's political influence in Bolivia.

## TWO WINGS

Military gorillas like Banzer and "popular nationalists" like Torres and the M.N.R., represent two wings of the capitalist class with different strategies for safeguarding Bolivian capitalism. There is not always a clear distinction between their methods.

When the working class makes its own revolution, all the Banzers, and Torreses will band together in an all-out defense of their capitalist privileges. In the meantime they will fight among themselves over how best to avoid or defeat that revolution.

Banzer chooses to sell himself to the imperialists for their financial and military assistance in his bloody crusade against Bolivian workers

and peasants. Torres and his cothinkers try to balance between the demands of the imperialists and the demands of the working class. He combines repression against the workers with social reforms. The club is still ready,

power. There is simply no fat for reforms on the bare skin and bones of the Bolivian economy.

The peasantry is once again following the lead of the working class. The possibility is greater than ever before



Bolivian farmworkers guard barricades on a road to Cochabamba

but Torres keeps it behind his back when possible.

In Bolivia, these two wings of the capitalist class have historically alternated with one another, passing state power between them like a football, depending on which of them is more capable of defending capitalism at a particular time. The working class can only put an end to this murderous game by seizing state power for itself.

Today it will not be easy for the M.N.R. to pass itself off as an ally of the working class. Its political alliance with the fascists in the Banzer government cannot be easily whitewashed. Economic conditions also militate against a successful M.N.R. return to

for a revolutionary resolution for the years of bitter class warfare in Bolivia.

## FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The Bolivian working class has given its support to one bourgeois or petty bourgeois party or figure after another and has been rewarded each time with betrayal. Today the workers must learn from their mistakes and build a revolutionary party, one which will not betray, will not waver.

The only alternative is to share the fate of the thousands of Chilean workers who have paid with their lives for the absence of a revolutionary leadership.

quieran, ¡pero que los patrones paguen el costo!

Como los independientes están a la merced de los bancos que son los dueños de sus camiones, y de los dueños de las grandes flotas de camiones, quienes tratan de quitarles el trabajo con más ganancias, es necesaria la nacionalización de los bancos y las grandes flotas de camiones bajo control de los obreros para asegurar el crédito barato y el trabajo seguro para los independientes.

Ante la inevitable resistencia de los explotadores a las medidas proletarias, es necesario formar guardias para la defensa de los obreros. Hoy los independientes están armados, pero no saben hacia donde apuntar sus armas.

## El camino

Sólo una decisiva política revolucionaria convencerá a los independientes de que, para avanzar, tienen que seguir la dirección de la clase obrera.

## Los camioneros

de la p. 20

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