



Reconstruct the Fourth International!

## BOSSSES SHIFT COURSE AS ECONOMY SLIDES



Rockefeller squirms while Ford rambles on. Bourgeoisie is tiring of Ford's vacillations.

by Jack Gregory

Remember how only six months ago the bourgeois press was in ecstasy over the new saviour, Good Gerald Ford, who would bind all wounds, give eyesight to the blind and make us all forget the evil, corrupt Richard Nixon? Remember the fervent prayers of big-name journalists that Ford's "religious faith proclaimed openly to an unbelieving generation" would turn the tide—dissolve international crisis, right the economy and return the country to Glory Road?

All of this seems very distant today. For weeks, the self-same bourgeois press has been warning of a coming "showdown" between President Ford and Congress. Good Gerald has been no more capable of dealing with the economic crisis than Bad Richard. If anything, Ford has accelerated the downward slide. And so today, the capitalist journalist corps heralds a clash between the

Democratic-controlled Congress and the Republican administration over conflicting strategies to deal with the economic crisis.

The economic contraction is indeed frightening. January's national unemployment rate was 8.2 per cent, the highest since 1941. In the major cities the situation is even worse—12 per cent jobless rate in New York and a whopping 21 per cent in Detroit. Unemployment among black youth is a staggering 41 per cent.

Worse is coming. With both Gross National Product and industrial production down, government economists (who have every reason to hide the truth) are predicting the decline to continue through 1975. With the international capitalist economy in crisis, there is no doubt that hard times lie ahead.

### HOT AIR FROM FORD

But it doesn't take statistics to know this. Every worker

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More than 2,000 people mob federal offices in Chicago applying for fewer than 1,000 federally-funded jobs. Ford's economic program is worthless in fight against unemployment.

## MID-EAST: IMPERIALISM, NATIONALISM AND WAR

by Cliff Gordon  
and Chris Hudson

Once again war clouds are gathering over the Middle East. War is highly likely within the next period—perhaps in a few months, perhaps in the next year. Even if diplomatic scrambling can prevent the outbreak of hostilities for a slightly longer period, over time another Middle Eastern war is inevitable.

U.S. imperialism's need to break the attempts of the Arab bourgeoisies to control Arab oil makes war inevitable. Parallel to this lies the long-term battle between the Arab peoples and Israel—a conflict most sharply expressed in the struggle over Palestine. Thus the new war may break out directly between the Western imperialists, aided by Israel, and the Arab states—or it may take the form of another localized war between Israel

and the Arabs, with the U.S. prompting in the wings.

The date and precise form of the new war cannot be exactly predicted. What can be predicted is the complete inability of the Arab bourgeoisies to defend their own states and peoples against imperialism. Today, Israel is gearing for war because the political struggle is not developing to its advantage. Israel wants to reshuffle the diplomatic cards

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# BOSSSES SHIFT COURSE

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knows that unemployment is sky-high, that inflation continues to erode real wages, and that the crisis is getting worse. And every worker knows that Ford has done nothing to turn the situation around save making a lot of noise.

What will be done? What plans are being discussed by the ruling class? Are splits emerging inside the bourgeoisie over how to deal with the crisis? What impact will the bourgeois strategies have on the proletariat?

The first place to turn for answers to these questions is the dispute between Ford and Congress. There are more Democrats in Congress than has been the case in over a decade. The ouster of Wilbur Mills as chairman of the pivotal House Ways and Means Committee and the establishment of a new Senate Budget Committee has significantly strengthened the hand of Democratic liberals. Consequently, the Ford-Congress dispute is brewing as a clash between the liberal and conservative wings of the ruling class.

## HONEYMOON

For months, a de facto bi-partisan consensus reigned in Congress on both domestic and international questions. The much-ballyhooed "honeymoon" following Ford's inauguration was the surface appearance of a tacit agreement between Democrats and Republicans to carry out an orderly transition from Ford to Nixon, to make sure that the nation did not polarize still further in the wake of the Watergate scandal.

At that time, despite underlying concern over the economic crisis, the domestic scene maintained an appearance of relative stability. While inflation was a clear menace, auto had not yet collapsed. Unemployment was far lower than today. The illusion of quick recovery was still maintained.

Beneath this was the fact that the misleaderships of the working class were able to keep the proletariat in check. The strangle-hold of the bureaucracy, the absence of a class struggle alternative and the generally low level of struggle gave the breathing space necessary for a truce between the ruling class factions.

Combined with this, the Democrats had not yet formulated their economic program. They wisely sat back and let Ford take the rap for the worsening economy. Now, with Ford saddled with the blame for mass unemployment, the Democrats are in position to appear as knights astride white chargers.

The situation has changed dramatically since last August's surface bliss. The severity of the international and domestic crises is breaking into the open. While no mass struggles have taken shape in the U.S., the ruling class is well aware that massive and angry working class action will be the inevitable response if the economic situation deteriorates much further. And so, previously hidden differences within the bourgeoisie over how to deal with the crisis are emerging.

## BUDGET

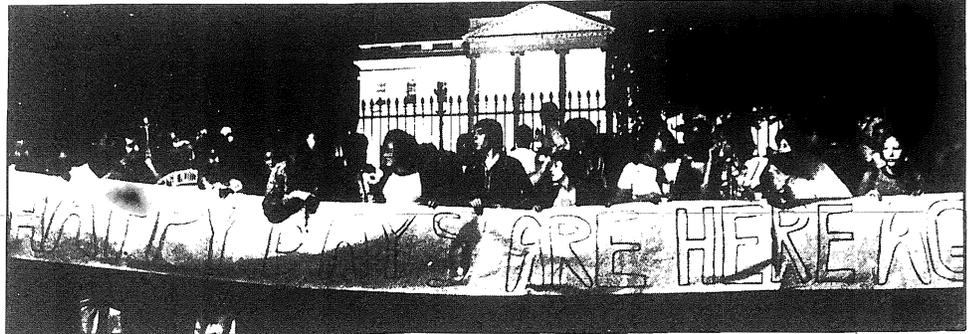
The dispute is centering around Ford's proposed budget. The budget is the key indicator of the administration's economic intervention. The debate around the budget is actually a fight over what strategy the state will adopt to meet the economic collapse.

Ford's proposed budget calls for a \$52 billion deficit for fiscal 1975-76, the largest peacetime deficit in history. And he has managed to hold it down to even this level only by slashing government expenditures on essential social services. Meanwhile, the allocation for defense will jump \$9 billion to a total of \$94 billion. Simultaneously, Ford is proposing a tax cut of \$16 billion and has indicated that he is prepared to accept an even larger cut.

The Democrats are attacking Ford's proposal down the line. They object to the social service cutbacks, propose cutting the defense allocation, and are proposing a considerably larger budget

deficit. The Democrats argue that if unemployment were at the 1973-74 level of about five per cent, the government would be earning about \$40 billion in additional revenue. Therefore, they argue, Ford's deficit is a "recession deficit" and not an "expenditure deficit." That is, Ford's program is not deficit spending at all, they say, continuing their attack to state that he is not really for using government spending to pull the economy out of the morass.

In response, Ford has: 1) attacked Congress for obstructing his programs without coming up with a clear alternative; and 2) proposed additional measures, such as the release of \$2 billion in highway funds, to "prove" his seriousness about fighting the recession.



TOP: Delegation from Women's Congressional Caucus, including Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisom, joke with Gerald Ford. Abzug, Ford agree on need to secure bourgeois interests, differ over methods. BOTTOM: "Honeymooners" celebrate Ford's inauguration last August. Depression slogan on banner proved prophetic.

What forces are really at work? To get the true picture, it is necessary to look beneath the charades of bourgeois politics.

## PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE

Let's return again to Ford's inauguration. At that time, Ford declared his commitment to balance the budget. Remember "Public Enemy Number One"—inflation. Recession and unemployment were considered secondary problems, and the administration's entire economic approach flowed from this conception.

Well known advocates of conservative economics were appointed to the key economic posts. Alan Greenspan was made Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, and William Simon was installed as Secretary of the Treasury. Both advocated strict budget-balancing and belt-tightening to combat inflation. Greenspan expressed sympathy for the views of the "Austrian School" of bourgeois economists, who violently oppose state economic intervention and believe that depression is the necessary cure for the credit-bloated, inflated economy. Following the lead of his advisers, Ford proposed a return to the "Old Time Religion" of cutting government spending to balance the budget, tight money policies, and in general giving as much leeway as possible to unregulated "market forces."

Ford had barely had a chance to put these policies into effect when the collapse of the auto industry swept the rug from beneath his feet. Chrysler Chairman Lynn Townsend pinned the blame for the auto crash directly on Ford's conservative economic policies, especially upon the president's discouragement of consumer spending. As the collapse spread from sector to sector, it became clear even to the thick-headed Ford that he must either change his economic approach or commit political suicide.

Had Ford seriously continued with his conservative austerity program, had he actually tried to balance the budget, he would have had to either drastically cut federal spending or sharply increase taxes. Either alternative would have sent the U.S. economy over the brink, and with it would have gone all hopes of international stability.

But the depression in auto brought Ford to his senses (lacking though they may be). The big

bourgeoisie was in trouble. Ford's anti-inflation program had caused profits to tumble and, worse still, the resultant unemployment created the pre-conditions for a militant response from the proletariat. It is the bourgeoisie, not Gerald Ford, that runs this country, and the bourgeoisie demanded a shift in policy.

The only thing unusual in all of this is that the ruling class let the conservative "Old Time Religion" go as far as it did. Inflation had proved a valuable tool in cutting the real wages of American workers. Overall, therefore, it was actually an aid to the big bourgeoisie. It is true that certain sectors of business were hurt by inflation, but on the whole these were the smaller corporations. The monopolies were able to pass rising production costs on through their ability to set prices.

All in all, the stimulus for Ford's program came from the small bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois sectors. The labor bureaucracy, under pressure from the ranks, squawked against inflation but realized that the mass unemployment that would necessarily result from the budget-balancing method would put them in a still more compromised position. Big business was at best lukewarm to Ford's strategy—some feared the social consequences of unchecked inflation and favored it, others were more terrified of the deep recession they were sure the program would bring on.

## FRENZY

But the petty-bourgeoisie went for the "Old Time Religion" hook, line and sinker. In fact, they demanded it. The petty bourgeoisie is almost always the most disoriented, the most frenzied group in times of crisis. Small businessmen, clerks, low-level government employees, etc., comprise this strata, and they find security in times of stability. Lacking the power of the monopolies, and without the organized and focused strength of the proletariat, they view themselves as spectators to history.

In prosperity, the petty bourgeoisie believes that good times will go on forever. But when the system goes into crisis, they go into crisis as well. Their world seems to crumble around them. Small businesses go bankrupt, small shopkeepers are forced heavily into debt and they lack the strength

to act cohesively as a unit. They look for some force to return stability, on any basis, and for somebody on whom to pin the blame for their grief.

This is precisely what happened during the spiraling inflation of the past two years. Overhead costs rose sharply for the small businessmen, and at the same time they were hurt badly by the credit crunch. As a result, bankruptcies increased and in general the petty bourgeoisie felt squeezed. They rallied around the traditional cry of the "little man." Blame Big Labor, the Big State, and Big Business. Thus they simultaneously provided the impetus to and the support for the conservative approach of calling for a return to "laissez-faire" market forces.

### FASCISM

The rhetoric against Big Labor, Big Business and the Big State is the all-too-familiar refrain of fascist movements, which find their base in the agitated petty-bourgeois and lumpen strata. Mussolini, Hitler and their disciples railed against all the organized forces in society, pretending that they would establish a state in which the "little man" would rule. But only two classes are capable of controlling society: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Under the guise of attacking labor, the state and the corporations equally, fascism inevitably becomes the instrument of the dominant corporate sectors.

When fascist movements come to power, they strengthen the state power tremendously and ruthlessly wield it to smash the institutions of the working class on the behalf of the large monopolies. Fascism thus capitalizes on the agitation of the petty-bourgeoisie, on their frenzied search for stability, to provide a vicious anti-working class solution for the crisis-wracked bourgeoisie.

But the U.S. is not yet ripe for fascism. Despite the depth of the current crisis, bourgeois rule is not in imminent danger. There is no mass revolutionary party. The trade union bureaucracy still maintains its grip on the working class. And the bourgeoisie is not eager to resort to fascism, which puts severe limits on the freedom of the ruling class itself at the same time as it props up the bourgeoisie. Finally, the bourgeoisie is not ready for a direct confrontation against a highly-organized proletariat.

Nor was Ford advocating fascism by any stretch of the imagination. He was simply appealing to the virtues of bygone days, yearning for the less complicated times when the "invisible hand of the market" seemed to automatically regulate the capitalist system. His laissez-faire program, complete with religious overtones, appealed to similar layers as did the fascists, but without their militancy and dynamism.

### MODEL T FORD

Ford was simply putting forward what had been the traditional program of the bourgeoisie—balance the budget, loosen government regulations and let market forces take over. But simple-minded Ford did not understand that this program can no longer represent the real needs of the ruling class, as it did a century ago. Big Business today demands the Big State, and with the best of intentions, Ford wound up advocating a strategy based on the illusions of the petty bourgeoisie rather than on the interests of the dominant corporations.

And so the big bourgeoisie quickly went into hostile opposition to Ford's strategy. It served no purpose except to endanger their survival. Capitalism can no longer survive without massive state intervention. The large monopolies depend on government contracts and subsidies, deficit spending, and a strong state to discipline the proletariat. Cutting back government spending necessarily means throwing the economy into crisis. Viewing the situation realistically, the ruling class saw that their strongest move was to increase state spending and attempt to pull themselves out of the recession. Rather than appealing to the petty-bourgeois elements, the big bourgeoisie charted a course to bolster their own profits while at the same time seeking to appeal to and co-opt the working class.

The Ford-Congress "showdown" is nothing more than a dispute over how to best carry out this tack. Ford, together with many Republicans and sectors

of the bourgeoisie, is proposing a compromise strategy. The reality of the 20th Century has forced Ford, like Nixon before him, to drop his life-long laissez-faire conservatism and to opt for greatly increasing state deficit spending—the very Keynesianism Nixon and Ford both lambasted for decades. But Ford's proposed cutbacks of essential public services and his half-hearted employment program is a half-way house. While bolstering the corporations, it has antagonized the labor bureaucracy, which needs more concessions to ward off the wrath of the ranks.

The Democrats, the trade union bureaucracy, and more far-sighted elements of the bourgeoisie differ with Ford on how to best prop up capitalist rule. They are for making concessions to the working class, the better to dampen the class struggle.

The old liberal-labor alliance, after breaking down in the late 60's and seemingly shattered by the McGovern presidential campaign, is crystallizing again. The Congressional Democrats are showing more solidarity than they have in years, pulling together in opposition to Ford. The labor bur-

earcracy, needing a fig leaf to mask itself before the ranks, is re-aligning with the Democrats. Both the Democrats and the bureaucrats fill the air with hosannahs to Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal. George Meany spoke out for "socialism" in a recent issue of *New America* (mouthpiece of the Social-Democrats, U.S.A.), making it clear that he identified socialism with the New Deal.

What we see before us is the embryonic emergence of the Popular Front, American style. The Democrats are posing concessions to the working class in order to pre-empt the militant response the ruling class fears. The New Deal revival is part and parcel of this development, since the New Deal was the vehicle of U.S. Popular Frontism in the 1930's.

In Europe, where there are mass reformist and

was forced to confine its struggle within the bourgeois channels and prevented from posing a revolutionary alternative. While militant sectors of the working class became demoralized by the repeated sell-outs of their leaderships, the bourgeoisie honed weapons for a "final solution"

Bonapartism and fascism, the bloody repression of the working class, were the punishment for the proletariat's failure to take power, for the betrayals of the Stalinists and reformists. When the workers' misleaders demonstrated that they would not provide a real alternative, the frenzied petty-bourgeois elements flocked to the banners of the far right, seeking stability there. The disarmed working class was crushed. This was the history of Germany and Spain four decades ago. It was repeated less than two years ago in Chile. The U.S. avoided this path only because the defeat of the international working class and the U.S. hegemony following World War II allowed for a period of economic stability during the post-war boom.

The Popular Front crystallizing within the Democratic Party today is designed, like its ancestors, to tie the workers to the capitalists. Though still embryonic in form, its outlines can be traced in the liberals' economic approach. Their formal program of expanded deficit financing, more public service jobs, bigger tax cuts and the like is dressed in gobs of rhetoric about championing the interests of the poor and oppressed against the monopolies, defending civil liberties against the reactionaries, and fighting for world peace against the war-mongers.

Elements are emerging with a more advanced program—among them, of all people, Henry Ford II. Shaken by the economic crisis, Henry Ford has called for a more co-ordinated government economic planning. Coming from a dyed-in-the-wool conservative, this is quite a jolt.

Henry Ford told the Congressional Joint Economic Committee: "In my thirty years as a businessman, I have never before felt so uncertain and so troubled about the future of both my country and my company." He continued, "I'd hate to see government get into the financing of private enterprise . . . I would be very frightened. But who knows what you have to do to get the economy moving?"

In order to bail out the bourgeoisie, Henry Ford is willing to give far broader powers to the bourgeois state. He made it plain that he doesn't like the idea,

but that the capitalist crisis has forced this alternative upon him.

Henry Ford is not alone in wanting to increase the role of the state. His testimony was followed by that of UAW head Leonard Woodcock. Woodcock is part of a group calling itself the Initiative Committee for National Economic Planning, which also includes John Kenneth Galbraith and former Undersecretary of the Treasury Robert V. Roosa (a long-time conservative).

The labor bureaucracy and university professors like Galbraith (and other Initiative Committee members like Wassily Leontief and Robert

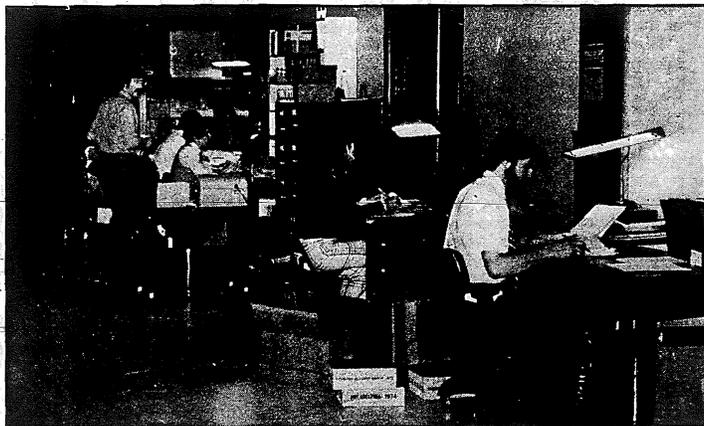
Lakachman) are, like Henry Ford, seeking a long-term solution to capitalism's problems. These elements are looking for a way to overcome the inherent contradictions of the capitalist system by centralizing production more in the hands of the state.

No matter where we turn, we find the ruling class and its lieutenants seeking to strengthen the government's hand to cope with the crisis. The only question is how this will be done. At this point, although the liberal-labor bloc is emerging, the Democrats have not stepped out sharply and hostilely against Ford. That is why Henry Ford,

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Alan Greenspan ponders collapsing economy.



While economy slides Congress churns out tons of useless rhetoric. Here bloated Congressional staff, which has risen from 10,000 to 17,000 in the last five years, overflows into the hallways.

Stalinist workers' parties, the Popular Front has traditionally taken the form of an alliance between these organizations and left-posing bourgeois parties. In the 1930's, under the banner of democracy, peace and unity of all "progressive" forces against fascism, the Popular Front became the main strategic device of Stalin's Comintern.

In the U.S., the Popular Front has historically formed inside the Democratic Party. The relatively small Communist Party and the trade union bureaucracy lined up solidly with FDR and the New Deal, shackling the proletariat to the bourgeoisie.

But both in Europe and America, the Popular Front disarmed the working class. The proletariat

## Editorial

## Women's Day '75

March 8 marks the 65th anniversary of International Women's Day. The tasks facing revolutionary women on this International Women's Day are enormous. The past year has seen the gains won by women through struggle slashed by the onslaught of the crisis of world capitalism. Unemployment among women in the U.S., for example, has increased nearly 60 per cent in the last year. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports over three and a half million women officially unemployed in January, 1975. These statistics, of course, don't take into account the millions of women who have never been able to get jobs, or who have given up trying altogether. In many basic industries, such as auto, women have been laid off virtually in toto.

Women are thus being bludgeoned back to the status of housewives and welfare recipients. The "lucky" few who have jobs are relegated to the most menial, low-paying, degrading kinds of work. The crime rate among women, particularly violent crimes, has soared as women's anger and frustration is manifested in individual and apolitical forms. Black and Latino women, as always, have been hit hardest by the current crisis. Women workers, along with their brothers, are struggling for their very survival!

International Women's Day commemorates the struggle of women against capitalist exploitation and oppression. Established by the world socialist movement in 1910, the first International Women's Day was marked in the U.S. by a series of highly militant textile strikes in New York. The then-revolutionary Second (Socialist) International stressed that the struggle of women for liberation was part of the international proletarian fight against the system of capitalist wage slavery itself. International Women's Day was founded as an explicitly proletarian holiday.

Not so today! The ruling class, which understands that a class conscious proletariat poses its extermination, is working overtime to coopt women's aspirations for liberation into channels acceptable to capitalism. The United Nations, still a tool for imperialism, has proclaimed 1975 as "International Women's Year." This bourgeois sham, replete with official jewelry and endless conferences, is designed to convince women that the answer to their oppression lies in "perfecting" capitalism.

The ruling class is abetted in this task of undermining the revolutionary potential of the proletarian women's struggle by the existing "leadership" of the women's movement. The radical petty-bourgeois women's movement of the late 1960's has dissipated. In the absence of a revolutionary leadership, its left wing, never fully cohered nor committed to the proletariat, was dispersed. Some of the radical women entered left organizations. Others abandoned politics altogether. Some, in despair and frustration, capitulated to the right wing, openly reformist forces in the women's movement. Thus, these pro-reformist forces gained hegemony. Led by the National Women's Political Caucus, the National Organization of Women (NOW) and the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), these currents work to channel the women's movement into an alliance with the liberal wing of the ruling class.

The current economic crisis clearly reveals the loyalties of these misleaders. Instead of mobilizing women to be a leading force in building a counter-attack to the capitalist onslaught, NOW, CLUW and others act as the bourgeoisie's advance contingent, smoothing out the road to reaction. By focusing only on the layoffs of women workers, these betrayers work to keep the struggle for jobs from being generalized and directed against the capitalist system as a whole. In New York, for example, NOW is fighting only **discriminatory** layoffs. A NOW representative quoted in the *New York Times* whiningly defends NOW's inaction: "so far we haven't heard of anything major." NOW

shamelessly admits that "there is nothing major" for it to do while three and a half million women and over four and a half million men are unemployed!

Both NOW and CLUW are now working to divert the fight against layoffs into a fight against the seniority system. Having accepted capitalism's bounds, that the "social pie" is limited and its crumbs must be fought over by the various sections of the proletariat, these organizations end up in the bourgeois courts fighting to overturn one of the few measures of job security the working class has. This class-dividing strategy is out and out reactionary class treason! The bourgeoisie rubs its hands in glee over the prospect of internecine warfare within the working class; men against women, worker against worker. They hope to direct the anger of minority and women workers away from the capitalists toward the older white workers. Smashing the seniority system would be a tremendous weapon in the bourgeoisie's union-busting arsenal. It would be a colossal step **backward** for women workers.

CLUW, a trade union organization portraying itself as "left" of the "classless" NOW, has carried its class-dividing strategy a step further. CLUW is calling demonstrations on International Women's Day to protest the economic crisis. But typically, the demonstrations are open only to trade union women—as CLUW itself is open only to organized women. There will certainly be speakers from the Democratic Party and the AFL-CIO bureaucracy at these demonstrations, but no representatives from the unorganized and unemployed, the majority and potentially most militant strata of women. The underlying content of the CLUW demonstrations is here exposed. "Jobs for all" . . . "all" meaning a few unionized women willing to follow the reformists.

CLUW's real goal is to elect more women bureaucrats and increase their influence within the existing trade union hierarchy and ruling class circles. To do this, the CLUW bureaucrats must prove they are loyal lieutenants worthy of "equal opportunity" to sell out the working class, by delivering votes to Democratic Party hacks, for rotten contract ratifications, against any perspective which threatens to break the proletariat from the death-trap of reformism.

International Women's Day must signal the struggle against this death-trap. Class conscious women have no interest in the bourgeoisie's slick phrases—in its agents' cynical maneuvers to trivialize and undermine the fight for women's equality. International Women's Day and the struggle it represents must be wrested from bourgeois forces and its revolutionary content restored.

The exploitation and oppression of women is rooted in class society itself. The bourgeois democratic program which the left wing of the petty bourgeoisie put forward in the Great French Revolution promised "liberty, equality and fraternity" under capitalism's banner. Equality before the law and equality in the market place—these were progressive features of the new social system. To a considerable extent, the development of capitalism did break down hierarchical, feudal bonds. These bonds tied the feudal producer to the land, the church and the family in a web of restrictive caste relationships. Under capitalism, the proletariat was to be "free"—"free" of property and "free" to sell his labor power to any capitalist who would hire him. In fact, even in capitalism's heyday remnants of the feudal order remained. Women, for example, never equally shared the fruits of bourgeois democracy.

Capitalism has long since quit its progressive epoch. Since approximately the turn of the century, capitalism has had to turn against its own program to prop up a rotting imperialist system. In underdeveloped countries the landlords, the church, hereditary, racial and sexual privilege, and other feudal remnants are bulwarks for the maintenance of capitalism. These are essential tools to keep the underdeveloped nations safe plundering grounds for a handful of imperialist giants.

In the "advanced" nations racked by economic crisis, it is impossible to bring the most oppressed strata into the productive process—there are no jobs to be had. Pre-capitalist caste relationships are maintained and strengthened to keep down the most oppressed workers. In times of acute crisis and

threat of proletarian revolution, the bourgeoisie seeks to use the mobilized hysterical sections of the petty bourgeoisie, another pre-capitalist class, as a fascist battering ram against the proletariat.

In the epoch of imperialist decay, the bourgeoisie fights to restrict and roll back the democratic rights of the workers and oppressed masses. Whatever partial gains are wrested from the ruling class through struggle are continually threatened. At best, in periods of relative stability such as the 50's in the advanced countries, capitalism can afford to grant minimal concessions in order to maintain social peace. The Civil Rights movement of the 50's and 60's gained partial victories through intense and prolonged class struggle. In return, the middle-class dominated leadership of the black movement used these concessions to try to keep the black proletarian masses in line.

Even partial victories for the women's movement have been few and far between. With the collapse of the post-war boom, the ruling class is unwilling to grant concessions to women. Not even the right to abortion, let alone free abortion on demand, has been won. Rather, a black Boston doctor is framed on a manslaughter charge for performing a legal abortion. Child care, paid maternity leaves—even the most minimal prerequisites for women's equality—remain unfulfilled. Ruling class liberals always try to deceive the masses by putting themselves forward as the "champions of the oppressed." In the face of full-scale capitalist crises, even this facade fades: the best these enemies of the working class can do is vote against raising the price of food stamps. These kind champions will let the working class starve more slowly than Gerald Ford.

As capitalism's crisis continues to unfold in ever more horrifying form, as the spectres of fascism and world war draw closer, women workers along with the rest of the proletariat must choose. Social reformism and its agents in the women's movement offers no way out. Indeed, it cannot even offer the status quo. Either the proletariat takes state power in its own name, or humanity will be hurled back centuries. The reformist misleaders of NOW and CLUW will hand the proletariat over to its exploiters, sapping the potential strength of a socialist women's movement, diverting women workers from their real tasks.

On International Women's Day, revolutionaries must raise the banner of social revolution, must call for women workers to take their place in the forefront of the struggle for socialism. Proletarian women have a strong revolutionary tradition. They have been in the front ranks of every revolutionary party and struggle, have shown their courage and determination countless times. In this epoch, of imperialist decay, the struggle for women's liberation, for the fulfillment of the bourgeois democratic promises of equality, can only be victorious as part of the international proletariat's struggle for socialist revolution.

As they fight in the day to day struggle of proletarian women for jobs, rights and dignity, revolutionary women must fight for this perspective. On this International Women's Day, the Revolutionary Socialist League, the nucleus of the U.S. section of the Reconstructed Fourth International, reaffirms its dedication to fight for this perspective, the perspective of the Permanent Revolution.

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# RSL FIGHTS FOR REVOLUTIONARY UAW UNEMPLOYMENT COMMITTEES IN LOCAL 51

The struggle for unemployment committees to unite working and laid-off auto workers at Detroit Chrysler UAW Local 51 can be an important step in building a proletarian response to the capitalist offensive against the working class. This struggle is being systematically derailed by the local bureaucrats and their allies.

The depth of the crisis in Detroit auto is horrifying. Unemployment is at depression levels—rising to 50 per cent in some sections of the inner city, the heart of Detroit's black proletariat. The impending collapse of the SUB fund, continual rumors of Chrysler's bankruptcy, and no upturn in sight threaten disaster for the auto workers unless they join the fight to overturn the whole rotting capitalist system.

Unemployment committees represent an embryonic focal point for a proletarian counter-attack to the crisis. Here the potentially most militant sections of the working class—blacks, women, young workers who are being thrown out of work by the millions and who have no stake in "saving" capitalism, could be brought together with those still working to map out a strategy to defend jobs and living standards. One of the greatest dangers facing the proletariat is the attempt by the ruling class to pit the employed and unemployed sectors of the workers against each other as the crisis deepens. This "divide and conquer" strategy must be actively combatted by the organized proletariat, whose strength lies precisely in its unity and determination. Instead of dropping unemployed workers from the union roles, as the UAW is doing in Linden, New Jersey, it is necessary to draw these workers into the very heart of the struggle.

There will be no help from the union tops and their cronies in this pressing task. UAW President Leonard Woodcock, for example, is "keeping his fingers crossed" that the capitalists (with his help) will be able to pull out of the crisis while keeping the ranks safely in line. Instead of mobilizing angry auto workers in a real fight for jobs, he arranges token gestures like the Washington march to place a little pressure on President Ford and to let the workers blow off steam. Woodcock's commitment to the Democratic Party is a commitment to capitalism, to screwing the working class only somewhat less blatantly than the Republicans. A working class divided between employed and unemployed is crucial to his plans.

Last fall, the Revolutionary Socialist League joined with other militants to fight for unemployment committees in Detroit UAW locals. Along with the Lynch Road Revolutionary Union Movement (LYNRUM), which generally supports the line of the Communist Labor Party and Concerned Rank and File (which later affiliated with the United National Caucus), supporters of the Revolutionary Socialist League helped circulate a petition calling for the formation of unemployment committees within the UAW.

Over 1,000 workers signed this petition.

Unlike other groups involved, however, we stressed that such committees must fight to unite the unemployed and employed auto workers. This unity can only be based on the common interests of both sectors. The unemployed committees cannot, therefore, be merely service organizations which really serve to make the unemployed resigned to their fate. They must be based on the only perspective that can defend the interests of the entire working class. That is, upon a revolutionary program including demands for a sliding scale of wages and hours (30 for 40), nationalization of the auto industry under workers' control, a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed—a national mass meeting of democratically elected representatives of the proletariat to fight for a revolutionary workers' government (See the Auto Bulletin reprinted in Torch No. 17).

How did the local bureaucracy respond to this United Front effort to establish an unemployment committee? Feeling the threat that such a committee might break out of the bounds of narrow reformism, Local 51 president Tony Janette refused to even allow the issue to come up at the November union meeting. But such a maneuver was too blatant, too exposing of the bureaucrats' role to suit the tastes of the UAW tops at Solidarity House. These hacks had a better plan: "support" establishing an unemployment committee . . . and then gut it of all content by limiting its functions to purely welfare and informational services. Moreover, Woodcock and cohorts warned, insist on bureaucratic appointment to the committee; so that it absolutely cannot reflect the developing consciousness of the ranks. The UAW bureaucracy fears a militant rank and file which would threaten its position far more than it fears the onslaught of the auto magnates.

The Communist Party supported this shameful betrayal. The CP's major perspective in the U.S. is to build an "anti-monopoly coalition." Such a coalition, ostensibly led by working class organizations, is to include all "progressive" forces. To the CP this means not only the proletariat, but middle class liberals, small businessmen and "progressive" capitalists, i.e., the liberal wing of the ruling class. This anti-monopoly coalition, the CP argues, will win state power peacefully, and through a number of intermediate stages begin to construct socialism. This perspective is a piece of vile class collaborationism. The coalition is a popular front, a cross-class alliance designed to subordinate the workers to the capitalists, to blunt the workers' consciousness, derail the class struggle and block the socialist revolution. It means the betrayal and defeat of the working class, as in Chile and Spain.

As part of this strategy, the CP orients to the "left wing" of the current labor bureaucracy—not simply to the old entrenched Stalinist leaderships in the United Electrical

Workers, 1199, etc., but also to Woodcock, UAW President Arnold Miller and their ilk. Hence the softness of the CP to the UAW bureaucracy generally, and to its anti-AFL-CIO wing led by Secretary-Treasurer Emil Mazey in particular. To build, and build its influence in, this wing of the bureaucracy, the CP picks and chooses the more left-sounding elements to side up to around the most rotten reformist programs.

While the CP rarely directly attacks the UAW leadership, the main brunt of its attack is reserved for its left-wing opponents, the Maoists and other centrists and the Revolutionary Socialist League. The latter are branded as "anti-union," "disrupters," and other labels from the arsenal of red-baiters.

The CP's Auto Workers Action Caucus (AWAC), built around vague union democracy and anti-racist slogans with 30 for 40 thrown in for radical cover, stresses that the group will try to win the support of local bureaucrats. The October issue of Political Affairs, theoretical organ of the CP, attacks the notoriously passive United National Caucus (UNC) for not being "loyal opposition," for being "anti-leadership" regarding the UAW tops. To the CP, the threat of any opposition must be nipped in the bud, before it can challenge to the CP's cozy relationship with "its bureaucrats."

Thus, the CP's support to the bureaucrats' unemployment committees. A letter printed in the CP's Daily World, and later circulated at the February Local 51 meeting, gives the following account of the struggle for unemployment committees:

At the December membership meeting for our local, UAW Plymouth No. 51, a committee on unemployment was set up by reactivating the Community Services Committee of the local.

... There was hesitation in the union leadership for a committee because of a group of phony leftists (many of them not so long in our plants) who say they are Maoists, Trotskyites, and numerous other labels.

... the phony left cried they didn't want any unemployed committee unless it was a "rank and file" committee, to be elected. They disrupted our meetings, for months kept us from getting a committee. The officers of our local appointed some members of the committee, then announced volunteers could also be members, but the disrupters didn't want that and never joined.

... Now the Maoists have been joined by other political slickers who continue to hold us in endless debate and turn us against each other and the local officers who are willing to work with us. The new "Saviours" call themselves the "Revolutionary Socialists"; the "Communist Labor Party." Because our International Union is not organizing our members to fight the depression, but continues to collaborate with the employers and Washington, these phonies are able to take advantage and throw all kinds of confusing garbage at us."

This letter is a disgusting portrayal of the CP's role in the labor movement. Under the phony cover of "Detroit Auto Worker" (the Stalinists often use this device to cover their most right-wing attacks), the CP places itself in the role of chief defender of Janette and Co. against the militants. The CP knows fullwell that it was the pressure of these militants which forced the UAW leaders to take some kind of minimal face-saving action in setting up an unemployment committee. Yet they are willing to lie in re-writing history to their own ends: preserving their relationship with Janette and suppressing the militancy of the ranks. The CP will remain a major obstacle in the path of social revolution until it is swept aside by the class-conscious proletariat.

The remaining opposition forces within Local 51 played the same game as Janette and his allies in the CP. LYNRUM fought to restrict the unemployment committees to welfare and information services. Despite its revolutionary rhetoric, LYNRUM put forward the same reformist program as that supported by the CP! It is thus no surprise that after weeks of trumpeting its opposition to a bureaucratically-appointed committee LYNRUM has meekly joined the bureaucrats' committee without any perspective to challenge the bureaucrats' control.

Concerned Rank and File, supported by the International Socialists, joined in this betrayal. While capitulating to our demand for programmatic and strategic clarification among the opposition forces, the IS's own propaganda continues to be constricted by its Economist-reformist approach. At this point when the economic crisis must be used to explain graphically to the most class conscious elements the necessity of social revolution, when the world movement cries out for the construction of a vanguard party of revolutionary leadership, the IS remains wedded to its "next step" tailist method. This method means capitulation to the consciousness of the more backward workers, to the parochial and reformist illusions imposed by the labor bureaucracy. The IS's blatant adaptation to the UNC, which functions as a pressure group on the bureaucracy necessarily follows. The IS shares the UNC's fundamental refusal to fight for a revolutionary perspective within every partial struggle of the working class—to function as a revolutionary vanguard.

The Revolutionary Socialist League will continue to expose the official unemployment committee as nothing but a face-saving gesture by fighting within the ranks for the implementation of our program and strategy by the unemployment committee. In this we will be joined, tomorrow if not today, by the best elements in the UAW who we will win to our perspectives, to the revolutionary party, to the banner of the reconstructed Fourth International, Party of World Revolution.

# PO Workers Under Attack FIGHT THE KOKOMO PLAN

Reprinted below is a Torch Postal Bulletin issued by the Revolutionary Socialist League in New York.

The Kokomo Plan is the most systematic attempt yet to transform letter carriers into speeded-up industrial robots. In the name of computerized "scientific objectivity," the postal bosses plan to eliminate thousands of routes and jobs. Presently routes are supposed to be adjusted according to a carrier's general ability, age and physical stamina. Under the Kokomo Plan, all letter carriers will be required to keep up with the breakneck speed of Kokomo standards or face discipline and suspension. If the Kokomo Plan succeeds in harnessing letter carriers, it will only be a short while before all postal workers find similar productivity schemes shoved down their throats.

Already in Kokomo, Indiana, the results are clear. Two Branch 36 members visited Kokomo and found that letter carriers were forced to spend up to twelve hours completing a route which the bosses' computer says can be done in eight! In working a route like this, a Kokomo carrier must box mail and deliver it to as many as 700 stops (400-500 stops is the norm in New York). In addition, a carrier in Kokomo must deliver all parcel post and make all collections on his route.

The horrors of the Kokomo Plan are nothing less than a carefully planned nationwide attack on all letter carriers. To pull themselves through the economic crisis, the capitalists have no choice but to drive workers' living standards back to the levels of the 1930's through inflation, unemployment and cutbacks in social services. The bosses must try to wring more profits out of those still employed by speeding up the pace of work to unheard of levels. Massive layoffs, sky-rocketing inflation and productivity schemes like Kokomo are part of the vicious attacks that capitalism has in store for workers around the world.

The postal bosses are afraid of the workers' response to the current attacks. In order to "sell" the Kokomo Plan, the bosses' strategy is to divide and conquer. Rather than implement the plan on a national scale in a head-on attack, the postal bosses will try to first pick-off groups of carriers in isolated areas and then move in on the major cities. Accordingly, management first billed the plan as an "experiment" in Kokomo. Later they announced that it would be "tested" further in Portland and Providence. In this manner, the postal bosses will attempt to spread the Plan over the entire country, isolating and weakening the militant leadership that New York postal workers have given to postal workers nationally.

## CRUCIAL TEST

The truth is that the Kokomo attack is really testing the carriers' ability to fight back. The test is crucial. If the bosses can successfully force Kokomo down the throats of carriers, they will certainly dream up a "Kalamazoo" Plan to speed up the clerks and

mailhandlers! The fight against the Kokomo Plan and all it represents must spearhead the struggles of all postal workers.

How has the leadership of the carriers responded? National President Rademacher has already made it clear that he will not fight. He has refused to conduct union-sponsored studies of the delivery standards in Kokomo—studies authorized by the contract. Instead, Rademacher accepts whatever standards the postal bosses have programmed their computer to print out!

Branch 36 President Sombrotto, on the other hand, has called for such studies—but has put forward no method of using them to stop the plan. Carriers' jobs can be defended only if the union's delivery standards—not the speeded-up standards of the Kokomo computer—define the load for carriers. Postal workers need a leadership which is prepared to fight for these standards.

Sombrotto says he is willing to strike against the Kokomo Plan, but

and layoffs. Sombrotto's willingness to do whatever is necessary to keep the bosses in business—to maintain capitalism—makes his strategy nothing but another attack on postal workers.

What is needed to win is not the tough talk—no action of a Sombrotto, nor the more blatant class-collaborationist strategy of a Rademacher, but a revolutionary strategy. The leaders of all the major unions (hacks like Meany, Woodcock and Abel or Rademacher, Sombrotto and Biller), no matter what their rhetoric, are class-collaborationist. They want to salvage capitalism, so they cooperate with the capitalist class. When the bosses attack, they help the bosses. When the workers fight back, these hacks sabotage the workers' efforts.

Class-collaborationists will always hold back the struggle. By tying workers to the decaying capitalist system, they stand in the way of the only solution to capitalism's crisis—its revolutionary overthrow by the working class.



All postal workers face threat of Kokomo speedups.

his strategy stops there. Sombrotto has said the Kokomo Plan has been around for months, but not until November, just before elections, did Outlook run a major story. It was at the December branch meeting that carriers voted unanimously to call for a strike if the Plan were implemented anywhere. However, instead of leading the membership in making the necessary preparations to defeat Kokomo, Sombrotto called for a quick vote on the strike motion and adjourned the meeting. In fact, Sombrotto will not lead a strike against Kokomo unless pressured to do so by the ranks. By leaving the membership unprepared and unmobilized, Sombrotto is giving himself room to maneuver and compromise with the bosses later.

Sombrotto's program calls on letter carriers to be militant but fails to confront the gravity of the attack. Even if Sombrotto makes some kind of a fight, he will settle for what a declining, crisis-ridden and increasingly unproductive capitalism can grant: a productivity scheme in a slightly milder form, soaring inflation

Today, most workers understand that they are under attack, but see no way to fight back. While a growing number of workers do understand the need for revolution, they have no strategy to make one. The Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL) and its newspaper, The Torch, is providing that strategy.

The task today is to build a leadership, by cohering revolutionary-minded workers around a revolutionary program. With such a program, revolutionaries can reach the rest of the working class, and can strengthen and unify it. The militancy of rank and file workers can be unleashed, the class-collaborationist hacks driven out and the unions used as a weapon in the struggle for Socialism.

Our program consists of revolutionary solutions—measures the workers in power would carry out—posed in the form that can be fought for today. These solutions are based on the actual needs of workers, not on what capitalism is willing or able to grant at the moment. This program enables us to fight alongside workers who don't believe a revolution is

needed, so that we can prove this to them in struggle. It is a program to defend the working class and at the same time win workers to the revolutionary banner.

In order to defend postal workers against the Kokomo Plan one thing must be clear: the attacks of Kokomo are part of the international offensive of a decaying capitalist system. Kokomo cannot be fought successfully in isolation. There will always be a "Kalamazoo" to replace a Kokomo unless workers take up a strategy that links the struggle against Kokomo to a struggle to overthrow capitalism itself.

Here is the program which postal workers must fight for in order to make such a struggle possible:

## JOBS FOR ALL!

Against the bosses' attempts to speed up carriers and eliminate jobs, the NALC must fight to restore and expand a declining postal service through increased hiring. This must become part of a program to expand housing, education, health, sanitation, fire protection—all necessary social services—by hiring all who are available to work at union wages. We need jobs for all and 30 hour week at 40 hours pay.

The NALC should take the lead in forming workers' and consumers' committees to monitor the real effects of inflation on working people and the unemployed. To combat the ravages of inflation, the NALC must fight to win full cost of living escalators for all workers based on the findings of such workers' committees.

Real cost of living clauses, increased hiring—in fact, all expanded public services—must be financed by taxing the capitalist banks and corporations—not workers' wages!

The bosses will protest that they cannot afford such "exorbitant" demands for workers. Against this response of the bosses, workers must demand that the Postal Service cancel its bonds. If capitalists cannot give workers enough jobs and a decent standard of living, the working class make take production into its own hands. Revolutionary-minded workers must point to the need to nationalize the banks and industry under workers' control.

The starting point for such a fight must be the call for public employee unity. NALC must raise the need for coordinated public employee strikes—posing the need for a general strike if necessary to defend workers. Coordinated action demands one unified postal union.

## WORKER'S DEFENSE

The capitalists will fight this program tooth and nail using all the means of repression at their disposal. Postal workers must be prepared: NALC must organize workers' defense guards to defend picket lines against the attacks of scabs, police, troops and thugs. Such defense guards must also be used to defend Blacks, Latins and other oppressed people against racist and fascist attacks. A year ago Outlook proposed arming shop stewards against provocations of Postal Service security guards. Rademacher and Sombrotto clearly do not take such a call seriously.

The struggle is not just a union matter—it is political. But the labor

# HOW THE R.U. RESTORES CAPITALISM

## Part Four: REFORMISM IN REVOLUTIONARY CLOTHES

by Walter Dahl and Jack Gregory

The death-agony of capitalism in its epoch of decay forces revisionists of all stripes to invent a constellation of ways to support capitalism while appearing to oppose it. The labor bureaucracy in the United States, for example, contains scores of self-proclaimed socialists, including, at times, George Meany. The reformist Socialist Parties of the Second International likewise call for the abolition of capitalism through gradual reform. A host of academics, currently headed by John Kenneth Galbraith, trumpet the same message.

The last thing these reformists want, what they fear most, is real socialism, the revolutionary rule of the working masses. Because they are not tied to specific property holdings, as are the monopolists, they are able to take a long-term view of capitalism's prospects. The prospects are bleak. Famine, depression, destruction of the environment, the threat of nuclear war all loom. Worst of all, the organized proletariat poses a constant threat of revolution. And so, in varying degrees, the reformists seek a solution to capitalism's crisis in increased statification, nationalization and bourgeois planning.

Bourgeois apologists of all stripes rally round the state when capitalism enters into open crisis. The state must contain the revolutionary workers. It must regulate the business cycle. It must maintain production when the floor threatens to collapse underneath the economy. "State, help!" cry the reformists. And then they crown statification with the term socialism.

It is no accident that in the 1930's, in the midst of the Great Depression, an armada of reformists and other bourgeois sycophants sang the praises of Stalin's Russia. Here was their dream come alive.

Here the workers were wrapped in iron chains, a monolithic state machine appeared all-powerful, the program of statification was carried to its final conclusion.

During the post-war boom, the USSR's western friends became disaffected. Western capitalism was working fine once more, and the program of statification was being adopted gradually. U.S. imperialism had the advantage of appearing to be democratic to boot, and the former adherents of complete statification now bestowed their blessings upon the Keynesian "mixed economy" characteris-

tic of post-war capitalism in the West.

But alas, this was not the best of all possible worlds. The post-war stability has ended, and even the big bourgeoisie now fears a crisis that threatens civilization itself. Once more, the need for nationalization is being murmured in reformist circles. Even notorious anti-communists like Henry Ford II speculate that the role of the state in production may have to be drastically increased. And once more, middle class elements seek a

statified paradise to serve as the New Utopia.

For many, the USSR has outlived its usefulness. The brutal suppressions of the Hungarian and Czech workers disillusioned even hardened followers of the Moscow line. The naked imperialism of the USSR towards its satellites and its open complicity with U.S. foreign policy have made Russia unpalatable to many elements.

In particular, disillusionment with the USSR was one of the basic roots of the American New Left.



May, 1917: Trotsky returns to Petrograd and calls for proletarian revolution.

**Maoism, and the RU, represents an unstable, vacillating centrism. Its elitist fear of the working class leads to the crass acceptance of state capitalism for socialism.**

SDS's early anti-communism and rejection of Leninism in favor of liberal ultra-democracy ("participatory democracy") was in large part the product of an emerging radical generation rejecting the shattered ideal of the previous generation. But like their parents, the early SDSers equated Russian state-capitalism with Leninist socialism. Where their ancestors had uncritically supported Russian Stalinism and then become bitter and cynical, the new generation opposed it, but rejected Marxism because of the Russian experience.

So when thousands of New Leftists began to consider themselves revolutionaries, they looked neither to the CP nor to Russia. Chinese Maoism became the attractive alternative. Hadn't Mao expelled the Russian advisers and broken with Moscow? Didn't China appear to run a revolutionary foreign policy line? Wasn't it part of the general struggle of the oppressed Third World masses against imperialism?

The tarnished image of Russia was replaced with the more presentable model of Chinese Stalinism. But China is no more socialist than Russia. As we showed in the previous part of this series, Mao established what he set out to construct--bourgeois rule on a state-capitalist basis, without and indeed against the proletariat.

### THE RU'S ROOTS

The RU emerged out of the New Left. It was founded in the Bay Area by student activists, ex-students involved in "community organizing" (the student movement's graduate school), and a sprinkling of old-line Stalinists who had been through the CP and Progressive Labor. While RU leaders like Bob Avakian had initially been attracted to Maoism through its guerrillaist aspects (Avakian had flirted with the adventurist romanticism of Regis Debray), the old Stalinists quickly convinced them that to be Maoists they had to be orthodox Stalinists, convincingly citing the Thought of Chairman Mao.

The path followed by the early RU was paralleled by thousands of subjective revolutionaries in SDS and the New Left. A generation repelled by Stalinism, after seeking refuge in left-liberalism, returned to Stalinism through the medium of Mao. They maintained their hostility to the USSR. They maintained their disdain for the Communist Party. But their subjective revolutionary impulses were derailed, and instead of coming to revolutionary socialism they identified with left-posing Chinese state-capitalism.

How did this come about? First of all, we should place these events in their historical setting. The mass attraction of Maoism in SDS took place in 1968-69. At this time, U.S. capitalism was visibly entering into crisis as the post-war boom unraveled. A huge strike wave shook this country, including the bitter strike against General Electric and, in 1970, the militant postal strike. The working class, written off by most student activists, announced its presence dramatically.

Marxism-Leninism thus gained a new appeal. Maybe Marx was right after all. Maybe the proletariat is the revolutionary force in capitalist society. The rejection of the proletariat, which had accompanied the rejection of Stalinism by the New Left, was suddenly open to question.

As thousands of SDS members began to consider a Marxist orientation to the proletariat, Maoism reared its ugly head. Maoism had a tremendous appeal to the student movement. Here was a means to identify with Marxism while maintaining hostility to the USSR and the CP, to call for an orientation to the proletariat while uncritically tailing nationalist groups (through Mao's "two-stage" New Democratic theory, discussed in the third piece in this series), and to maintain liberal elitism under a revolutionary guise. Once more, as capitalism went into open crisis, revolutionary elements were misled into Stalinism.

From the origins of the Maoists in the U.S. generally, and the RU specifically, we can see the roots of the centrism of Maoism. Centrism is a petty-bourgeois disease that stands, or more accurately vacillates, between reformism and revolutionary socialism. In brief, centrism is reformism in revolutionary clothes. In particular, Maoism in the U.S. must constantly attempt to

hide its true politics, which are fundamentally the same as the Communist Party, behind revolutionary slogans and adventurist actions.

U.S. Maoists are caught in this position. Their hostility to Russia and to the CP, as we have seen, has roots that go back to the origins of the New Left. But their opposition to Brezhnev and Gus Hall now runs deeper than this. Without this opposition, there would be no basis for organizational independence from the CP. Therefore, the RU must attack Russia as state-capitalist. It must attack the CP as class-collaborationist.

On the other side, a real analysis of Russian state-capitalism (as opposed to the hogwash and whitewash job of Red Papers No. 7), one which exposed Stalin's role as organizer of the state-capitalist counter-revolution, would require a break with Stalinism and with Stalin's Chinese admirers. In the same way, a re-examination of the Communist Party, USA would force abandoning Foster as well as Browder, and giving up the pretense that the CP was a revolutionary organization until the 1950's.

Maoism therefore can neither break towards revolutionary socialism, Trotskyism, nor (today) return to orthodox Soviet revisionism. It remains an unstable, vacillating centrism. But underneath the revolutionary clothes, the Maoists share the bankrupt perspectives of the CP on virtually all fundamentals.

Like the CP, the Maoists are supporters of state-capitalism. When stripped of all its trappings, the RU's analysis of capitalist restoration in the USSR boils down to accusing Khrushchev of decentralizing the economy, and then claiming that Brezhnev and Kosygin fully restored capitalism by completing the decentralization.

It is true that some decentralization occurred in the post-Stalin years, mainly because of the chaos created in the Stalinist command economy by the attempts to price arbitrarily. In capitalist society, price is determined by value, and the law of value in turn determines the division of labor. The decentralization in Russia represented the recognition by the bureaucracy that the law of value imposed a division of labor upon them despite their schemes. For example, the proletariat must be paid enough to subsist and reproduce if production is to continue. Stalin's forced-labor nearly destroyed the Russian workers, and Stalin himself recognized this as early as 1949, when he approved reforms required if production in Russia was to be maintained. And these reforms included some decentralization, in the attempt to find a method to set prices more realistically by mimicking capitalist market methods.

So it was Stalin who first introduced such measures. Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Kosygin carried them further, making concessions to the Russian workers in an attempt to solidify their rule. But in the past few years, centralization has gained the upper hand. Liberman and his school of decentralizers have been broken up. Decentralization, in its own way, was causing economic disorder as individual plants competed openly against one another (instead of covertly, as they had under Stalin). Does this mean that Russia is returning to socialism, RU? Does the recent centralization in the hands of Brezhnev and Kosygin represent increased power for the Russian workers? Of course not! But that is what the RU should say.

The reason that the RU puts forward such nonsense is that they identify socialism as really centralized state capitalism, using Stalin as the model. Despite their protestations that capitalism can exist on a statified basis, they demonstrate their support for state capitalism by their own analysis.

Because Stalin restored capitalism in the USSR, and because all of the crimes of his bureaucratic heirs were just pale reflections of his acts, the RU cannot even tell us when capitalism was restored in Russia.

**This negation of the negation must be firmly grasped. There is the first negation: under Khrushchev's leadership, the bourgeoisie attacks Marxism-Leninism, begins the wrecking of socialism. But then there is a second negation, in a sense symbolized by the coming to power of Brezhnev and Kosygin (though there is no brick wall politically dividing their reign from that of Khrushchev). Khrushchev and Khrushchevism come under attack. 'Discipline' and 'control' re-emerge as**

**watchwords of the day. The economy is systematically restored to working capitalist order.**

### DIALECTICS IN WONDERLAND

By means of fanciful dialectics, the RU is attempting to mask the essential continuity between Stalin and modern Soviet state capitalism. Unable to claim that Soviet capitalism is "private" and internally competitive, the RU resorts to the theory of a more-or-less competitive stage under Khrushchev. But all they have succeeded in doing is to shove their insoluble problem over a bit.

What sort of society was Khrushchev's Russia, according to the RU? Certainly, not "socialist," since it was Khrushchev in 1956 who organized the "crucial turning point in the restoration process." Was Russia then capitalist? The RU must believe it was, especially since there is no "brick wall"—that is, class-dividing line—between Brezhnev and Khrushchev. But the RU has to tread very cautiously. It was not Khrushchev but Kosygin who was able "to restore to the means of production their character of capital." It was not the chaos that reigned under Khrushchev that was responsible for capitalism, since "the introduction of a competitive market economy is not the means through which capitalism has been restored."

**To sum up, as far as the bourgeois forces in Soviet society were concerned, Khrushchev had not gone far enough in restoring capitalism. But as far as the Soviet working class was concerned, he had gone too far.**

How about as far as the RU is concerned? Had Khrushchev restored capitalism or not? We are never told. The Khrushchev years are treated as a special stage where capitalism was somehow lurking in the wings but not yet functioning. The Soviet Union was under bourgeois rule, but not capitalist. Trapped by its own superficial sophistication, the RU has managed to negate not Khrushchevism, but Marxism.

### NEW DEMOCRACY IN REVERSE

The Maoists' analysis of the Soviet Union is just the flip side of the coin of their revisionist theory of New Democracy. As we showed in Part Three, "New Democracy" holds that the bourgeois state can be transformed peacefully into a workers' state without the conscious intervention of the working class, and without anyone—even Mao—being able to point to the actual socialist revolution. Similarly for the USSR: capitalism was restored gradually without any discernable counter-revolution. "Socialism" was destroyed in 1956, but capitalism was not fully restored until sometime after Brezhnev came to power in 1964.

This is New Democracy in reverse, a method that enables Mao and his followers to label some state capitalist regimes "socialist." Their calling the Soviet Union capitalist has nothing to do with the Marxist understanding of revolution and counter-revolution; it means only that the Maoists stand in solidarity with one set of state capitalist rulers—the Chinese—and in opposition to the others.

So the RU's much-heralded analysis of state-capitalism in Russia is nothing but a fig-leaf to conceal

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their otherwise naked support for state-capitalism. They dress themselves in what appears to be a revolutionary position the better to disorient the proletariat. Here is the hallmark of centrism.

But the RU's bourgeois politics are not confined to their analysis of Russia. In previous parts of this series, we have exposed the bankruptcy of their "two-stage" theory of actively restraining the proletariat from going beyond the bourgeois revolution in the underdeveloped countries. We have shown that this class-collaborationist method was responsible for the Chilean coup, the mass slaughter in Indonesia and the defeat of the Spanish Revolution, to cite just a few cases.

### ONE STAGE?

But what about the advanced countries? Here, the RU claims to be for the socialist revolution right now, today:

**Capitalism has developed to its ultimate stage; imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. It is rotten ripe. It can only be brought down by replacing it with the dictatorship of the proletariat. One stage! One strategy!**

Sounds very revolutionary, doesn't it? But as it turns out, the RU's one stage is not the socialist stage after all. Let the RU speak for itself once more: "A minimum program, short of the dictatorship of the proletariat, provides the basis at this time for the struggle against imperialism."

So in its "one stage," the RU proposes a program "short of the dictatorship of the proletariat." What sort of program can this be? Has the RU discovered a society between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat?

No such society exists. Even Mao admitted that, at least in its early years, "New Democratic" China was capitalist. What can the RU be talking about?

There is only one conclusion. In the advanced countries, where the RU calls for "one stage," that stage is a bourgeois stage. Bourgeois revolutions are called for at the heart of bourgeois imperialism, and to make matters even worse there is no recourse to the future, "socialist" stage.

Of course, the RU will protest. They will scream that their one stage is the socialist stage. But there it is, in black and white. Was this just a slip of the pen?

### "SOCIALISM" BY DECEIT

Nothing of the sort. For despite the RU's subjective feeling that it is revolutionary, it believes that socialism has to sneak up on the proletariat, that revolutionaries cannot say what is to the working class and put forward a revolutionary program. Instead, a minimal program, "something less" than the dictatorship of the proletariat, is what revolutionaries should tell workers to struggle for. But then, why shouldn't the proletariat support "progressive" bourgeois politicians and "enlightened" capitalists? The RU seeks to differentiate itself from the CP, and so it won't go this far today. But that is where its method leads.

And the RU consistently carries out this minimal approach in practice. It busies itself, day in and day out, in limiting itself to calling for democratic and partial demands, and shunning the fight for socialism.

Red Papers No. 6, for example, elaborates the RU's approach in Outlaw, a rank and file grouping among New York postal workers in which the RU has considerable influence:

**We have struggled to make Outlaw fight for the interests of postal workers, a center of leadership to mobilize the rank and file in struggles, in opposition to the management and the union bureaucracy.**

**This is the opposite of the Trotskyite method . . . The Trotskyites just scream about "sell out leadership" and then tell the workers to solve their problems by substituting one set of bad leaders—the present union hacks—for another—the Trotskyites themselves.**

**Outlaw's method has been to sum up the demands of postal workers, concretize them into a particular program . . . and then . . . force the union leadership to take a position for or against our proposals . . . Outlaw has won far more support than any mere "opposition caucus" simply seeking office could. Outlaw forces bureaucrats to either agree with us or fight our proposals.**

Here the RU proudly boasts of its centrist practice. What does it do? It "sums up" what

workers already know—what workers are already willing to fight for—and leaves the struggle at that level. When will it openly oppose the bureaucrats? Only after the bureaucrats have completely exposed themselves. Until then, the RU will not contend for leadership.

But when will the RU be ready, when will the bureaucrats have exposed themselves to the mass of postal workers? Unless there is a revolutionary leadership struggling directly against the bureaucrats, and pointing to what is really needed, the bureaucrats will have a free hand. They will lead the union to disaster. And only then will the RU be ready to lead a fight against them, just as the CP learned the tragedy of Chile only when it occurred. And like the CP, the RU will draw no lessons from disaster. It will be back the next day, peddling its wares in another union, warning the workers not to openly oppose the bureaucrats.

The RU is right about one thing. Trotskyists are unalterably opposed to the union bureaucracy. We do not wait until after the betrayals to warn that the bureaucrats will sell out—and if that is what the RU means by the "Trotskyite method" of "screaming about sell-out leadership," we proudly plead guilty as charged. In the same way, Lenin was guilty of opposing the tailism of the Russian Economists, who like the RU confined themselves to "summing up" narrow trade unionism.

But we do not just assert that replacing the union hacks with revolutionary socialists is the objective need of the rank and file. We indicate in advance the basis on which we struggle for power. We champion and struggle for the day to day needs of the ranks, but insist that to really secure these gains will require breaking beyond capitalist limits. In other words, we precisely tie the struggle for partial and democratic demands to the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat—as opposed to the RU.

### MISLEADERS

The international proletariat has paid with its blood countless times for the crimes of misleaders like the RU. It has been led to the slaughter over and over again by betrayers who tell the workers to just fight for what they think that they can win today. The task of revolutionaries is to prepare the proletariat for the struggle for power, and this cannot be done by cheap maneuvers. It cannot be done by trying to con the working class into believing that "something less" than the dictatorship of the proletariat is good enough.

Such a method means actively restraining the advanced workers, the workers who are ready to organize for socialism, and telling them to confine themselves to minimum reform struggles. It means building an empiricist swamy, rather than a hardened revolutionary cadre consistently fighting the class-collaborationist trade union bureaucrats.

### METHOD OF BUREAUCRACY

In fact, the RU's method is the method of the labor bureaucracy. The bureaucrats also claim to "sum up" the consciousness of the ranks and base their program on this. Of course, the RU will quarrel with them about what the sum really is, but this is a secondary question. Maybe the RU will be right, maybe the bureaucrats will be. It depends upon what quantities are being "summed up." There is no doubt that the majority of American workers today are conservative and somewhat cynical. There is no doubt that they have tremendous illusions in the bureaucracy. Many believe that the bureaucrats are winning all that can be won. Others see no alternative method of struggle. The bureaucrats play upon such sentiments.

The RU orients to a more militant strata. It gets a different sum than the bureaucrats—because it is counting different workers. But it plays the same role as do the bureaucrats. Just as the bureaucrats tell the mass of workers that it is hopeless to demand more than the bureaucrats deliver, so the RU tells the workers it misleads that it is futile to struggle for more than minimal demands. The RU limits its trade union work to reforms—it calls for more reforms and is more vocal than the bureaucrats, it is true, but the approach is fundamentally the same.

What will the RU do when a left-sounding

bureaucrat comes along, one who is also willing to make a lot of noise and to fight for all the same reforms as the RU? How will it be able to distinguish itself from such a left-sounding labor lieutenant? The answer is that it won't. And it doesn't matter whether or not the RU opposes such a character. Through its practice, it will have built his base. It will have told the workers that socialism is not necessary today, that all that is needed is a few more reforms. The left-posing bureaucrat will gladly agree.

**We in the RU definitely believe that a high level organization is necessary to make revolution . . . But what is needed in the PO at this time is a broad-based anti-imperialist group that is open to any postal worker who wants to fight the bosses and sees that as part of a broader fight.**

Proletarian revolution and a vanguard party, it seems, are necessary. But postal workers don't need it. Trade unionists don't need it. All they need is a broad-based organization that wants to fight (on what basis?) and sees its fight as part of a broader fight (what kind of broader fight?). And anyone who says that more is needed is a "Trotskyite" who must be slandered. The RU attempts to forcibly contain the class struggle within bourgeois limits, just as the trade union bureaucrats do.

### FEAR THE PROLETARIAT

So the RU's practice is consistent with its theory. Beneath the surface of the theory, as we have seen, lies the crass acceptance of state-capitalism as socialism. This represents the fear of the rule of the working class, the disgusting elitist attitude that the proletariat is not fit to rule. And this is what is reflected in its trade union work. The workers are not fit to be told that they need socialism. They must be duped.

Although the RU ranks may not realize it, under this theory the workers will never be ready. When the RU "sums up" the consciousness of the ranks, it will never find that it adds up to socialist consciousness. For that, a revolutionary leadership is needed, one which is needed today, one which must be consciously built by revolutionary socialists who speak the truth to the proletariat. Instead, the RU tells the proletariat not to struggle for its own interests, for its own dictatorship, for its own rule.

Here is the true nature of the RU. Behind every revolutionary-seeming position lies the program of reformism. This defines the centrism of the RU. From the identification with Stalin's workers' prison, to opposition of proletarian revolution in the Third World with "two-stage" Menshevism, to support for China's bourgeois foreign policy line, to its minimal program in the trade unions in this country, the RU supports capitalism wherever it exists. Like the supporters of Stalin four decades ago, the RU is part of a petty-bourgeois movement that is frightened by the crisis of capitalism and seeks means of stabilizing it while seeming to oppose it.

### THE TRAGEDY OF MAOISM

Many subjective revolutionaries have been confused by the RU's revolutionary clothes. Many believe that the RU really is a revolutionary organization. This is the real tragedy. For the RU's objective task is to mislead such individuals, to prevent them from reaching the revolutionary consciousness to which they were headed. Centrism is the last defense of the bourgeoisie, and the RU plays its role to the hilt.

Supporters of the RU are faced with a critical test. Will they continue to support the thinly-veiled class-collaborationist policies of the RU, policies which as we have demonstrated differ little from the naked treachery of the Communist Party? Will they continue to tolerate an analysis of the USSR that whitewashes Stalin? Will they continue to support the two-stage Menshevism that has led to disaster after disaster for the working class? Will they continue to accept the RU's minimal, economist trade union approach? Or will they break from the Revolutionary Union and its bourgeois ideology and find the true heritage of Marx and Lenin in the Trotskyism of the Revolutionary Socialist League? This is the question. It is the question of reform or revolution.

# Struggle at Evendale

## GE, Bureaucrats, RU Unite to Crush Ranks

by Bob Anderson

As international capitalism weaves and lurches into a full-scale depression, the crisis for the proletariat translates literally as one of leadership. The current leaders of the international unions are tied by a thousand threads to a decaying capitalism; they offer one "solution" after another designed to make the workers pay for the bosses' crisis. The various centrist groupings which mouth revolution while practicing reformism are capable only of further vacillations and betrayals.

But the working class does not stand in place. The sell-outs in the major contracts over the past months—UAW, USWA, CWA, and UMWA—were answered by widespread wildcats and overwhelming statements of no-confidence in the labor traitors. There is no crisis in militancy, no crisis of determination in the ranks of the proletariat. The major battles are not yet joined; the real power of the working class remains untested. The advance guard of the proletariat must break the twin chains which bind our class: reformism and centrism.

### GE

The struggle for industrial unionism against the giant General Electric Corporation and the recent events at the GE plant in Evendale, Ohio read like a textbook on the crisis of leadership.

General Electric is the fourth largest corporation in the U.S. It defeated all unionization attempts until 1938, through the age-old formula of repression and paternalism. Gerald Swope, the czar of the GE empire, had written up a labor code in 1937 explicitly formulated to keep out the unions and prove the company's "good faith." The Stalinist-dominated United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers (UE) accepted this notorious anti-labor code, word for word, as the contract in the 1938 negotiations. In return, the UE was recognized as the national bargaining agent for the GE plants they were able to organize.

The Communist Party at this point was enamored with the "People's President"—Franklin Roosevelt—and primarily concerned with labor peace. The adventurism and dual unionism of the "Third Period" (1928-1933) had come to a barbarous end with Hitler's rise to power in Germany. Stalin's new line was the "People's Front," declaring that only the "democratic" bourgeoisie could save the workers from fascism. The Stalinist UE played the role of strikebreaker during World War II, being the best policeman for the capitalists.

The UE finally led its first national strike against GE in 1946, representing 96 per cent of the workforce. They went back to work with a paltry 18 and one-half cents wage increase. This

was after the UE had spent five long years enforcing the war-time wage-freeze, the speed-up and the no-strike pledge. The UE had helped to cut its own throat: its strike-breaking activity during the war and the miserable 1946 contract made it a sitting duck for the capitalist attacks. In the cold-war frenzy after World War II the once-mighty UE was crushed for its "ties to Moscow." The anti-communist IUE was thrown up in its place. The workers in the electrical industry had lost the industrial unions they had struggled to build.

### DIVIDE AND CONQUER

By 1949 GE faced not one industrial union, but many smaller unions: the IUE, UE, UAW, IAM and others. The IUE and UE, which represented 70 per cent of the workers, maintained separate national bargaining; the other 30 per cent were forced to negotiate only at the local level. They were powerless. From 1949 to 1969 in every contract round GE made its proposal and said "take it or leave it." The divided unions took it again and again.

For 25 years the 14 unions represented at GE have bargained separately behind the sniveling lead of the IUE bureaucrats. In 1960, then IUE president James Carey called a strike without a union vote and it was easily broken: a complete defeat for the IUE and the workers of General Electric. In 1966 all the unions took strike votes, only to see the IUE leaders settle separately for peanuts.

By 1969, GE made it clear that they were going after the very life of the unions, taking on the right to strike and the right to a national contract. With their very survival at stake, the 14 unions managed to maintain a coalition at the bargaining sessions. Each union bargained separately, but they met together in special sessions throughout the negotiations.

### COURAGEOUS MILITANTS

The GE workers responded with absolute discipline and overpowering unity. They shut down the wide domain of General Electric for 100 days in a show of strength which provided an example for our entire class during the upsurge in the late 1960's. GE attempted two well-financed back-to-work movements, but the ranks held the line against scabs and police in pitched battles across the country. The right to strike and the national contract were defended, but the ranks at GE remained, and continue to remain, divided into 14 separate unions. The Stalinist betrayals in the 1940's paved the way for the smashing of industrial unionism at General Electric and throughout the electronics industry.

The highly diversified General Electric empire is being hit by the depression conditions which now reign

throughout the economy. Two markets have traditionally provided the bulk of GE's profits. Both are rapidly drying up. GE plants across the country produce a wide range of consumer goods from lightbulbs to color TV's. Today these goods sit rotting in the warehouses. And GE has been a major producer of engines, parts and equipment for the airlines industry in the U.S. and elsewhere. Today the major airlines plead bankruptcy and cut back new orders drastically.

GE has responded to the profit squeeze by launching a frontal assault on the workers and their unions through firings, layoffs and speed-up. The ranks have replied with wildcats in a number of key plants and a fierce determination to defend their unions.



Picket lines during 1969 GE strike. Heroism of workers overcome scabs and cops, but couldn't forge one union for all GE workers.

The Evendale plant, near Cincinnati, is GE's main jet engine works, employing over 12,000 workers. Only about 50 per cent of the workforce is organized: 4,500 in the UAW, 750 in the IAM, and a few hundred in smaller locals of firemen, boilermakers and so on. It is the only major GE plant not represented by the IUE and UE.

The bosses have hit Evendale with nearly 1,000 layoffs, and more are planned for the coming weeks. The company recently fired a woman with 22 years seniority for absenteeism. She had a doctor's excuse for every day missed because of her asthmatic condition. As one fighting UAW member said: "This is only the opening move to fire any older dissident who has been or may become sick. If we allow it to pass, it will give management another nail in our coffin." The local bureaucrats sit passively by.

The UAW local is currently in the midst of a union election campaign. Two men are in the running: Richardson, a right-wing bureaucrat who is incumbent vice-president and Hickman, an aspiring bureaucrat who is a second shift committeeman. Both are tied hand and foot to Woodcock.

Hickman was a leader of the 1971

wildcat, and he never raised a hand to defend the four members of his local who were fired in the aftermath of that strike. His tactics as committeeman have given him something of a militant reputation and a base of support on the second shift. The international gave their initial endorsement to Hickman, as a "left face" in the best position to control the local. His only program has been to offer sickening apologies for the Woodcock regime. The Hickman Coalition recently put out a leaflet bravely demanding a COL increase on a par with the autoworkers. The rest of the UAW gets a pittance masquerading as COL protection, and GE workers get even less. Hickman demands nothing but more of the same.

Hickman promises to come up with a "deal" like they have at the neighboring Norwood GMAD and Sharonville Ford plants. That "deal" includes massive layoffs, forced overtime, and the bourgeoisie's most brutal speed-up. The heroic Norwood fighters are leaders in the combat against the savage General Motors Assembly Division. With the UAW under the most vicious attack in its history, Hickman effectively pits the GE workers against their closest allies at Norwood and Sharonville.

Hickman gave it his best effort, but

the bosses at GE were not convinced of his ability to control the local: they fired him on January 14th.

### UNION BREAKING

Management's cover was that Hickman allegedly turned in some overtime he didn't work, but the guts of the matter are that GE was giving notice that they are prepared to break the union. With inventories piling up and layoffs increasing, the union is in a weakened position. The firing of an aspiring

bureaucrat like Hickman was designed to demoralize the ranks.

The workers responded with an immediate walkout. The plant was completely shut down a few hours after the firing. The strikers marched to the union hall demanding an all-out struggle against the company. But it was clear that GE could wait out an isolated wildcat. The central lesson of the GE events was being pounded home—only a unified, disciplined, class-wide response can defend against today's attacks.

The international had already given the local bureaucrats the word to put things in order immediately. The union hacks called a "strike meeting" for the following day, which 2,000 UAW members attended. The bargaining committee announced that the fight was finished, saying simply, "our hands are tied."

The misleadership at GE-Evendale is in no way limited to Woodcock and his competing underlings, Hickman and Richardson. Another force is in the field: the Revolutionary Union (Stalinist-Maoist). At the December union meeting, RU supporters called for an employed-unemployed committee in the local. Richardson, the VP, initially supported the call, and RU

supporters wrote a leaflet concerning the idea for distribution in the plant. Baker, the local president, naturally refused to print it; this was enough for the RU to surmise that the unions are reactionary. Instead of mobilizing the ranks to demand the unity of the employed and unemployed, the RU withdrew from the struggle.

Hickman attempted to use the situation to prove that he could out right-wing Richardson. He red-baited the RU, and then made similar attacks on Richardson for supporting their call. We defend the RU against all right-wing attacks, just as we would have defended the UE and CP from anti-communist attacks in the 1940's. At the same time we are the most resolute defenders of Hickman from company attacks. This is the Leninist method of the united front: uniting the class against attacks and at the same time exposing the competing misleaderships.

The RU exposed itself most clearly in the aftermath of Hickman's firing. A few days after the wildcat "some concerned workers at GE" passed out a leaflet. In this sheet, RU supporters raise their central demands for the current crisis: join the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee (UWOC) and fight for jobs or income. There is no mention of the employed-unemployed committee or of the struggle against the UAW bureaucrats. The RU tells unemployed GE workers to forget their union, forget the struggle for revolutionary leadership, and join UWOC instead.

The Revolutionary Socialist League supports the call for employed-unemployed committees in the UAW: we demand democratically-elected committees in every UAW local. In response to the initiative of the ranks, the Woodcock gang forms "committees to aid the unemployed" in order to derail the movement for a massive mobilization of the union. Militants must turn these organs into potential factory committees and use them as a central arena in the struggle for revolutionary leadership. The factory committees will unite the employed with the unemployed and must lead the fight for city-wide and regional meetings of the UAW to build the national emergency congress of the union. Spread throughout the trade

unions, the factory committees will be a mighty force for mobilizing the entire labor movement.

But the committees cannot be limited to the organized plants. They must be expanded to include the most oppressed layers of the class which remain unorganized and outside of the trade union movement. The boldest revolutionary fighters will come from this section of our class. The factory committees will democratically elect delegates to city-wide councils of the employed and unemployed. These councils will organize all sections of



UE President Fitzgerald

the working class around the demands of jobs for all at the capitalists' expense.

They will prove to be a powerful torrent leading to the Congress of Labor and the Oppressed, called to launch a Labor Party directly counterposed to the decaying parties of the bourgeoisie: the Democrats and Republicans. In the factory committees, in the city-wide councils, in the local, regional and national emergency congresses of the trade unions, and in the Congress of Labor and the Oppressed, the Revolutionary Socialist League will wage an uncompromising struggle for revolutionary leadership. This is the road to the Workers' Government.

The RU stands absolutely opposed to these organs of class unity. They counterpose UWOC. And what is the content of their demand for jobs or income? As their Cincinnati paper,

Movin On Up, states it: "We really don't care how they come up with the money or the jobs." The RU continues to confuse the vanguard and the rearguard. The RU "really doesn't care" if it's the working class or the capitalists who bear the brunt of the capitalists' decaying world order.

In the December issue of the RU's newspaper, *Revolution*, we're told: "Bluestone and the rest of the UAW International leadership say that the working class is powerless, just as all those who define the power of the working class only in the most narrow limited terms, the power to stop production in exchange for a few crumbs, see the working class as weakened by unemployment."

#### MARXISM VS. MAOISM

Every Marxist understands that the power of the working class flows from its role in production, and that our class is weakened by unemployment. This is why every revolutionary since Marx has led the fight for a shorter work week with no reduction in pay: jobs for all! To the bleatings of Hickman who says 15 cents every three months is a model COL increase and to the idiocy of the RU which says unemployment doesn't weaken our class, the RSL counterposes the sliding scale of wages and hours. 30 hours work for 40 hours pay and penny for penny COL protection.

The RU pledges that UWOC will build an "army of class fighters," but in fact UWOC divides the class. Instead of taking the fight for jobs into the trade unions, instead of waging the struggle for revolutionary leadership, the RU stands aside, saying the trade unions be damned.

For the RU there are only two possible approaches to the trade unions. On the one hand we have their own past work and the current work of the October League (Stalinist-Maoist). This involves picking out a "progressive" bureaucrat and then tailing him. The RU poses it as "uniting with Woodcock against Meany."

The other possibility for these two-bit Stalinists is to withdraw from the "reactionary" trade unions. Their current line on dual unionism is simply a statement by the RU that they can't work in the unions without capitulating to the labor hacks. Lenin stated it

absolutely clearly in *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, in reference to the German "Left" Communists: "because of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the trade union top leadership, they jump to the conclusion that . . . we must withdraw from the trade unions, refuse to work in them, and create new and artificial forms of labor organizations. This is so unpardonable a blunder that it is tantamount to the greatest service Communists could render the bourgeoisie." Now, listen to the RU (from the December *Revolution*): "Meany, Abel, etc., are people who are actually part of the ruling class themselves."

But the RU is not basing its line on the "Left" Communists; they sing the praises of Stalin's "Third Period." In the U.S. Stalin's "left turn" led to the establishment of dual unions down the line in coal, in textiles, in longshore, etc. The RU turns to the history of the Stalinists in the workers' movement and attempts to repeat that history.

The "Third Period" led directly to the rise of fascism in Germany. The Stalinists split the workers movement with their tiny "red" unions, leaving millions of social democratic workers with their "social fascist" leaders. At every turn the Stalinists refused to build united fronts with the "social fascists," and left the German proletariat divided and defenseless against the rise of Hitler. The RU uses the same method today, labelling the labor bureaucrats as members of the ruling class.

The RU's current phrasemongering will pass quickly, however, as the economy slides deeper into depression and as the right-wing organizations grow bolder. The RU will turn to another part of their proud tradition. The tradition of the People's Front, of the UE, of breaking strikes during World War II: the tradition of scabs. Just as Trotsky led the fight against the betrayal of the German proletariat, just as Trotsky led the fight against the "People's Front," and just as Trotsky led the fight against the Stalinist counterrevolution in the first workers' state, the RSL will lead the fight against Stalin's offspring. The RU's Stalinist banner is dripping with the blood of the international working class.

## BOSSSES SHIFT COURSE

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Robert Roosa and John Kenneth Galbraith can all unite around the general idea of increasing state regulation of the economy. But as the ranks increase the pressure on the trade union bureaucracy, the bureaucrats will in turn call upon the Democrats to provide more cover, to pose as a more left-wing force. In order to maintain their hold on the ranks, the bureaucrats will catalyze the emergence of an open Popular Front-type bloc, breaking the remnants of the truce between the ruling class factions.

#### LIMITS OF REFORMISM

It seems almost certain at this point that the Democrats will win in 1976, and that the liberal, Popular Front-type strategy will be implemented. The Democrats will make certain concessions to the working class to keep their struggles in check. But there are definite limits to how far they can proceed. Nationalization of much of basic industry would bring them into conflict with the private property basis of U.S. capitalism, and would cut them adrift from the support of the bourgeoisie on which they base themselves. Therefore, they will restrict

themselves to, at most, token nationalizations.

And even were they able to carry out sweeping nationalizations, they would not eliminate the contradictions of the capitalist system. So long as production is forcibly kept out of the hands of the working class, the system remains capitalist and the contradictions remain. The drive must be to increase surplus-value at the expense of the proletariat—whether directly through the state, as in the U.S.S.R., or through monopolistic corporations, as in the U.S.

The Popular Front strategy will doom the proletariat to the fate of the German, Spanish and Chilean workers unless a revolutionary leadership is fielded that unswervingly rejects it. As the international economic crisis deepens, the bourgeoisie will grow more and more desperate. It will be unwilling to continue to pay to cost of buying off the class struggle through concessions. It will balk at any proposals for major nationalizations. It will resort, once more, to building up the state apparatus on terms which it finds more suitable—mass mobilizations of the petty-bourgeoisie for Bonapartism and fascism. If the working class remains disarmed by class-collaborationist leaders, this right-wing strategy will succeed in smashing the proletariat.

But we are still far from this point. The bourgeoisie still wants to preserve the trappings of

bourgeois democracy. The power of the working class is too great to be taken on frontally. Even Gerald Ford and the Republicans must put on a show of combatting unemployment. The liberal strategy of the Democrats will be tested first, with the state built up under the guise of the supporter of the working man. The ultra-right-wing variant is still in embryonic form. But when the liberal approach fails, as it must in the face of the deepening economic crisis, we will once more hear the cry of "Down With Big Labor, the Big State, and Big Business." This time it will be from those who will mobilize the petty-bourgeoisie for the all-out assault against the proletariat, precisely to provide the "final solution" for the monopolists by transforming the state apparatus into a machine of terror.

The working class can prevent this. To do so requires a clear understanding of where the Democrats' liberal strategy leads. It leads to disarming the working class, to giving the bourgeoisie the time it so desperately needs to prepare the right-wing assault while the liberals and the labor bureaucracy hold the workers in check. Militant workers must learn the tragic lessons of Popular Front betrayal today, and work now to smash the Popular Front and build the revolutionary vanguard party that will blaze the proletarian road, the road to revolutionary socialism.

# Middle East

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by force. The Arab regimes, on the other hand, desperately want the United States to get them off the hook—to force Israel to make the minimum concessions necessary to “sell” an Arab sell-out to the Arab masses.

## PALESTINE

Sadat of Egypt has indicated his willingness to make a separate deal with Israel, behind Syria's back, in exchange for Israel's return of the Sinai oil fields and the two strategic passes. But no deal can be concluded until the Palestine question is settled. With his Palestinian accomplice, Arafat, Sadat wants to liquidate the Palestinian question forever through establishing an amputee state. Arafat is trying to convince the U.S. and Israel that this concession to Arab nationalism is the best possible guarantee for the future inviolability of Israel. To demonstrate how he intends to administer the proposed PLO state, Arafat is arresting and executing Palestinian liberation fighters who reject his deal. He is policing the Palestinian movement in the interests of U.S. and Israeli imperialism—in advance and without solicitation.

But Israel refuses to discuss the possibility of creating a PLO state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israelis are unconvinced that Arafat is equal to the task of preserving a stable regime while holding the masses of workers and peasants in check. They are not ready to give up the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Arafat only to witness his overthrow a few years or even months later.

Israel is banking on the eventual need of the United States to intervene against the oil producers. In this situation, Israel could grab off extra territory, while a new settlement, clipping the wings of the Arab bourgeoisie, would end all talk about Israeli concessions.

The Arab rulers have never been capable of presenting more than the facade of Pan-Arab unity against the imperialists. The regimes of Egypt, Syria and Iraq, historically the most vocal advocates of Pan-Arabism, are always ready to stab each other in the back for immediate advantage. The monarchies of Saudi Arabia, Iran and Jordan which two decades ago were covering before the wave of bourgeois-democratic republicanism headed by Nasser, today sit secure in their own states and occupy the driver's seat among Arab states. Internally and externally, the forces of Arab nationalism have been unable to complete the democratic revolution—the struggle to safeguard independence, seize the national wealth, overthrow the semi-feudal monarchies and solve the land question, and destroy the political-military overlordship of the imperialists and Israel.

These bourgeois-democratic tasks cannot be conquered by Arab nationalism, the political representatives of the Arab bourgeoisies. King or colonel, the Arab nationalists realize they must deal with imperialism, not overthrow it. They are tied to its markets and aid. Afraid of mobilizing their own masses, they must look to the imperialists to arrange the most favorable deal. They fight the imperialists—as in 1956 over Suez, or in the October War of 1973—only when the imperialists themselves leave no choice.

## THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The historic tasks of the national and bourgeois revolutions in the Middle East cannot be achieved without socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only Leninist parties, uniting the workers of the Middle East and leading the revolutionary peasants, can explode the rotten imperialist deals.

In order to build Leninist parties, it is necessary

to know how to take a stand on the national and democratic questions. It is necessary to fight alongside the Arab bourgeois rulers whenever they are compelled to take half-hearted and treacherous action against the imperialists. This is not the case in Israel; the defense of Israel is the defense of an imperialist state, and to internationalists the defeat of Israel in war opens up the class contradictions of Israeli society (as the limited losses of the 1973 war have already done).

But while giving support to the Arab rulers in specific conflicts against imperialism and its Israeli policeman, it is necessary to remain political enemies of Sadat and Arafat as well as Faisal and the Iranian Shah. Those who soften their opposition to these rulers because of their anti-imperialist gestures weaken the workers and peasants, for the leadership of the bourgeois rulers is the greatest factor weakening the anti-imperialist struggle.

The inability of the Arab bourgeois forces to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution is

always been under the hegemony of bourgeois nationalism. Over the last eight years, it has been divided (in a manner analogous to the Chinese Kuomintang in the 1920's) into two main wings. These are the Fatah-PLO forces led by Arafat, which represent an open bourgeois-nationalist program, and the left-democratic groupings which originated in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the various splits in the latter. In addition to the PFLP itself, the most important of these is the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP).

## THE PLO

Until 1967, the PLO under the leadership of Ahmed Shuqaryi dominated the Palestinian movement. From its inception in 1964, the PLO was a pawn in the hands of Nasser. Nasser used the PLO to reinforce his prestige in his bid for leadership of the Arab world, as well as to forestall the formation



Black September: Guerrillas defend Irbid, Jordan against Hussein's troops.

most clearly seen in the struggle over Palestine. It is no accident that the fate of Palestine is one of the central questions driving the Middle East to a new war. It is difficult for the Israelis to recognize the existence of a Palestinian nation without admitting that they have no right to the territory which they occupy. Arafat, by setting his sights firmly on the “mini-state,” helps them pull off this fraud. The Arab regimes, on the other hand, must use the question of Palestine as the pivot around which they conduct their intrigues and deals with the imperialists and their own mutual rivalry for dominance in the Arab world.

## COLLISION COURSE

The Palestine question occupies this unique significance in Middle Eastern politics because the Arab national struggle and the Israeli spearhead of world imperialism collide physically at Palestine. It is a miniature of the entire Middle East. For this reason, the Palestine question is the most explosive political question in the Middle East, because the whole anti-imperialist struggle is translated in Palestine into the simple terms of the struggle of a displaced people to regain their homeland. All political forces in the Middle East are measured in relation to this struggle—from the outright national oppression of the Israelis to the capitulations of the Arab bourgeois rulers and Arafat.

Palestinian nationalism is the most militant variety of Arab nationalism to emerge in recent years. It is here that the revolutionary Arab workers will find the lessons of the failure of nationalism and the necessity of counterposing to it the strategy of permanent revolution.

The Palestinian national liberation movement has

of a more militant organization which he would find more difficult to control. Several brigades of a Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA) were organized, but these were placed at the disposal of the regular armies of Egypt, Syria and Iraq for exclusive use in conventional war.

No serious attempts to form mass organizations of the Palestinian workers and peasants were undertaken by the PLO in this period. Shuqaryi accepted Nasser's perspective that the Palestine question could be resolved only through subordinating it to the interests of his regime. The liberation of Palestine was the work of the Egyptian High Command and would take place when the Nasser regime had decided that the time had come to administer the final stroke against Israel.

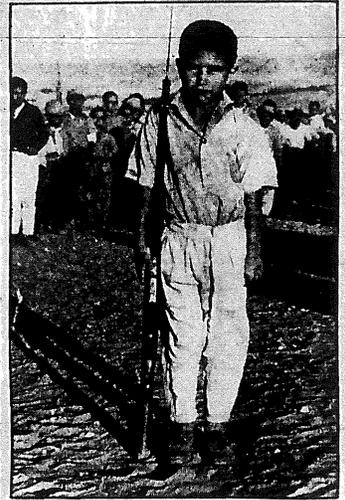
The catastrophic defeat of the Arab armies in the June, 1967 war marked the end of Shuqaryi's leadership of Palestinian nationalism. By 1969, Fatah had taken over the PLO. Instead of drawing the correct conclusion that the Arab bourgeois regimes could not be trusted to wage determined war on Israel—and that therefore the Palestinians should work for their overthrow—Arafat and the Fatah leadership adopted a “left” version of the previous policy. Under cover of the doctrine that it was an error in general to look to the other Arab peoples for any alliance against Israel, they adopted a policy of “non-interference” in the politics of other Arab states. This was supposed to guarantee the “independence” of the Palestinian movement while enabling it to receive arms and protection from those states willing to offer it.

In reality, “non-interference” became nothing more than a smokescreen to hide Arafat's dealings with Nasser and the others and an excuse for not



هذا طريقنا في الكفاح  
فيا نحي اتمم كفاحي

Fatah poster proclaiming eternal fight for liberation.



Fedayeen—women, men and children—take up arms in liberation struggle.

exposing the betrayals of the Arab regimes to imperialism. Fatah-PLO described itself as "non-ideological" and claimed that whether liberated Palestine was to be socialist or capitalist was a question to be postponed until the homeland had been recovered. Finally, Fatah embarked upon a policy of guerrilla warfare which was to inspire the Palestinian masses to take up arms against Israel in a "popular war." Guerrilla warfare was explicitly counterposed to organizing a political movement in the West Bank, Jordan and Israel.

**PFLP**

Like Fatah, the PFLP accepted the Menshevik-Stalinist theory of "two-stage" revolution, which in reality means limiting the revolution to bourgeois aims. But the PFLP formally advocated the necessity of extending the democratic revolution

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BLACK LIBERATION  
AND THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

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A Torch Pamphlet

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throughout the Arab world as a prelude to liberating Palestine. In practice, this means opposition to the regimes of Lebanon and Jordan alone, while generally supporting the governments of Egypt, Syria and particularly Iraq as semi-revolutionary.

The PDFLP broke from the PFLP in 1968, accusing PFLP leader Habash of not criticizing Egypt, Syria and Iraq sufficiently. But the PDFLP proved no more willing to call for overthrowing these regimes than its parent group.

Despite the formal "socialist" ideology of the groups to the left of Fatah, they are all petty bourgeois democratic parties. Where Arafat's actual program is the consolidation of an authoritarian bourgeois regime, the PFLP-PDFLP wing provides cover for left-bourgeois regimes along the lines of Syria and Iraq. The exact nature of these "Marxist-Leninist" parties can be found in their names. They are Popular Fronts, amalgams of the forces from all classes to wage the national revolution on a bourgeois basis, and they deny the existence of any specifically working-class perspective for the struggle against Israel.

**DECISIVE TEST**

The entire Palestinian nationalist leadership was put to the decisive test in 1970. Fatah's "non-interference" allowed Nasser to connive at the destruction of the Palestinian threat by Jordan's King Hussein. "Non-interference" provided Nasser with a blank check to barter away support for the Palestinians for the return of the Sinai from Israel.

As a preliminary gesture of good faith to the Israelis, Nasser shut down the Fatah radio station in Cairo. This was the signal for Hussein to prepare the destruction of the fedayeen in Jordan. In a vain attempt to force Fatah to strike first against Hussein, the PFLP executed a series of airline hijackings. They landed the planes in Jordan and blew them up. Hussein immediately responded with a military government and the sporadic fighting between his troops and the fedayeen quickly escalated into a full scale civil war. The Palestinians were crushed in a series of costly battles. The PDFLP was virtually destroyed. None of the organizations were able to mobilize the masses into active support of the struggle against Hussein.

The PFLP and PDFLP did not counterpose a revolutionary alternative to Fatah. Meanwhile, Fatah was begging Egypt to come to its rescue—yes, Egypt, which had precipitated the situation in the first place. Iraq, the PFLP's idea of a revolutionary Arab state, promised to assist the Palestinians in the event of a showdown, but promptly withdrew the division it had stationed in Jordan as soon as the fighting became serious. Syria sent a large armored force against the Jordanian army, but refused to commit its air units. This permitted Hussein to employ his small air force to break up the Syrian attack. This action decided the war.

The treachery of the Palestinian leadership

continued in the aftermath of Black September. In January, the PFLP joined Fatah-PLO in submitting to Hussein's demand that they disarm the thousands-strong Palestinian popular militias. Enough arms were handed over to Hussein to equip a division with infantry weapons. Hussein then proceeded to kill or drive out the remnant of the fedayeen left in Jordan. This is how bourgeois nationalism acts in the hour of crisis.

The Palestinian national movement never recovered from the effects of Black September. If the 1967 war demonstrated the folly of relying upon the existing Arab regimes to liberate Palestine, the



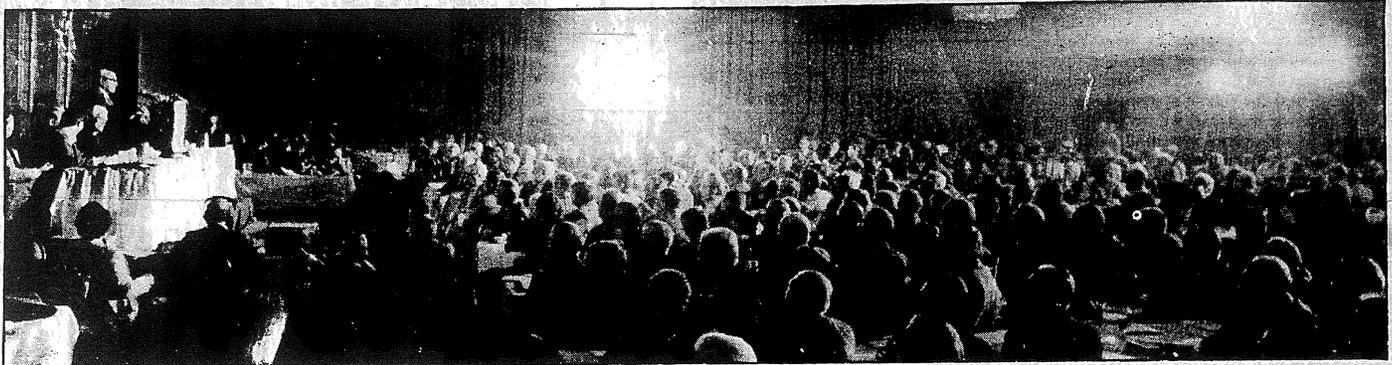
Nasser, fearful of revolutionary mobilization of masses, is stalemated after 1967 war. Here he prays for victory.

disasters in Jordan of 1970-71 established the limits of a strategy which appeals to the masses strictly on the basis of bourgeois democracy. Today, the PFLP is once again in temporary opposition to Arafat, denouncing him for attempting to liquidate the Palestinian question from Mid-Eastern politics. Yet when the decisive moment for revolutionary action arrives, they will not have prepared the masses because they have nothing fundamentally different to offer.

The Arab defeat of 1967 was a contradictory event. By showing the weakness of the Arab bourgeois rulers, it impelled the petty bourgeois nationalists to break partially from the Arab regimes. This gave the Palestinian movement a far more explosive character which provided a continuing source of unrest for the bourgeois regimes. But the petty bourgeois nationalists still had no fundamental perspective except to force the bourgeois Arab regimes—and later the United States—to win for them the state they were unwilling to mobilize the Arab masses to struggle for. This could only be a state carved out in the interests of imperialism.

For the Arab masses, the 1967 defeat led to a period of demoralization and passivity. This facilitated Arafat's maneuvers towards the bourgeois regimes, the PFLP's policy of isolated

# At the AFL-CIO General Board MEANY PLANS SURRENDER



George Meany addresses fellow hacks at AFL-CIO General Board meeting. The assembly rubberstamped Meany's class collaborationist scheme.

by Brent Davis

On January 23, the General Board of the AFL-CIO met in emergency session. The great significance of this meeting was underlined by its agenda: the economic crisis. The nosediving economy and the growing fear of the ranks forced these hacks to meet and put forward a program to "combat" unemployment on paper.

The General Board consists of 450 labor bureaucrats representing all 110 affiliated unions, the state and major local federations, and the AFL-CIO departments (building trades, maritime, etc.). Normally, AFL-CIO policy is set by the Executive Council, a much smaller body even more thoroughly dominated by George Meany, and even more insulated from the ranks. The General Board's customary function is to rubber-stamp Meany's candidate for U.S. president.

Consequently, the General Board had not met since 1968. It is so extraneous to the functioning of Meany's clique that it did not even meet to deal with the wage freeze of 1971-74. Why was it convened this year?

## CO-OPTIVE STRATEGY

The General Board was called into session as part of a general co-optive strategy by the labor bureaucracy. Meany and his cohorts are trying to give the impression of taking action against unemployment, in order to convince the ranks that all that can be done is being done, and that there is no need to take matters into their own hands.

Along the same line, the UAW, the Glass Workers and Distributive Workers have all held rallies in Washington, and the building trades have demonstrated in many places for more jobs and against scab construction. While the struggle at this moment can be contained by the bureaucracy, they know the tremendous power that lies below the surface. The entire labor bureaucracy is working over-time to prevent strikes and wage gains that would further injure the sagging economy. To do this efficiently, they need some kind of cover to hide their capitulation. Meany's legislative program serves as

this cover.

Meany also needs to strengthen his hold over the bureaucracy. A serious political split is developing in the ranks of the labor bureaucracy. The more left-talking types such as Woodcock, Chavez and Wurf, support the McGovern wing of the Democratic Party. Meany, Abel and the building trades line up with the Henry Jackson-Mayor Daley wing. In 1972, Meany was not completely successful in holding the labor bureaucracy to his line of neutrality in the presidential elections, and his problem will be even greater in 1976. Meany used the General Board meeting to cohere the bureaucracy around his program, giving these hacks some sense of having a say in the AFL-CIO program, having them go on record supporting it, and spending the meeting whipping up the national chauvinist fervor that his program requires.

Meany needs this control over the bureaucracy for more than just securing his position. His clearly stated program and the mobilization of the bureaucracy behind it is an attempt to force the Democrats to formulate a program that can be an alternative to Ford's. In particular, Meany wants to pressure the Democrats into supporting many chauvinist protectionist measures that they are not yet willing to implement.

Meany hopes to be able to do this without mobilizing the ranks, and so the fanfare of a General Board meeting. He also needs this control for 1976. If Meany can convince the Democrats that he has the labor bureaucracy disciplined, his bargaining position at the 1976 Democratic Convention will be much stronger.

## MEANY'S PROGRAM

The actual six-point program adopted by the General Board is scandalous. It consists of: 1) tax cuts for individuals and corporations; 2) cutting down oil imports through energy allocation and gas rationing; 3) lowering interest rates and channeling credit into housing construction; 4) public works programs; 5) import restrictions; and 6) increases in food stamps, welfare and unemployment

compensation payments.

There is not a hint of struggle against the bourgeoisie in this program, no notion of forcing the capitalists to pay for the crisis they have created. Rather, Meany wants to solve the problem by increasing profits and generally strengthening U.S. capitalism.

Vital to this is strengthening U.S. imperialism. The Board meeting was largely given over to whipping up national chauvinism aimed at the "Arab extortionists" in an attempt to line up the working class to support the next Mid-East war and a possible U.S. intervention there. A host of protectionist measures, under the cover of saving U.S. jobs, serve basically the same purpose. Meany knows that the workers will have to pay for his program to protect U.S. imperialism. He is already calling for gas rationing and easing environmental controls as part of his "solution" to the energy crisis.

## REFORMS?

The parts of Meany's program that sound like reforms—public works, tax cuts, etc.—are more than just inadequate. Meany has no way to pay for

them. He rejects taxing the corporations and banks. On the contrary, he is calling for a tax cut for business. If Meany's program were implemented, the result would be a fantastic growth in the government debt. Horrendous interest rates, which would deepen the recession, and skyrocketing inflation would result. The General Board managed to ignore the question of inflation, and for good reason. Its only "solution" to unemployment is massive inflation.

For this reason, Meany will backpeddle on this program, asking for less and less and getting still less than that. The real purpose of this program is merely to provide a cover for Meany. Its demagogic promises are a substitute for fighting the companies and the government, a substitute he needs to hold the ranks in line.

Furthermore, Meany's public works program is a drop in the bucket compared to what is really needed. The General Board's "Action Plan" calls for an authorization of only \$2 billion above what Congress has already allocated. This would barely scratch the surface of the highest sustained unemployment since the Great Depression. The real need is jobs for all with guaranteed cost of living protection against inflation, but this is something that Meany will not demand. Jobs for all, at corporate expense, is the obvious and essential need of the American working class. But such a struggle would threaten the framework of capitalism, and Meany and the labor bureaucrats as a whole owe their first allegiance to the bourgeoisie.

## MEANY'S TACTICS

The tactics Meany proposed to fight for his program show his utter lack of seriousness in fighting for even these crumbs. A number of union tops, including Jennings from the IUE and Stetin from the textile workers, called for mass demonstrations to pressure Congress. This was too radical for the General Board. In addition to lobbying in Washington, the closest thing to an action proposal adopted by the General Board was to have the state federations hold conferences to "make elected officials and the general public



New Jersey state and municipal workers protest state-wide job and pay freeze.

even more aware of the crisis facing the unemployed."

Despite the exclusion of the ranks, the sell-out program and the complete lack of a fighting strategy, the General Board meeting presents an important opportunity for revolutionaries. Under the pressure of the ranks, Meany was forced to place the question of the economic crisis on the agenda of the workers' movement. He was forced to make clear that the entire movement must be mobilized around a common program, that the struggle cannot be fought union by union. He was forced to state his program openly, presenting revolutionaries with a target. Every union and unionist in the AFL-CIO has their leadership on record in favor of the garbage passed by the General Board. Marxists can use this in the battle to overthrow that program and leadership.

### REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAM

Revolutionaries must counterpose to Meany's social program a program that is a real solution to unemployment and inflation. That program is the socialist revolution, a program that revolutionaries must make concrete by explaining how it can be

fought for today. A vital part of that program is the sliding scale of hours—cutting the work week with no loss of pay until all are employed. This must be joined to the struggle for a serious public works program—jobs for all at union wages, providing the homes, schools, food and energy that working people need. Rather than tax cuts for business, the battle must be waged to pay for these jobs by taxing the corporations and banks.

Militants cannot afford to ignore the question of inflation—full cost of living protection for wages, pensions and welfare. Against Meany's strategy of propping up the ailing capitalist economy, revolutionaries counterpose the fight to nationalize industry under workers' control. Meany's program places the question of imperialism on the agenda of the workers' movement. The struggle against all forms of protectionism and against the coming war is essential for the revolutionary program.

This program must be linked to the call for militant action. A one-day general strike, accompanied by massive demonstrations, would mobilize the labor movement and draw millions of the unemployed and unorganized into the struggle. The formation of a

labor party armed with the revolutionary program would provide an on-going organization to struggle for the entire workers' movement.

### REVOLUTIONARY TACTICS

Revolutionaries must take this program into the labor movement and actively counterpose it to Meany's program. Resolutions should be introduced into the locals condemning the tax cuts for business, the gas rationing, the war-mongering against the Arabs and the protectionist policies. The revolutionary program should be introduced, and every local bureaucrat forced to take a position one way or the other. If enough locals actively debate these questions, the pressure will grow on the higher-up left-talking bureaucrats, like Sadlow-ski and Chavez, to openly state their opinion of Meany's program. If they try to disassociate themselves from Meany, their answer to the economic crisis must be dragged from them so it can be exposed.

Revolutionaries must take advantage of the state conferences that are going to be held. Locals should pass resolutions demanding that the first point on the agenda be a discussion

and rejection of Meany's program. These conferences must be blown open. The ranks must be free to attend, and locals that condemn Meany's program should be represented by delegates who reject his betrayal.

These conferences must be opened to the entire working class. Unions outside of the AFL-CIO, the organizations of oppressed people and the unemployed and representatives of the unorganized should be invited to join in hammering out a common fighting strategy for our class. Representatives of working class political organizations, including communists, should be invited to help forge a militant program of action.

George Meany, despite his intentions, gave an opportunity to revolutionaries. The emergency session of the General Board gives a concreteness and living reality to the idea of a common program of action for the many millions in the labor movement. While it is unlikely that the bureaucracy's hold over the state conferences can be broken, the struggle to do so can be an important weapon in the fight to free the labor movement from its reformist leadership.

## Middle East

Cont'd. from p. 13

terrorist actions designed to put pressure on these same regimes, and finally the rightward turn of Nasser and his successor Sadat.

The October war has restored the confidence of the Arab masses in their power to defeat Israel, while the maneuvering of the last year and the worsening economic conditions have further weakened Sadat. Proletarian rioting has broken out in both Cairo and Tel Aviv, and there has been an unprecedented upsurge of political activity among the Palestinians of the West Bank. Conditions have never been more favorable for the creation of a revolutionary proletarian party in Palestine. The rising mass movement on the West Bank must be seized as an opportunity to form trade unions of Arab laborers and other working class and peasant organizations.

Military support is extended to the Arab nationalist leaders, not in support of their aim of forcing Israel to grant a PLO state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but as part of the struggle to liberate Palestine as a whole and topple the Israeli state. The task is to heighten the class consciousness of the Arab workers, show that the national tasks can only be accomplished by overthrowing the bourgeois regimes, and extend the Arab workers' hands to Israeli workers on a class basis. This means support for all actions of the Israeli working class against their state combined with a firm line rejecting Zionism and the existence of a separate Israeli state and recognizing the place of Israeli workers in a Socialist Federation of the Middle East.

Finally, the task is to warn the masses that the PLO's support for the "compromise" solution of the West Bank-Gaza Strip state is actually a repudiation of the struggle to liberate Palestine. The masses must be warned that the PLO will attempt to suppress any efforts to utilize this territory as a



Palestinian supporters march in New York during Yasir Arafat's appearance at the UN. Despite revolutionary pose, Arafat's PLO is nationalist road-block to Palestinian liberation.

base of operations to carry the class struggle into Israel itself. This warning must be connected to a campaign of defense for the guerrillas being imprisoned and murdered by Arafat.

The Middle East today, as in the past, is a cock-pit in which the conflicts of world imperialism are played out. To Leninists, the progressive national struggle which remains uncompleted is strictly subordinate to the danger of imperialist war.

But in the preliminary period the conflicting imperialist policies are played out mainly through the attempt to divide, divert and defeat the anti-imperialist struggle on the part of the Arab peoples. The military henchman of world imperialism, Israel; the conservative bourgeois rulers openly allied with Western imperialism; and the "radical" bourgeois-nationalist rulers who mislead the masses each play a part in this. Only the most sterile abstentionism, which is a cloak for opportunist capitulation to Western imperialism, can "equate"

Israel and the Arab states. The "condemnation" of Israel and Arab nationalism alike (especially when combined with defensism toward the Israeli imperialist state) is a cloak for the defense of Western imperialist interests represented by Israel.

The "nationalism" of the Israeli masses signifies their support for a state based on the suppression of the Arab peoples. They must be broken from it. The nationalism of the Arab masses on the contrary signifies their support for the continuation of the anti-imperialist struggle, as well as their illusions in their bourgeois rulers. Leninists do not "counterpose" socialist revolution and the opposition to imperialist war to the national demands of oppressed peoples, but on the contrary, fight for these legitimate and progressive demands while showing that they can only be won in conjunction with the socialist revolution. The socialist revolution alone can remove the Middle East from the jaws of imperialism.

## PO Workers

Cont'd. from p. 6

movement is tied to the Democratic Party which has brought war, wage controls and now Beame's layoffs. NALC must call for a labor party to fight for the only government which will carry out this program—a workers' government. Only a revolutionary labor party fighting for a workers' government can win the fight against inflation, layoffs, speed-up, poverty and degradation—can win the fight against all Kokomo Plans forever.

### OUTLAW

We call on all militant and revolutionary-minded workers to take up the struggle for a revolutionary opposition to Rademacher and Sombrotto. One focus for the fight against the present union hacks is Outlaw, the largest postal workers opposition group in the New York area. But for Outlaw to be capable of building a revolutionary leadership inside the postal unions, it must be won to a program such as that presented above.

Unfortunately, the leadership of Outlaw—supporters of the Maoist Revolutionary Union (RU)—has consistently fought against the adoption of such a program. The RU's strategy inside Outlaw, and in the rest of the trade unions, is to call on workers to "fight harder" without raising the need to overthrow capitalism. Such a strategy is doomed to defeat.

The RU claims to understand the necessity of making the socialist revolution—yet they fail to warn workers that the working class as a whole can only be defended against capitalism's deepening crisis by building a revolutionary movement to overthrow it. A leadership which fails to say what is needed, no matter how "unpopular" it may be at the moment, can only betray.

Outlaw's limited militant trade unionism must be transformed into a conscious revolutionary leadership. Join us in this fight!

## UAW Rally

# Woodcock Postures in Washington

by David Franklin

The past few months have seen not only the massive capitalist offensive against auto workers, but the wholesale capitulation of the UAW bureaucracy. Having to face the rank and file, the union tops were forced to present at least a facade of a counter-attack. And so they presented the February 5 "Rally for Jobs" in Washington, attended by 10,000 union members, predominantly unemployed workers. This "rally" displayed in clear form what notion of a fight Woodcock and Co. plans to wage.

In the broadest sense, the rally was intended by its organizers to be a publicity campaign for the Democratic Party—the "friends of labor." UAW vice-president Doug Fraser and Woodcock kicked off the festivities; their talks mingled citing statistics on how bad the layoffs are with verbal blasts at the Ford administration and lots of "militant" rhetoric (notable among the latter being Woodcock's threat of calling a mass demonstration at the capital of a quarter of a million unemployed).

### FDR RIDES AGAIN

This set the stage for a host of Democratic Party politicians, leading up to a climax with Teddy Kennedy. Walter Mondale began the line-up by reminding us of the good old days when Franklin Roosevelt saved us from Herbert Hoover and disaster. In fact, Roosevelt almost seemed to be the man of the hour for the hacks and politicians. That a man who has been dead 30 years had to be resurrected as today's answer is sign enough of the reformists' inability to deal satisfactorily with the crisis from even a bourgeois point of view. But the fact is the "New Deal" neither brought the economy out of depression nor provided the solution to the mass misery of the working class.

The union's relationship with the Democrats is closely linked with their program for congressional action ("A program for the nation's people"). Among the most important aspects of this program are tax cuts, unemployment insurance and public service employment.

As for tax cuts, this means a tax rebate (Woodcock called for between \$100 and \$200), and a reduction of withholding taxes for the rest of 1975, starting July 1.

In terms of unemployment insurance, it is proposed that 1) there be benefit levels of two-thirds of workers' full-time weekly wages; 2) this be in effect for 52 weeks and perhaps longer in "emergency situations"; 3) there should be no disqualifications for unemployed "through no fault of their own."

For public service employment, the bureaucracy "suggests" that one-half of one per cent of the federal budget be

marked for "public service" jobs (e.g., recreation and conservation) for up to four per cent unemployment, and an additional one-half of one per cent be appropriated for each one per cent increase in unemployment. And this is designed to provide work at "adequate wages."

There are other proposed measures (support of the Kennedy-Corman health bill) and nice "suggestions" (such as enacting an "excess profits" tax). But taken individually or as a package, they add up to a miserable acceptance of the capitalists' demands. Accepted at face value, only a fraction of the unemployed would go back to work—"at an adequate (subsistence) wage;" for those remaining unemployed, existing 52 weeks at two-thirds of current wages isn't exactly living high on the hog. The tax cuts would only be a drop in the bucket. And all this, of course, is

before the demands reach the congressional "bargaining table."

But despite the rottenness of the bureaucracy's program, and despite the obvious anger of the ranks as expressed at the rally, it is important to note the political character of that anger. There were prevailing illusions among the rank and filers in both the Democrats and the Woodcock crew's ability and desire to solve the workers' dilemma. Various politicians, particularly Kennedy, were well received.

There were, of course, different motivations for the ranks' misconceptions and those of its "leadership." The greatest applause came for the most "militant" rhetoric mustered for the occasion—for example, when Woodcock threatened a mass demonstration, and his threats to "make the rich pay;" and when Democrat Bella Abzug called for a cut-off of funds to Vietnam "and other military dictatorships all over the world."

Moreover, it had not been the bureaucracy's intention to hold this large a rally. Pressure from the ranks forced the attendance. Many workers were expecting a march and certainly more than a two-hour rally.

The rally took place at a particular conjuncture of the class struggle. The working class in general, and the ranks of the UAW in particular, are too strong to take the bosses' offensive sitting down. At the same time, the disorienting effects of the crisis, combined with the crassness of the Republican approach (manifested in Ford's budget proposal), and the lack of a recognized alternative, revolutionary leadership, has given the bureaucracy and its Democratic pals some breathing room.

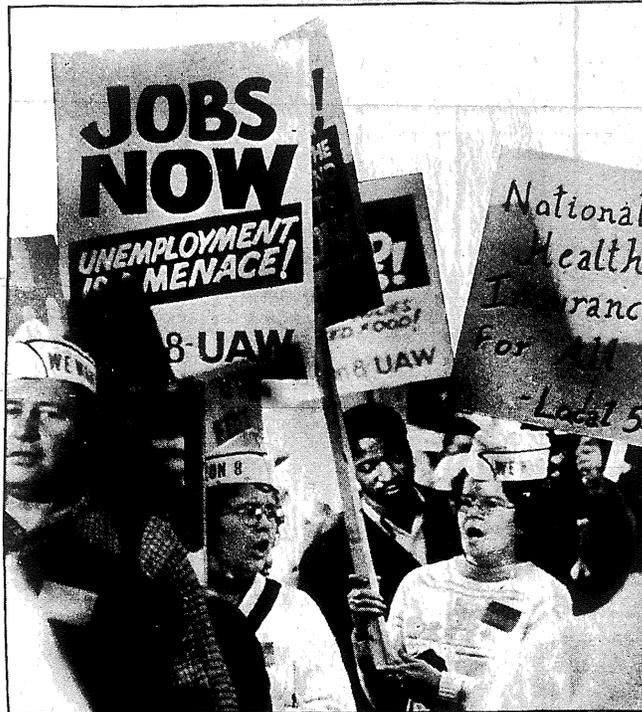
### LABOR LIEUTENANTS

This was something the UAW leadership was well aware of and took into account as they conceived the rally—a relatively "open" (and from their point of view a successful) affair. Despite a social vision limited by their class standpoint, they have an understanding of the importance of gauging the relationship of class forces. Moreover, the bureaucracy has not maintained its position by having a bad tactical sense; their apparent clumsiness in the crisis is the result of their aim to preserve the rule of the auto bosses when such rule means naked, accelerating misery for the people the union is supposed to represent.

As for the rally itself, it was a slick presentation—from the issuing of identification cards marked "delegate" (to give you "participatory democracy" feeling), to the last bus out of the cluttered armory.

Politically-advanced workers know that the Democratic Party is a cesspool. And breaking the mass of workers from the DP is a necessity. But the prevailing illusions among auto workers about the bureaucracy's ability to deliver the goods—or at least its legitimacy—must be taken into account. Woodcock is making a lot of militant promises and getting away with it. Advanced workers should demand that this rhetoric be transformed into a mobilization of the UAW, not for the Democrats, but into a counter-offensive against the bosses. This must involve taking the lead in rallying other sections of the class, employed and unemployed, black and white, organized and unorganized, around a class struggle program. This mobilization and program was discussed in the January issue of *The Torch*.

These demands should be put to the UAW leadership in order to expose these leaders. There should be no illusions that they will be implemented. The rank and file under the revolutionary leadership should be prepared to take action into their own hands.



UAW members in Washington. Woodcock called rally for ranks to blow off steam, trying to pre-empt a militant response.