

Young Spartacus

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Who Elected Gerald Ford?

Ford Pardons Nixon—Extradite Nixon to Hanoi!

Both the Republican and Democratic Parties, and the bourgeois press from the liberal *New York Times* to the conservative *Chicago Tribune*, for the first time since the initial disclosures of Nixon's Watergate scandal are now united in hailing President Gerald Ford as some sort of moral savior. It is not that the air is no longer filled with the "stench of Watergate," but rather that the bourgeoisie hopes Gerald Ford can quickly deodorize the political climate.

The agreement to "bury Watergate" by burying Nixon was made in the interests of a stabilized domestic government and a smoother functioning imperialist order. Capitalist politicians face an annual inflation of 10 percent, the distinct possibility of a rapidly impending major depression, a nation-wide wage offensive and heightened inter-imperialist rivalries. The prospects of a fully discredited Nixon regime trying to enforce new austerity measures or score ever greater diplomatic coups was manifestly out of the question. Thus, the political representatives of the ruling class bounced Nixon and immediately covered-up Henry Kissinger's own surreptitious surveillance activities.

The position of most of the American left that Watergate represented a fundamental political split

within the ruling class appears even more patently unreal given the bourgeoisie's mopping up of the Watergate affair. The fact that all wings of the bourgeoisie have rallied behind and ushered in Ford—tireless anti-communist, racist and anti-labor voter, big spender for the Defense Department, and non-spender for social-services—is final proof that the Watergate crisis centered not on Nixon's basic policies but rather his haughty and intolerable disregard for his bourgeois peers and cronies. During the Watergate Congressional hearings Texas black Democrat Barbara Jordan made the frank observation that Nixon's crime consisted in using against representatives of his class methods of political surveillance and harassment normally reserved for socialists, trade union militants and blacks:

"There is no question about the right of the President to institute warrantless wiretaps even in the interests of national security. We don't quarrel about that. It dates back to 1940. President Roosevelt in a memo to his Attorney General, Attorney General Jackson, stating that it is in the national security to prevent subversive activities to instigate these wiretaps. But that's not what we're concerned about."

—quoted in the *Militant*, 9 August 1974

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L'EXPRESS

As Nixon was holed-up in White House, Ford was being groomed for presidency. When Ford spoke at U. Michigan, Ann Arbor (above), RCY participated in demonstration outside.

National Conference Consolidates Growth



YOUNG SPARTACUS

SYL National Conference concludes with singing of "Internationale."

RCY Becomes SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE

Over the July 4 weekend 185 delegates and observers met in the Niagara region for the Third National Conference of the Revolutionary Communist Youth (RCY). In the period since our last national conference the RCY has experienced dynamic growth, expressed in significant steady recruitment, continued establishment and consolidation of active campus fractions, geographical extension through new branches and regional work and greatly increased press circulation. The RCY has run communist election campaigns at four campuses, conducted principled united-front defense work, participated in strike support and a number of important campus union organizing drives and helped to build the Spartacist League-initiated campaigns around the defense of Chilean political prisoners and solidarity with the British miners strike. As a result the RCY has become one of the most influential left groups on the campuses.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Exclusions by Boston "Socialist"-Feminists

The petty-bourgeois feminist movement in Boston of late has fallen on hard times. The hapless reformists of the Socialist Workers Party/Young Socialist Alliance have seen their single-issue "mass movement," the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition, collapse following the Supreme Court ruling legalizing abortion. Early this year Roxanne Dunbar's self-proclaimed "radical feminist" Female Liberation, one of the pioneering feminist collectives, disbanded following a long period of stagnation.

In an attempt to revitalize the feminist movement politically a Socialist-Feminist study group was launched this spring largely through the initiative of the Cambridge Women's Center. The announced objective of the group was to develop a viable program and strategy for women's liberation through the study and discussion of assorted "socialist-feminist" literature, most prominently Sheila Rowbotham's influential *Women, Resistance and Revolution*. The group initially attracted a politically diverse range of women, some of whom seriously expressed the desire to evaluate the past failures of the feminist movement and transcend classless "sisterhood."

Members of the Spartacist League and the Spartacus Youth League (formerly the Revolutionary Communist Youth) participated in the several study circles, which were established for the summer by the first general meetings of the group, presenting a revolutionary socialist analysis of women's oppression. However, as soon as the political discussions began, the anti-communist feminists of the Women's Center were forced to abandon all their "socialist" pretensions and democratic posturing.

In one of the circles the feminist leaders panicked when a member of the SL/RCY began to present a class analysis of the woman question, and summarily excluded her for being a "member of a democratic centralist organization with a line." This blatantly bureaucratic and anti-communist exclusion was defended on the pretext that such affiliation was incompatible with some "Principle of Unity," a draft document which had never been discussed much less adopted by the group.

It very soon became apparent that the Women's Center leadership intended to ram through a more calculated anti-communist purge of the study circles. The Program Committee, which was merely a liaison body comprised of one representative from each of the seven constituent circles, in a shabby maneuver to implicitly disassociate itself from the first exclusion declared that henceforth all supporters of the SL/RCY would be permitted to attend only one study circle. But simultaneously the Committee leaders launched a behind-the-scenes campaign for the complete exclusion of the SL/RCY based upon the most poisonous anti-communism: the SL/RCY "is only here to recruit" and owes its "primary commitment" to another organization; the SL/RCY "has a line" and thus "would be disruptive in the future."

Unable to face the test of open political debate, these feminists resort to bureaucratic suppression of revolutionary politics and anti-communist ex-

clusion. While railing against the real discrimination against women in the bureaucratically deformed workers states (USSR, China, Cuba, etc.) the "socialist" feminists trample upon the most elementary norms of workers democracy within their own group.

As a result of this red-baiting whisper campaign, two study groups voted to exclude SL/RCY participants, while two others decided against exclusion and for a general membership meeting to debate the question. However, one of the opposing circles, dominated by members of the social-democratic New American Movement (which itself has a long record of anti-communist exclusionism), later reversed its decision in favor of expulsion, apparently after having been assured that the purge would not be extended to NAM supporters as well.

On 1 July the Boston SL/RCY issued a statement, "Against Our Exclusion," which called upon all the study circles to repudiate the exclusions and demand a membership meeting to discuss openly the political basis for participation in the study circles. At the next meeting the Program Committee was successful in pushing through a motion to exclude all members of the SL/RCY. At this point the SL/RCY, together with almost half the body present, walked out of the meeting. The majority of the Cambridge-Alston circle joined together with supporters of the SL/RCY in a separate group which will be studying the communist approach to women's liberation, and is preparing an open letter to the Socialist-Feminists to expose the role of the Cambridge Women's Center leadership. The Boston Socialist-Feminists group, through its policy of exclusionism, has exposed its fundamental anti-communism and doomed itself to early disintegration.

No to the Violence Center!

Last fall Progressive Labor Party/SDS and its catchall liberal front group, the Committee Against Racism (CAR), launched a campaign to prevent the establishment of a proposed "Center for the Study

and Reduction of Violence" at the Neuropsychiatric Institute on the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) campus. According to the unchallenged allegations in CAR literature it appears very likely that a large part of the Violence Center's research will be devoted to developing methods of "quieting" prisoners and offenders through chemical pacification, lobotomization and psychosurgery and to exploring generally the psychological bases of social unrest.

Unable to get this "anti-racism" campaign off the ground, SDS in a last-hope effort to spotlight its activities staged a sit-in demonstration in an administration office on 11 April. The entire body of demonstrators—a total of three PL/SDS supporters!—were arrested and now face possible expulsion for this feeble, moralistic and idiotic publicity stunt. While the Spartacus Youth League opposes the campus-focused, liberal-egalitarian CAR campaigns as diversions from the road of class-struggle opposition to racial oppression, we have consistently come to the defense of PL/SDS when they have been threatened with administration or police victimization or reprisal. The SYL demands that all charges against the Sit-In Three be dropped immediately!

Marxists recognize that capitalism is a social system based on the organized and institutionalized violence of exploitation and oppression, and we solidarize with the rebellions of the oppressed against their exploiters. Scientific socialism nonetheless distinguishes between revolutionary violence in the class struggle and the often violent anti-social behavior of mentally deranged and criminally insane elements. But just as we stand fundamentally opposed to the use of theories of genetic and racial inferiority as a justification for repression or genocide, we are opposed to the barbaric abuse of medical practices by the bourgeois authorities as forms of repression and punishment which disfigure and cripple their victims emotionally and mentally. Only in the medical, rehabilitative and corrective institutions of a workers state can the possibilities of such techniques as psychosurgery be explored and developed in a genuinely and consistently socially beneficial manner.

All available evidence indicates that the Violence Center will constitute a highly specialized auxiliary of the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state pursuing behind the facade of detached academia "scientific" experiments similar to those which have been conducted behind the protective walls of such scientific institutions as, for example, the Vacaville State Prison in California. For this reason the SYL opposes the establishment of the proposed Violence Center.

James P. Cannon 1890-1974

The death of veteran communist James P. Cannon on 21 August brought to an end a long life of dedicated service to the working class. While still a teenager Cannon joined the Industrial Workers of the World as a revolutionary syndicalist. Later he entered the Socialist Party and took his place in the revolutionary wing of the social democracy. Under the impact of the Russian Revolution Cannon was among those who formed the Communist Party, and during the difficult years of reaction in the 1920's led the International Labor Defense.

With the Stalinist degeneration of the Communist International Cannon came forward as one of the principal defenders of the Leninist program and was expelled from the CP in 1928 for Trotskyism. Cannon built the Trotskyist party in this country and tempered its cadres above all through his principled programmatic intransigence, for which Trotsky paid him tribute. For revolutionary opposition to imperialist war Cannon and the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party were the first to be jailed under the Smith Act.

After the post-war upsurge Cannon had to struggle to preserve the party and its cadres from the demoralizing isola-

tion of the long McCarthy era and from the influence of the growing revisionism of Pablo in the Fourth International. Cannon and the SWP, however, withdrew from an international fight against Pabloism. Cannon's tragic political degeneration was part of the final succumbing of the SWP to this revisionism in the early 1960's.

For years the SWP has trampled upon the revolutionary program and heritage that for so many decades had been defended by Cannon. It is with revulsion that we watch the Kautskys of the SWP today shamelessly recall the revolutionary achievements of Cannon in order to kick off a fund-raising jamboree for building this reformist party.

The birth of the Spartacist League in the struggle against revisionism in the SWP is a process that Cannon once understood well: the cadres of the revolutionary party of the future must and will come from those who remain steadfast to the principles of proletarian socialism. With this sense of revolutionary continuity, we firmly assert our rightful heritage to the traditions of Cannonism and our determination to rebuild the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.



Young Spartacus

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SYL Fights Discriminatory Student Election Rules

Last spring the Spartacus Youth League (formerly the Revolutionary Communist Youth) at Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit played the initiating and leading role in a united-front defense of SDS. The University administration had fully collaborated with the Detroit police in the arrest and attempted extradition to Illinois of two SDSers involved in the disruption of a public speech by the racist ideologue Edward Banfield. Against the sectarian and stupid refusal of SDS to join in this united front for their defense, we warned that a "successful attack by bourgeois forces against any left-wing group or individual strengthens the bourgeoisie's hand against the entire workers movement and opens the gates for increased repression of the left" (YSp, July-August 1974).

Clearly aware of the self-imposed vulnerability of SDS, the WSU administration has now refused to recognize the 1974-75 Student-Faculty Council (S-FC) elected by the student body in June on the basis of the seating of the three members of the SDS-backed Candidates Against Racism (CAR) slate. The administration has declared the three students ineligible under the rarely enforced 1962 S-FC charter because of low grade averages and insufficient accumulated course credits. These requirements in themselves are patently undemocratic and discriminate particularly against minority and working-class youth who suffer from inferior preparatory schooling and often the economic compulsion to be part-time students, part-time workers.

WSU President George Gullen's move to force the S-FC to dump the CAR slate is the latest incident in a sustained campaign of harassment over the past several years designed to curb the activities of the left on campus. Administration efforts to squelch the publication of radical views in the campus newspaper, the *South End*, have been the source of conflict since 1968. Last year Gullen successfully tightened administrative control over the campus press by the establishment of a new Publications Board and this winter has begun to enforce restrictions limiting the number and location of literature tables on campus.

Recently the administration has drawn up a new student code, scheduled to be approved by the Board of Governors this fall, which includes provisions sanctioning increased administration repression. Under the new code students engaging in sit-ins and certain other forms of political demonstrations, or refusing to move literature tables, could be legally prosecuted by the University. Furthermore, any student brought up on charges deemed to be "of such a nature that the student's presence will interfere with the academic program" could be suspended until proven innocent or otherwise charged.

Recent substantial tuition hikes (10 percent for freshmen and sophomores and 20 percent for juniors and seniors) have hit especially hard at WSU's largely working-class student body, and Gullen, apprehensive of any resurgence of the 1971 anti-tuition rise struggles, is seeking every opportunity to muzzle the campus left. The administration's open attack on SDS and CAR is an attempt not only to harass individual student activists, but also to create an atmosphere of intimidation to stifle future left political activities and campaigns.

In its latest move the administration has declared the CAR slate ineligible and has offered the S-FC the choice of either seating the next three eligible runners-up or throwing the vacancies open to new elections. At its first meeting following the announcement of the administration's decision the S-FC was divided between the assorted New Left radicals, who opposed the administration's provocation primarily as an infringement upon the illusory "student control" of the council, and the outright careerists and conservatives, who wished at all costs to avoid antagonizing the administration. Adopting a motion advanced by the opportunists of the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), the S-FC for the moment resolved its differences by declaring that in principle it defended student rights and student control of the S-FC.

At the next meeting called to take up the question of the defense of the CAR slate, the S-FC voted to reject the administration proposals and to demand that the duly elected slate be seated. As a compromise the administration then offered to consider again the academic standing of the three students. Since one of the students actually had been eligible at the time of the elections and a second had since fulfilled the requirements, the S-FC opted for the



RCY at Wayne State University initiated and led the defense of SDS/CAR, demanding end to all discriminatory election requirements.

administration's deal and has begun bargaining for the recognition of part of the slate. Thus, the S-FC radicals, as well as the YSA and SDS, have retreated from their initial position of defense on principle and have dodged entirely the basic question of the discriminatory S-FC charter.

The RCY, in our WSU *Young Spartacus* supplement of 8 May, was the first organization on campus to come out for the defense of SDS. The RCY has attended the S-FC meetings and pointed out that offering up part or all of the CAR slate will not appease the administration, but on the contrary only will embolden their future violations of student rights, as represented by the new student code. The RCY raised the demands that the duly elected CAR slate be seated and the 1974-75 S-FC be recognized, and that all discriminatory requirements concerning student representation be abolished. In addition the RCY called for an end to all administration control over the S-FC and an end to all forms of political repression and harassment on campus.

At present it appears that the administration intends to permit the one eligible student to be seated and proceed with new elections for the other two seats. Most campus organizations have indicated that they will not field candidates, thus the two CAR

candidates very likely will be running unopposed. In such a situation we will call for a vote for the CAR slate, since the elections will essentially constitute a referendum on student democratic rights. At the same time we continue to demand the abolition of all discriminatory requirements for eligibility to student representative bodies.

The unswerving commitment of the SYL to the defense of all pro-working-class organizations and militants in no way implies political support to SDS or CAR. We have counterposed to the anemic academic liberalism and futile confrontationism of SDS-CAR the necessity for a class-struggle opposition to all manifestations of racial oppression, and to the parochial student-power illusions of SDS and the S-FC the struggle for the nationalization of high schools and colleges under worker-student-teacher control. While fostering no illusions in the capacity of student councils to alter fundamentally the class-biased policies and bourgeois role of educational institutions under capitalism, the SYL recognizes the necessity to fight for democratic rights on campus. We seek to utilize student election campaigns and councils as the platform for raising a socialist program, which relates the particular problems of student youth to the more fundamental social issues and seeks to link up isolated campus struggles to the struggle for socialist revolution and a workers government. ■

Defend the Attica Brothers!

Three years ago Nelson Rockefeller, then governor of New York State, ordered the cop assault that extinguished the heroic rebellion at Attica prison in a bloodbath. Viciously determined to show that capitalism has no mercy even for rebels who happen to survive, the government brought indictments against 61 of the Attica inmates. On September 16 the first of the trials of the Attica Brothers will open.

The defense of the Attica Brothers has been conducted by the Attica Defense Committee (ADC), now the Attica Brothers Legal Defense (ABLD) on the basis of three demands: "1) All 42 indictments against the 61 Brothers be dropped; 2) The state indict the real criminals responsible for the 43 deaths—Rockefeller, Oswald, and the state troopers; 3) The original humanitarian demands of D Yard be implemented." The core of the ADC/ABLD—primarily lawyers and legal staff of Maoist and New Left persuasion—have made acceptance of all these demands the precondition for participating in the defense effort and have subordinated all propaganda and tactics to their strategy of a primarily legal fight. The ADC/ABLD has excluded from the defense organizations that disagree with its legalist strategy. All criticism is considered "playing politics with their [the Brothers'] lives."

Several times during the past two years the Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth (now the Spartacus Youth League) has addressed calls to the ADC/ABLD for united-front working-class defense of the Attica Brothers. We have repeatedly argued that the broadest support for the defense could be mobilized

around the single demand "No Reprisals—Drop All Charges." All organizations and individuals united around this central demand should have the right to raise and argue for their own positions whether they agree with all the politics of the Attica Brothers' 28 "D Yard" demands or not. At the same time the defense must have a strategic orientation of appealing to the organizations of the workers and blacks.

The difference between a mass united-front defense and a narrow legalist defense was fought out in the movement which grew up around the Sacco and Vanzetti case in the 1920's. The late James P. Cannon, then the head of the International Labor Defense, wrote splendidly on the meaning of a class-struggle defense:

"One policy is the policy of the class struggle. It puts the center of gravity in the protest movement of the workers of America and the world. It puts all faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatever in the justice of the courts. While favoring all possible legal proceedings, it calls for agitation, publicity, demonstrations—organized protest on a national and international scale. It calls for unity and solidarity of all workers on this burning issue, regardless of conflicting views on other questions.... The other policy...relies mainly on legal proceedings."

—Labor Defender, January 1927

The defense of the Attica Brothers is the duty of every self-proclaimed socialist and class-conscious militant. The SYL calls for united-front demonstrations of support for the Attica Brothers around the demands NO REPRISALS—DROP THE CHARGES.

"Revolutionary" Student Brigade Holds Conference:

Maoists Exhume New Left

Over 400 predominantly student youth from collectives around the country gathered in Iowa City from 15-17 June for the first national convention of the Attica Brigade (there renamed the Revolutionary Student Brigade), which is dominated by the Maoist Revolutionary Union (RU). The convention represented the results of the efforts of the reformist RU in rebuilding a national campus-based youth movement on the attitudes and politics of bankrupt New Leftism.

Exhuming the New Left

The Attica Brigades initially were merely the "anti-imperialist" contingents in the National Peace Action Coalition annual peace crawls of November 1971 and April 1972, in which the RU participated. Seeing in these and subsequent episodic regroupments of sundry New Left-inclined youth the potential for developing a front group of the approximate character of the Third World-period SDS, the RU set about organizing Attica Brigade collectives as the beginning of "an anti-imperialist student organization."

Raising the call "Rebuild the Student Movement," the first issue of the Attica Brigade paper trumpeted:

"We can learn many valuable lessons from the student movement of the '60's. The most important is that students are an effective force in the fight against imperialism, both when they fight for their real needs as students, and as spreaders of consciousness to the broad masses of people."

—*Fight Back*, September-October 1973

Articles in *Fight Back*, a substantial section of the single convention document, and the keynote address of the

Vietnam. And we also support the fight of oppressed people here in the U.S."

—*Fight Back*, November 1973

Students and the "Anti-Imperialist United Front"

From the period of its break with anti-communist exclusionism in 1965 until the left-right polarization and split in 1969, SDS represented the broad pole of attraction within a rapidly evolving and widespread student radicalization. The Attica Brigade, however, has been built by the RU in a period of campus political quiescence on the Maoist conception of a student-youth component of the "anti-imperialist united front." As expressed by RU honcho Bob Avakian in his speech to the convention on "The Role of Students in the Revolutionary Movement," the Attica Brigade "should not be narrowed down to those who are consciously for proletarian revolution" and Brigaders must "take what they have learned and link up with the masses on the campus, and unite the student movement with the broader mass movement" (as reported in *Revolution*, July 1974).

Although indeed often highly responsive to heightened social crisis and polarization, the "masses on campus" are a multi-class layer in society which consequently is neither inherently revolutionary nor reactionary. For this reason the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky rejected the conception of an intrinsically leftist or "revolutionary student" movement developing spontaneously out of isolated student struggles and independently of the hegemony of the Marxist program. The task

imperialist united front" is a reformist strategy, like the Communist Party's "anti-monopoly coalition," for pursuing class collaboration with "progressive" liberals and for tailing petty-bourgeois nationalists and the "labor lieutenants of capital" in the unions. The RU is opposed to building the Attica Brigade as a youth organization "consciously for proletarian revolution" in program precisely because the Maoists "unite the student movement with the broader mass movement" on a programmatic basis in which the class independence of the proletariat is suppressed.

Furthermore, for Leninists the united front is a tactic with a particular applicability, and not a grandiose strategy for orchestrating "anti-imperialist" or anti-monopoly forces. The united front draws its class-struggle potential from the tension between the maximum mobilization of proletarian forces and the unremitting struggle for the hegemony of the communist program against all the misleaders.

The Deeds of the Attica Brigade

Brigaders claim to "support the fight of oppressed people here in the U.S." But where does the "anti-imperialist united front" actually lead? On the elementary class question of the cops, the sworn enemies and butchers of the oppressed, the Attica Brigade has opposed the Spartacus Youth League (formerly Revolutionary Communist Youth) demand "Cops Off Campus" in order to preserve its liberal blocs during the Berkeley "Save the Crim School" and the State University of New York at Buffalo "No Guns for Cops" campaigns. Earlier the Brigade students at Buffalo had crossed the class line entirely when they wildly cheered as "allies" some campus cops who were opposed to budget cutbacks only out of concern for "security" funds.

Tailing the anti-communist nationalists of the Third World Coalition (TWC) and Black Studies Department during the fight against budget and program cutbacks at City College of New York (CCNY), the Attica Brigade has consistently opposed the attempts of the RCY to raise socialist slogans, and again crossed the class line by approving a CP front group-instigated cop intervention into a militant picket line to remove the menace of the RCY's communist slogans.

Similarly, in the Farah and farmworker strike support committees the Attica Brigade has suppressed all left-wing politics and become water-boys for the sell-out bureaucrats. Exhortations about solidarity with the oppressed farmworkers cannot cover the Attica Brigade's uncritical support to Chavez' defeatist liberal boycott strategy which has led to the virtual destruction of the union built by the struggle of the farmworkers. Nor do the Brigade's empty slogans of "solidarity" mean much when it refuses to mention a word of criticism of Chavez' vicious redbaiting and disgusting support to the government-grower campaign to deport "foreign" Mexican migrant workers.

The "Throw the Bum Out—Organize to Fight" committees, politically based on anti-Nixon liberalism, have demonstrated the complete bankruptcy of the Attica Brigade "mass line." Now that the bourgeoisie has forced "the Bum" out, the Brigade is left with absolutely

FIGHT BACK



Attica Brothers Legal Defense demanded that Attica Brigade change its name following infantile antics and publicity stunts, like seizure of Statue of Liberty.

nothing but the exhortation to "put all the bums on the run."

And How Does Mao "Fight Back"?

Brigaders likewise claim to stand in solidarity with the oppressed of the world. But whom does Mao's "anti-imperialist united front" include? Bandaranaike of Ceylon, after butchering thousands of Maoist-inspired youth of the J.V.P. and launching a reign of terror among the peasantry, was invited to Peking to be given a triumphal reception and an interest-free loan of 150 million rupees, and later presented as the people's leader in Chou En-lai's laudatory "Message to Mrs. Bandaranaike." Similarly, the barbarous genocide and rape of East Bengal in 1971 by Yahya Khan did not diminish in the least the stature of this "progressive" military dictator in Mao's Hall of Fame.

While the Attica Brigade enthuses over the struggle of the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) and the Iranian Student Association, the Shah of Iran, that true friend of China, is crushing the PFLOAG guerrillas and executing Iranian students. *Fight Back* cowardly asserts that the Shah "can only maintain his fascist rule through huge military and financial support from the U.S." Yes, but Mao claims that he's a progressive!

The Attica Brigade supports the struggle in Vietnam by denouncing all reports of "North Vietnamese aggression" as slanderous imperialist lies, thus recognizing the imperialist-imposed "peace" as legitimate. Despite the recent intermittent mini-offences, the Vietnamese Stalinists have historically squandered and betrayed the heroism and aspirations of the workers and peasants through the search for some "peaceful coalition"

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FIGHT BACK



The Revolutionary Union: workerism in the factories, Yippie-anarcho-Maoism on the campuses. Cartoon from Attica Brigade's *Fight Back*.

convention (delivered by the dimly eminent former SDS Secretary Clark Kissinger) have been devoted to glorifying the heritage of the "good old" SDS, distorting the opportunist role of the Maoists and villifying the "Progressive Labor Trotskyites."

Thus, the RU could justify an undisguised return to simple New Left vicarious Third World nationalism as the proclaimed political basis of the Brigade:

"We have two principles of unity. We support all national liberation struggles around the world, as exemplified by the NLF-PRG of S.

of communists is to bring Marxist analysis and the revolutionary program to campus and youth struggles, linking them to the central, class struggle in society and always striving to advance them to conscious political partisanship with the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. To denigrate or suppress the struggle for the Marxist program is to abandon the student movement to petty-bourgeois illusions and bourgeois ideology.

But Maoists reject the fundamental Marxist tenet that the proletariat is the only consistently revolutionary class in capitalist society. The "anti-

...FORD

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But what has Nixon's tieless, short-sleeved, nice-guy replacement set about doing? Ford has already declared a wage freeze effective for at least three months for all federal government employees. Although no definitive formulation of the economic policy of his administration has emerged from Ford's huddles with his gaggle of economic advisors, it is clear that he intends to attempt a reimposition of a general wage freeze. His relatively expansive monetary policy is designed to increase the value of monetary capital, being rapidly eaten away by inflation, at the expense of wage increases and government expenditures for domestic social services. Ford hopes to stave off a depression through an all-sided assault on the living standards and working conditions of the proletariat.

Speaking to graduating students at Ohio State University on 30 August, Ford stressed the particular role he envisions for students "in the fight against inflation." He referred to the "distant challenge" of other nations and then tooted his horn for the "highly motivated" and "extremely well disciplined" Chinese youth (*New York Times*, 31 August). Not even Ford imagines that the problem of inflation in an advanced capitalist economy can be addressed by 30,000 Ohio State students laying railroad ties by hand, but perhaps he hopes nonetheless to obscure the rising rate of unemployment among college graduates and cutbacks in educational funding with these crackpot references to Maoist voluntarism. More realistically, Ford will probably use the offices of the Labor Department to set up some work-study "cooperative education" programs while advocating the elimination of "less practical" curricula. He spoke about the "practical application of education" and punned

miserably that U.S. education was "strangled by degrees" (*ibid.*).

Poor Richard Nixon?

In the meantime the bourgeois media have launched a virtual crusade to evoke public sympathy for yesterday's villain, the resigned mass murderer and crook Nixon. CBS Newsman Dan Rather said of Nixon's resignation speech, in which Nixon only stated the obvious truth that he had lost his "base in Congress," that it was truly "magnificent" and represented Nixon's "finest hour." When the following day Nixon appeared on television to bite his lip and appeal to the memory of his mother ("she was a saint"), the bourgeois news commentators became positively lyrical, intoning somberly on Nixon's last view of the Washington Monument, the sound of his helicopter whirring in the distance, etc. Ford's "spirit of reconciliation" means pardon for this confessed criminal but prosecution for the Attica Brothers!

Amnesty for Draft Evaders and Deserters—No Amnesty for Nixon! Extradite Him to Hanoi!

In Ford's inauguration speech where he noted that he had not been elected, he also acknowledged "a power higher than the people, Who [sic] commands not only righteousness but love, not only justice but mercy." But sermonizing about divine right will only go so far. If Ford is to appear plausible as the embodiment of the "spirit of reconciliation," he is going to have to do more than just hold prayer gatherings and prepare his own breakfast.

As part of his effort to win disgruntled liberals and particularly youth to his mission of "binding up the nation's wounds" Ford has focused public attention on the issue of amnesty for Vietnam war deserters and draft evaders. In his first speech outside Washington Ford preached leniency, love and forgiveness to the startled convention of the Veterans of Foreign

Wars. Ford is clearly talking about "earned amnesty," i.e., alternative service: "I want them to come home, if they want to work their way back." And in an oblique reference to the kind of treatment the more political cases will receive, Ford added ominously: "I will then decide how best to deal with the different kinds of cases. There are differences" (*New York Times*, 20 August).

Much has been made of Ford's difference with Nixon on the amnesty issue. In a speech of 31 January 1973, Nixon indeed did maintain a hard line on the question:

"Those who served paid their price. Those who deserted must pay their price and the price is not a junket in the peace corps or something like that, as some have suggested. The price is a criminal penalty for disobeying the laws of the United States."
—quoted in the *New York Times*, 20 August 1974

Is it just that Nixon was more interested in "plumbing" than "healing"? The fact is that public opinion on the amnesty question has shifted substantially in the last two years. The most recent Gallup pole (April 1974) shows that of the 58 percent of Americans

who were not in favor of unconditional amnesty, 80 percent supported some kind of alternative service. So Ford has a popular issue in amnesty.

Only the masterful staging of delivering his amnesty position at the VFW convention—probably the one place on earth outside the quarters of Thieu's government in Saigon where even conditional amnesty is too lenient—could lend credibility to Ford's "healing" policies. Senator George McGovern, the has-been darling of left liberalism, could only say of the VFW performance: "...[Ford] needs to move in a number of ways to initiate some healing process in the country. The people are ripe for that. I hope that was the motivation for the speech" (*New York Times*, 20 August).

Ford's image as the Great Reconciler was also pushed by the ever-reliable Black Congressional Caucus. Ford met with the Democrats on 20 August for a clearly cosmetic session. Shirley Chisholm, another favorite of the liberals, noted the "sharp difference between Ford and Nixon" and observed of Ford: "He's kinder, more frank and seems to have a desire to

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When Ford quietly slipped onto U. of Chicago campus, RCY on short notice organized protest picket.

with imperialism.

The most recent guest in Peking has been none other than cold-warrior, pro-Zionist Senator Henry Jackson, who fully concurs with the Maoists that the Soviet Union represents the "number one enemy." As the *New York Times* (2 July) noted: "Senator Jackson's support for maintaining American troop levels in Western Europe is without doubt appreciated in China." In the course of their high-level talks Chou En-lai indeed did pledge continuing Chinese support for the maintenance and strengthening of NATO, that "united front" of American imperialism!

Satisfied with his "united front" with the Maoist bureaucracy against the working class of Europe and the Soviet bloc, Jackson returned urging closer ties with China on the basis that "the Chinese could be trusted more than the Russians as international partners" (as quoted in the *New York Times*, 9 July). Will the Attica Brigade give the same back-handed electoral support to the anti-communist, rocket-rattling racist Democratic presidential contender Jackson in 1976 as the RU gave to McGovern in 1972?

Attrition to the Right

In its rotten attempt to rebuild the old New Left the RU has been faced with a not inconsiderable loss of membership from the Attica Brigade, including major splits in the direction of an outright reversion to undisciplined New Leftist collectives as well as the New American Movement (NAM). Although NAM seeks to rebuild the student movement around the old social-democratic politics of the early SDS, and the Attica Brigade around the Third Worldist protest politics, there nonetheless is an overlap in the loose fringes of their constituencies: political drifters, dilettantes and

open reformists who are repulsed by the revolutionary left and are comfortable only with openly liberal protest politics, student powerism, tailist front-group support committees and "serve the people" social workerism. Thus, some Attica Brigade chapters have split to merge with NAM (Queens, Binghamton, Cornell) or to function as an "independent" Radical Student Union with NAM politics (Ann Arbor).

An "Anti-Communist United Front"

The most important point about the convention was that virtually all the criticisms voiced by non-RU Brigades were characteristically *anti-communist*: the conscientiously simplistic *Fight Back* is too "sectarian"; adopting the proposed name Revolutionary Student Brigade will alienate the mass of students; the participation of RUers in the Brigades has led to "cadrefication"; and elitist vanguardism "is a more destructive problem" than "the problem of tailing the masses."

By building a parochial "student brigade" on the basis of decrepit, discredited New Leftism and seeking to control the resulting undisciplined front group by manipulation and domination, the RU has only succeeded in creating an organization in which not only opponent ostensibly revolutionary organizations but even it is denounced! Serious RUers would do well to examine the history of the Young Communist League-led National Student League and American Student Union, organizations which in the 1930's passed from a crude working-class orientation to open alliance with Roosevelt; and the Leninist Comintern's formulation of youth-party relations: that the youth group should have its own independent organizational life and at the same time be in com-

plete *open political* solidarity with the communist party.

But the RU, for whose present politics the front group is the logical organizational expression, retreated before the criticisms in typical Stalinist fashion, only to later announce that the National Interim Bureau had decided to dispense with the discussion and adoption of the draft "Statement of Unity," the main political document before the convention! Political discussion was instead diverted to a largely artificial debate over "Throw the Bum Out—Organize to Fight" vs. "Throw the Bum Out—Fight Ghetto Repression" as the main fall campaign slogan.

The only significant left criticism registered at the convention was the complaint in the report of the Antioch Brigade that "anti-imperialist" politics never seem to come forward in Attica Brigade "second-level work" (i.e., front groups) such as farmworker and prisoner support:

"This holds back the struggle because it can lead people to believe we can unite with 'liberal' elements of the ruling class, that the system can be reformed, that the struggle can be resolved under imperialism, that the system really does work."

But such "second-level" (that is, *sub-reformist*) work, the front groups of a front group, is precisely what the Brigade "mass line" is all about: the liquidation of any ostensibly revolutionary line into demands which never transgress the reform of capitalist society.

The current left posturing taken up by the RU in the welter of polemics among the self-proclaimed Maoist groups and in speeches by Avakian across the country will very likely exacerbate the anti-communist impulses within the Brigade and lead to crumbling on its right wing. As early as the convention, the Berkeley Radical Students Union (which advocates not

socialism but "radical surgery" for capitalist society), under the influence of a right split in the RU in the direction of the Black Workers Congress led by two senior RU cadre working in the RSU, declined to join the new Revolutionary Student Brigade.

The Spectre of the RCY

Faced with rightist opposition within the Brigade, the RU was also clearly concerned by the left threat presented by the RCY. The "Procedures for the Convention" included in the main conference document listed eight organizations to be excluded from this "mass student movement," the first of which was the SL/RCY. Moreover, during the convention proceedings the RCY was continually mentioned or denounced.

The RU felt compelled to schedule a workshop session on Trotskyism (which drew about 75, more than the attendance at Avakian's workshop on "Communists in the Mass Movement"). The salient focus of this presentation was the differences and "fundamental similarities" between the "right Trots" (the YSA) and the "left Trots" (the RCY). The speaker elaborated on the "sectarian" (read: principled) intervention of the RCY in a number of campus struggles, especially the Laney anti-tuition hike and CCNY anti-budget cut campaigns, and the Delano farmworkers rally.

Those members of the RU and Attica Brigade/Revolutionary Student Brigade who are seriously committed to the struggle for socialist revolution, only the victory of which can lead to the destruction of imperialism, will be increasingly confronted by the genuinely revolutionary program and practice of the SYL, youth group of the Spartacist League. There is only one revolutionary alternative to the dead-end reformism of Maoism: Join the SYL! ■

Anti-Busing Forces

On 3 April this year a crowd of 20,000, exclusively white, demonstrated in Boston for repeal of the 1965 Massachusetts Racial Imbalance Act. After an eight-year delay the law was finally slated for implementation through large-scale busing of public school children, both in Boston proper and nearby suburbs. In late July the Supreme Court, in a stunning reversal of previous decisions, overturned by a 5-4 vote a lower court ruling that children from the overwhelmingly black Detroit inner city be bused to the largely white suburbs. Not satisfied with the Supreme Court's ban on cross-district busing, the following week Congress passed the education budget bill with an amendment barring the busing of a child beyond the next-closest school.

The Supreme Court and Congressional actions effectively cripple the racial integration of urban schools and go a long way toward undoing the famous 1954 decision. The anti-busing actions at the highest levels of government are major blows against the democratic rights of black people.

White Backlash Whips Busing

The "white backlash," most dramatically evident in the electoral successes of Alabama's populist/racist former governor George Wallace, has long threatened to reverse even the formal legal gains of the civil rights movement. Opposition to school busing is the cutting edge of the white backlash. The emotion-ridden issue played a central role in both Wallace's and Nixon's 1972 presidential campaigns. And at the lower political levels a new generation of racist demagogues, typified by Boston's Louise Day Hicks, has risen to prominence on the anti-busing campaign.

The first major attempt to legally reverse court-ordered busing was Nixon's 1972 education bill. Passed by the House, it was killed by a filibuster of Senate liberals. This election year, however, poll-conscious liberals have unceremoniously decamped from their earlier half-hearted support for busing. Already smelling a Republican rout in November in the wake of Watergate, the Democrats will do just about anything to prevent school integration from again becoming an embarrassing campaign issue. Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield arranged the "compromise" to eliminate the expansion of busing, while letting past court orders stand.

In the face of the racist reaction to integration, the black political establishment in the main has surrendered, reverting to the politics of Booker T. Washington. At least on the critical school question, prominent black politicians are prepared to support *de facto* segregation in return for more patronage. On hearing the Supreme Court ruling, Detroit mayor Coleman Young stated, "I shed no great tears for cross-district busing," and then demanded more educational money for his administration (*New York Times*, 26 July). The Black Caucus of the Massachusetts State Legislature indicated its willingness to support repeal of the Racial Imbalance Act in return for some kind of "community control" patronage deal.

Although totally inadequate even as a solution to school segregation, busing is at least a minimal attempt to allow the black poor a share in the benefits of white American society. Moreover, busing has become a symbol in the struggle against black oppression in general. If the anti-busing campaign is successful, if the Hicks, Wallaces and Fords win on this question, it will greatly encourage the forces of racist

reaction to turn the calendar back before 1954 at every level. The successful drive in state legislatures to restore the death penalty and the Supreme Court's recent reactionary rulings on prisoner rights are part of the same rightward political motion reflected in the Congressional anti-busing stand and Supreme Court ruling.

Apart from its importance as a democratic issue and its limited but tangible contribution to the quality of education available to the black poor, there is a further reason that proletarian revolutionaries must support busing. It is desperately necessary to use all means possible to break the black masses out of the social isolation of the ghetto. The hard race line in this country, stronger on the personal level even than in the old rural South, is poison to socialist consciousness.

rigid racial division of American society.

"Separate But Equal" Socialists

The racial integration of public schools—and that is what the busing conflict is all about—is such an elementary democratic right, and the opponents of busing are so shamelessly racist, that it is difficult to believe that any left-wing organization would not support court-ordered busing. Nonetheless, two self-proclaimed socialist groups, the ostensibly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the social-democratic International Socialists (IS), actually *oppose* legally enforced school desegregation, though their reasons differ: the former advocates black nationalism while the lat-

lished. Black control means Black people electing community councils through which the masses can administer and supervise these funds as well as all aspects of school functioning... It includes being able to decide whether Black students will or will not be bused."

—*Militant*, 10 March 1972

But the SWP's opportunist appetites seem to be counterposed to taking a hard position on any subject. Thus Jenness/Pulley state in the same article that while the SWP "does not see busing as *the* solution," if the "Black community" supports busing then so will they!

The difference between Wallace/Hicks and Jenness/Pulley turns out to be only that the former want to prohibit blacks from attending white schools, while the SWP wants to convince blacks



Cross-district busing of black and Puerto Rican students into Canarsie, Brooklyn, provoked a fierce racist backlash, including intimidating demonstrations (above) and a campaign for "community control" of the schools (right).



Most whites today view blacks as a hostile social group, with whom they can have no friends, no ties and no basis for identification. The prevailing social climate in this country contains the potential for race war, in which (given their relative social power) the blacks would be the principal victims. It is only at the point of production that black/white relations are not generally hostile and where common proletarian interests occasionally overcome the

ter capitulates to white racist backwardness.

The SWP is opposed to busing because it believes that racially separate schools ("black control of the black community") are progressive. As SWP candidates Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley stated in their 1972 presidential/vice-presidential campaign:

"But money alone won't solve the problems of Black education. Black control of Black education must also be estab-

not to. (Both agree on preventing whites from attending black schools.) In practice, even this difference evaporates. Wallace and Hicks would happily agree to the SWP policy, since they believe they can discourage blacks from wanting to attend white neighborhood schools. Voluntary busing is an open invitation for organized harassment and racial violence against the volunteers. The history of school desegregation since 1954 is full of exam-

GUARDIAN

Must Be Defeated!

ples of such harassment, from demonstrations by white parents in Little Rock against integration in 1956 to burning of school buses by the Ku Klux Klan in Michigan in the 1970's.

The SWP has embraced the Uncle Tom tradition of black acceptance of "separate but equal" facilities. If the SWP took historical traditions seriously, next to their posters of Che Guevara and Malcolm X they should also display the ideological inspirer of their position on black education—Booker T. Washington.

The International Socialists have the dishonor of capitulating directly to the white racist backlash on the busing question:

"'Two-way' busing involves more than simply the right of black people to attend any school they want, a right which socialists unconditionally defend. It also involves sending white students (mostly working class) to worse schools, an issue made to order for racists.

"Even whites who are not racist find it impossible to defend. . . . For these reasons, socialists oppose both the 'pro'-busing and 'anti'-busing forces, both of whom use racism to further their own ends."

—Workers Power, 10 November 1972

For blacks the IS position amounts to essentially the same thing as the SWP's. Blacks have the right to volunteer to attend white neighborhood schools in the face of organized racist violence. But—horror of horrors—whites must not be assigned to ghetto schools! The ghetto schools are hell-holes not because of their geographical location, but because they serve as prison camps for restless black lumpen youth. Under the present conditions of rampant white racism, the presence of significant numbers of white students could be an at least minimally effective way of introducing an element of change into the nature of ghetto schools. If an all-black school becomes 20 percent white, the administration, teachers and



Socialists critically support busing (above) to achieve racial desegregation as a democratic right; racists, including Ku Klux Klan, firebombed these buses in Pontiac, Michigan (below).

on the cultural level of the black masses and even less effect on their economic situation. As long as blacks remain a race-color caste, concentrated at the bottom of American society and imprisoned in ghettos, changes in formal education will have only a marginal impact on black people.

For Free Universal Higher Education

While the Spartacist League supports busing regardless of popular opposition to it, it would be moralistic idealism, not scientific socialism, to believe whites can be won over simply by appeals to democratic principles. White workers and petty bourgeois will accept busing only when they believe it does not attack their material interests.

White parental opposition to busing reflects both racist attitudes as such and a belief that an influx of blacks will lower educational quality, thereby making it more difficult for their children to get into and do well in college. In reality, the available studies show that integrated schools have little effect on the academic performance of either white or black children. However, whites do view busing as a serious threat to the future educational/career prospects for their children.

U.S. whites will accept integrated public schools only if the intensely competitive screening/tracking purpose of the educational system is eliminated. Socialists must demand free higher education for all with an adequate stipend to cover living expenses for every student. Free universal higher education will not eliminate those anti-busing forces that reflect pure and simple racist bigotry, but it would fundamentally undercut the anti-

busing sentiment arising out of the struggle over limited educational resources.

For Low-Rent Racially Integrated Housing

Some opposition to busing, particularly from the school children them-

selves, is due to the time-consuming inconvenience involved. While recognizing the resistance to extensive busing caused by practical considerations, the convenience issue is totally dwarfed by the central question of the democratic rights of blacks.

Busing is a somewhat artificial attempt to overcome ghettoization. Given the geographical concentrations of blacks and whites, busing, even under the best of circumstances, could not produce racially balanced schools. For example, only 30 percent of New York City school children are classified as non-Puerto Rican whites. The rigid and many-sided separation of blacks and whites in American society must be attacked at its most blatant level—ghettoization.

The existence of and commitment to exclusively white neighborhoods reflect racist attitudes, personal economic advantage and fear of racial violence. For white homeowners, there is an obvious economic advantage in keeping neighborhood property values up by keeping blacks out. More importantly, when blacks move into a white neighborhood, this is seen by everyone as the expansion of the ghetto: any whites who do not move out will soon find themselves in the unenviable and dangerous situation of being isolated in a black neighborhood.

Only a powerful material incentive can break down the rigid racially divided neighborhood pattern. Socialists must demand the construction of low-rent, racially integrated quality public housing. Many white families would show a very different attitude toward having black neighbors if it meant they could pay a third of their present rent for a comparable or even better dwelling. On the other hand, hardened bigots who insist on living in their exclusive neighborhoods would then be paying dearly for that privilege.

It is unlikely that free universal higher education or low-rent, racially integrated housing will ever be achieved under conditions of bourgeois class rule. However, such demands are essential to turn the black and white working masses' present clawing at each other over a larger share of the pie into a united struggle against the common enemy—the capitalist class. ■



NY TIMES

the cops will behave rather differently. On the other hand all the talk about quality education—on both sides of the busing conflict—is bourgeois idealist hogwash. Ghetto schools do not teach because there are no jobs, no careers for the products of those schools. Black lumpen youth cannot use the knowledge normally transmitted through the public school system to get ahead in American society. Doubling the budget for ghetto schools would have little effect

SYL Forums—

"Students, Communists and the Socialist Revolution"

Speaker: Joe Drummond, SYL National Chairman
Date: Thurs., Sept. 19th
Time: 7:30 PM
Place: William L. Harkness Room 110, Yale University

New Haven

"Tuition Hikes, Budget Cutbacks—Which Way Out?"

Speaker: Irene Goldman, SL/SYL
Date: Wednesday, Sept. 25th
Time: 12:30 PM
Place: Hillberry A, UCB Wayne State University

Detroit

"Independence Struggles In Africa: What Road for Socialists?"

Speaker: Henry Alston, SL
Date: Friday, Oct. 11th
Time: 7:30 PM
Place: Michigan Union, University of Michigan
Further information: (313) 921-4626

Ann Arbor

Speaker: Henry Alston, SL
Date: Thursday, Oct. 10th
Time: 12:30 PM
Place: Hillberry A, UCB Wayne State University

Detroit

Bay Area—

Seven-Week Transit Strike Ends

1 SEPTEMBER—Recently in the Bay Area the Spartacus Youth League (formerly the Revolutionary Communist Youth) has been active in building student support for the strike of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) against the AC Transit Company, which owns the buses serving the east Bay Area. The seven-week strike, settled on 30 August, marked an important development in the nationwide mounting wave of working-class action which began in the spring.

Strike Wave

The upsurge in strikes expresses the growing working-class drive, as yet uneven and localized, to reverse the deterioration of living and working conditions brought about by the almost 20 percent inflation during the nearly three years of wage controls, imposed by the federal government and aggressively enforced by the labor bureaucracy. The present strike wave represents the highest level of combativity in the American proletariat since the tumultuous class battles of the immediate post-WWII period. In the Bay Area, traditionally a center of militant trade unionism, over 100 strikes were in progress as of last month.

The main issues in dispute in the AC Transit strike are maintenance of a cost-of-living escalator clause and wage parity with the Bay Area Rapid Transit system workers. Virtually unique among contractual provisions secured by the organized labor movement, this cost-of-living clause has afforded ATU workers significant, although certainly not entirely adequate, protection against inflation at the expense of the company. The formula in the escalator clause provides quarterly wage increases based on the corresponding rise in the consumer price index. However, each cost-of-living increase consists of the quarterly adjustment added to the pay boost of the previous quarter. When the bargaining representatives of AC Transit agreed to

YOUNG SPARTACUS



RCY strike-support rally, UC Berkeley. ATU militant speaking.



YOUNG SPARTACUS

SL/RCY-organized class-struggle contingent in 18 July ATU march to AC Transit Offices.

this escalator clause, they clearly did not realize the ruthlessness of compounding raises in a period of spiraling inflation. Thus, ATU workers have won wage increases of 36 percent based on an 18 percent rise in the consumer price index since 1972.

When the pay raise insured under the contract ran up against the federal wage guidelines in 1972, the cost-of-living allotments were refused by AC Transit, and the ATU took the company to court for violation of contract. The court ruling handed down early this June forced AC Transit to abide by the bourgeois legality of its unwisely-negotiated contract and pay up cost-of-living increases retroactive from July 1972 in the amount of \$2.3 million. When the contract expired on 30 June, the ATU International bureaucracy proposed to submit the bargaining to binding arbitration and offered to continue work under the old contract during the period of negotiations.

The ATU bureaucracy's willingness to violate the elementary union principle of "no contract, no work" was a demonstration of its commitment to class collaboration. The AC Transit Company had learned its lesson and rejected the proposal, which would have involved an additional cost-of-living increase of 41 cents by the end of July. While howling that the strike was against the "public interest," AC Transit could not resort to the normal practice of obtaining a back-to-work injunction, since this also would entail becoming ensnared in the cost-of-living clause. Thus, only when the union bureaucracy had the door to binding arbitration slammed in its face did it reluctantly resort to strike action.

Two weeks after the beginning of the ATU strike the Teamster-organized bus drivers at the San Francisco airport went out on strike over wage demands, and the Service Employees International Union announced its readiness to bring out the city Muni bus drivers. These developments

sharply posed the need for a Bay Area-wide transit strike which would include the taxicab drivers and the Bay Area Rapid Transit workers. A successful offensive by all transit workers at this time would be a powerful impetus to direct the current intensive strike wave in the Bay Area toward a general strike to roll back the capitalists' attempts to transfer the burdens of inflation onto the backs of the working people and unemployed. The Spartacist League/RCY has been the only left organization to agitate for a Bay Area-wide transit strike.

RCY Strike Support

The RCY took the initiative in mobilizing student support for the strike, centering its activities on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley. The RCY wrote a letter to the UC Berkeley campus newspaper, the *Daily Californian*, opposing its biased coverage of the strike and appealing to students to solidarize with the striking workers. In the letter and in leaflets the RCY called a rally for 18 July around the slogan "Victory to the AC Transit Strike." Although all left organizations supporting the slogan as well as the ATU local leadership were invited to participate and speak at the rally, the only group to respond and join with the RCY in concretely demonstrating support for the strike was a small New Left collective called the Committee for Working-Class Studies.

The rally featured two militant rank-and-file bus drivers, who described the erosion of the drivers' living conditions, the class-collaborationist and defeatist strategy of the ATU bureaucracy, and the preparations of capitalist lackeys like Transit Director Bingham to move against the allegedly "anti-public" strike. Both ATU militants emphasized the need for building militant caucuses in the ATU and all unions "to fight the dead weight of the labor bureaucracy" and for the formation of a labor party which,

unlike "the timid Australian, Canadian and British specimens," would fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours to eliminate unemployment and combat inflation and for the expropriation of industry without compensation.

The spokesman for the RCY analyzed the recent strike wave across the U.S. and pointed out both the massive social power of the proletariat and also the need for a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions. He linked the needs of students for lower education costs and increased employment prospects to the perspective of the class struggle against the entire capitalist system.

It is necessary to raise the demand for guaranteed automatic cost-of-living adjustments for those living on student stipends, unemployment compensation, pensions, social security benefits and welfare.

We answer the capitalists' anti-strike public opinion campaign with the demands for free mass public transportation and nationalization of the transit system without compensation. If public services like transportation are indeed so much in the "public interest," then they indeed should be publicly owned. The rally concluded with the call for students to demonstrate their support for the striking ATU workers by marching in an SL/RCY-organized united-front contingent at the Central Labor Council demonstration the following day.

Class-Struggle Contingent

The SL/RCY was the only left organization with a visible and organized intervention in the ATU demonstration and march to AC Transit headquarters. Self-proclaimed pro-working-class organizations such as the social-democratic International Socialists, the Maoist October League and the pathetic Class Struggle League refused to join in the united-front contingent and in fact did no more than dispatch small newspaper sales teams. The class-struggle contingent organized by the SL/RCY marched behind a banner reading "For a Bay Area Transit Strike" and carried signs calling for victory to the ATU strike, repeal of all anti-labor laws and injunctions, full cost-of-living escalator clauses in all contracts, 30 hours work for 40 hours pay, expropriation of the transit industry and a workers party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government. The RCY continued to build support for the strike, and on 23 July sponsored a forum at UC Berkeley on "The Strike Wave and Revolutionary Politics," with presentations by striking ATU militants and members of the RCY. ■

SL/SYL PUBLIC OFFICES—Revolutionary Literature

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Saturday 1:00—4:00 p.m.

260 West Broadway
Room 522
New York, New York
Phone 925-5665

Conference...

Continued from page 1

In recognition of the qualitative growth of our capacities as a national interventionist Trotskyist youth organization the conference delegates unanimously voted to increase the frequency of *Young Spartacus* to monthly with the next issue and change the name of the organization (effective with the initiation of the fall campaigns on the campuses) to the SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE of the United States (SYL/US). From its inception the RCY has been built in the tradition of the Leninist Communist International/Communist Youth International. With the Stalinist degeneration of the Comintern this tradition was upheld in the U.S. by the Spartacus Youth League, youth group of the Trotskyist Communist League of America.

Now both our capacities as well as our tasks are in many respects comparable to those of the first, and finest, Trotskyist youth organization in this country. Through the name of our press we have already linked ourselves to the heritage of this revolutionary communist youth work. It is with justifiable pride that we henceforth continue our struggle as the SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE, youth section of the Spartacist League of the U.S. The growth of the International Spartacist Tendency was felt at the conference with the messages of greetings from a number of fraternal organizations.

Campus Struggles Anticipated

The first main report and discussion took up the conference document on tasks and perspectives analyzing the general political developments in U.S. society in the last period and their impact on the student population. In the shadow of a mounting social crisis, the working class has remained relatively quiescent over the past three years, a social contradiction which can be explained by the suppressive policies of the trade union bureaucracy. But the Watergate scandal, obviously capitalist-manipulated "energy crisis," dizzying inflation, intense speed-up and the hovering threat of massive unemployment have set into motion rank-and-file ferment and discontent. This situation poses the prospect of a massive upsurge in the class struggle, the potential of which is already apparent in the strike wave that erupted this spring. The present ossified and isolated labor bureaucracy may prove unable to deflect such an explosive and combative upheaval in labor militancy. The objective situation would thus be highly favorable for the struggle for revolutionary leadership in the unions.

The lull in political activism on the campuses which set in following the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam combined with the downturn in working class action in the past period did not signal a generalized positive rapprochement with the bourgeois political establishment. The drift in student sentiment has been in the direction not so much of conscious conservatism as apathy and depoliticalization. With the emergence of a new generation of students unscarred by ex-New Left cynicism and demoralization, the campuses have been unusually open to socialist ideas. Should a new period of working-class struggle open up we have every reason to expect the radicalization to spill over onto the campuses, further polarizing the students and impelling a significant section into a new round of student struggles.

The SL/RCY has always asserted the strategic importance of a campus-oriented youth group as a vehicle for public propaganda and recruitment of intellectuals as well as a training ground for young comrades. The political correctness of this perspective is verified by not only steady recruitment but also the effectiveness of the RCY in polarizing campus situations, acquiring real though partial successes in discrediting the pretensions of the Maoists, fake Trotskyists and other would-be revolutionaries and in estab-

lishing itself as the genuine Marxist tendency on campus. The SYL's present capacities are the fruit of this long term perspective. With its current campus bases and forces, the SYL can begin to initiate more campaigns, including united-front work, in order to intersect social struggles, making a special contribution to the task of the Spartacist League in struggling for leadership over all oppressed sectors of the population.

Decline of Our Competitors

As a consequence of desertion of the campuses for workerist total immersion in the factories, stagnation in a difficult period, faction-ridden internal weaknesses, decreasing credibility and the often devastating effects of SL/RCY political and organizational intervention, many left organizations have either lost, or failed to establish, campus bases. Both the Workers League/Young Socialists and the Progressive Labor Party/SDS have suffered serious cadre depletion primarily as a result of their political gyrations and increasingly frenzied attempts to hurl small propaganda groups into "mass" work, moreover during a period of quiescence. The International Socialists likewise exploded in a deep split, as a substantial minority (now the Revolutionary Socialist League) spun away from IS' step-at-a-time reformism, in the direction of Trotskyoid burlesque. The Communist Party/YWLL is so submerged in front group activities on the campuses as to almost eliminate it as an open competitor to the SYL.

Behind the workerist sneers of disintegrating sects like the RSL and the Class Struggle League for political work on the campuses lies the fear that their workerist posturing, if allowed back on to the campuses, will flower into the most glorious petty-bourgeois radicalism. As the greatest opportunities for left-wing recruitment, as well as an important arena for public political work and polemical struggle within the left, are still to be found on the campuses in this period, the lack of student work has been a major contributing factor to the stagnation of these organizations.

The only organizations that seriously stand as national competitors of the SYL on the campuses are the Maoists and to a lesser extent the Young Socialist Alliance, which although organizationally strong has yet to find a new "vanguard" to tail or a new "mass" movement to build since the withering of the student power, feminist and anti-war movements. Maintaining a shaky foothold in some local areas, SDS and the Party for Workers Power continue their "revolutionary" activist posturing hoping to disguise the liberal pabulum they serve up as "program." Also gaining influence on some campuses are groups like NAM and Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, which are consolidating strictly around unabashed pre-New Left social democracy. The SYL will increasingly come to the fore as the recognized youth auxiliary to the growing communist opposition in the labor movement.

The Youth Question

Much of the conference discussion was activist-oriented, reflecting the past years' concrete struggles and the anticipation of our increasingly interventionist, leading role as the socialist youth organization championing the struggle of the working class among students. The main political discussion at the conference centered on aspects of the application of the Trotskyist Transitional Program to the universities. We have been unique in upholding the Leninist attitude to students, codified at the Second Congress of the Communist Youth International, which rejects the organizing of student organizations *separate* from the party or correspondingly formulating a separate student program. The "Resolution on the Youth" adopted at the founding conference of the Trotskyist Fourth International in 1938 reaffirms that there is

no "youth" or "student" program as such, and that the necessary struggle around demands relating to the special oppression of youth "cannot be separated from the struggle for the demands of workers as a whole, both employed and unemployed" and should be developed and applied "within the framework of the transitional program of the FI" (see *RCY Newsletter*, No. 17, May-June 1973).

The Spartacus Youth League of the early 1930's produced an excellent "Draft Resolution on the Student Problem" (*Young Spartacus*, October 1934), which was subsequently adopted by its national conference. The SYL drew its basic perspective from an understanding of the importance of direct communist intervention in campus political life:

"Our propaganda must be conducted by students organized in the SYL who for the purposes of direct agitation in the schools unite to form a common student group, i.e., a school fraction of League members."

From a recognition of the essentially multi-class character of the student population, which especially in America more closely reflects the whole of society than in most countries, the SYL resolution explains that the task of communist youth on campuses is to pose as the *communist pole of attraction* in all student struggles:

"Revolutionary education becomes the primary task of the SYL among the students. Differences in social composition make this especially necessary. Bound in the main with classes other than the working class there is no lasting unity of interests as such. Their existence as students is but for a few years, after which they take their place in class society. He can be won over to the side of the revolutionary working class by ideological conviction. Education assumes the character of discussion, literature, lectures and participation with the workers in certain activities such as demonstrations, anti-war movements and the like in which he realizes that the decisive class is the working class... While we stress the educational nature of our work, we cannot fail to recognize the problems that do confront the students. Our comrades must in all cases play active, nay leading roles in the struggles of the students around their own demands."

Socialist Program and the Campuses

The main political document for the convention noted that the educational system is an important pillar of bourgeois society and that a socialist atti-

tude toward the educational system is guided by the necessity to obstruct the schools from being instruments of class rule and discrimination and to establish the democratic right of self-government. The lengthy discussion centered on such aspects of the socialist program as applied to the universities as the nationalization of the private

universities, student-teacher-worker control, university autonomy, participation in university bodies and our attitude to ethnic and women's studies. Together with demands for free quality higher education, open admissions and state stipends for all, the demand for the nationalization of the private universities (including their endowments) is designed to directly undercut the class discrimination in training and education perpetuated by the distinction in elite and plebian schools. We are in favor of taking the private universities out of the hands of capitalist trustees and opening them up to all students. We are opposed to all forms of bourgeois prerogative and snobbery.

The demand for student-teacher-worker control is a programmatic expression of university self-government or autonomy and constitutes a *democratic demand*. Analogous to tenant councils or consumer cooperatives, student-teacher-worker control is not a call for some form of campus constituent assembly, but in general is a demand which socialists raise to pose with the maximum working-class thrust, a solution to a broad range of student problems and campus struggles at the expense of bourgeois authority.

Our attitude to student-teacher-worker control is nonetheless determined by the character of the period and the particular student struggles. To raise the slogan in Germany in the early 1930's when most students were Nazi supporters, or at white universities in the South in the early 1960's where the overwhelming majority of students were opposed to the luke-warm attempts of the Federal government to integrate the campuses, would clearly be reactionary. In such cases the demand for university self-government abrogates a higher democratic issue or the more fundamental class questions.

To raise the slogan in situations when campus-based struggles begin to expand beyond campus parochialism to pose larger social issues, as at Columbia University in 1968, would be a diversion from the task of broadening the struggle. In periods when campus struggles intersect a rapidly unfolding social crisis, as in France and Mexico in 1968, the demand can catalyze the opening of major class battles. Academic freedom for some of the Chilean universities during the Allende government was a demand for permitting these institutions to become organizing centers for fascist reaction, while for "red" professors in the U.S. during the McCarthy era it was an important democratic struggle.

Communists consider running in elections to various participatory bodies on campus provided that they could serve as an effective platform for socialist propaganda and were not created at the expense of some higher democratic or socialist principle. For example, student governments often provide such a platform for socialist politics, while certain advisory committees which infringe on union hiring should be boycotted.

While it was a tenet of the old New Left that the creation of special departments or programs dealing with ethnic, labor, radical and women's studies was inherently progressive or even revolutionary, we take no position on the formation of such departments any more than any other particular academic division of labor. But we do recognize the validity of rediscovering the true history of the oppressed. We are opposed to the establishment of racially or sexually exclusionist programs, but once formed would defend their right to exist in the event of administration attack. However, we are unconditionally opposed to any form of training for the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state, e.g., ROTC or criminalistics.

Following the discussion and voting of the various documents and resolutions before the delegates, the incoming National Committee was elected. With the singing of the *Internationale* the conference ended on a note of determination, enthusiasm and revolutionary optimism. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

tude toward the educational system is guided by the necessity to obstruct the schools from being instruments of class rule and discrimination and to establish the democratic right of self-government. The lengthy discussion centered on such aspects of the socialist program as applied to the universities as the nationalization of the private

Black Oppression...

Continued from page 12

Part of the problem was that the CI under Stalin transformed the Leninist transitional organization from a vehicle for mass work into a substitute for mass work. Lenin saw the need for special methods of work among the specially oppressed, e.g., blacks and women, and argued that the CPs should set up transitional organizations—led by party cadre and functioning as arms of the party—which would address the special needs of minorities and women and attempt to bring them into the communist movement. Depending upon the period, such organizations might or might not obtain a mass character. The CP under Stalin opted for the creation of front groups that only created the illusion (and probably only for CP members) of mass work but in fact represented an abandonment of genuine mass work.

The problem of front-groupism was complicated by the tendency toward sectoralism or poly-vanguardism (à la the present-day Socialist Workers Party), as expressed in the 1928 "Resolution on the Negro Question":

"It is the duty of Negro workers to organize through the mobilization of the broad masses of the Negro population the struggle of the agricultural laborers and tenant farmers against all forms of semi-feudal oppression. On the other hand, it is the duty of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. to mobilize and rally the broad masses of the white workers for active participation in this struggle."

This poly-vanguardism flowed from the attempt to fit the dynamic of the American revolution into Stalin's "two-stage revolution." The first, "national-democratic" stage would be carried out by blacks in the "Black Belt" against "semi-feudal oppression." Hence, the principal axis of the black question was seen as agrarian, concentrated in the "Black Belt," and the principal enemy of blacks was not capitalism but "semi-feudal oppression"!!

It is easy to see from this schema how the ultraleft rhetoric of the "Third Period" in which Roosevelt, the NAACP and the AFL leadership were all considered "fascists," was easily converted in the post-1935 "People's Front" period where political blocs with the NAACP, Roosevelt and the AFL bureaucracy became "progressive."

To its credit the CP transcended in practice its poly-vanguardist theories and insisted on the bi-racial character of the LSNR. However, the CP could not decide whether to restrict the LSNR to a newspaper support club or to create a real black transitional organization, with its own organizational life and linked to the party through its leading and most conscious members.

CP Sectarianism on the United Front

The relationship between the LSNR and other black and non-CP labor organizations was shaped by the "Third Period" concept of the united front. Since, according to the CP, the acuteness of the capitalist crisis had converted the leaderships of all non-CP-led organizations into fascists, there could be no agreements with such leaderships, even for common action (the united front from above). Instead there could only be "united fronts from below," i.e., between the CP's Trade Union Unity League and the ranks of the AFL around the TUUL program, between the LSNR and the ranks of the NAACP or Pan-African Congress around the LSNR program.

Several years later when the CP had liquidated the LSNR into the pro-Rooseveltian National Negro Congress, James W. Ford, leader of CP black work during the "People's Front" period, stated:

"The original weaknesses of the LSNR were identical with those of the American Negro Labor Congress. Calling for affiliation on the basis of the complete program, the LSNR tended to make

existing organizations suspicious."

—*The Negro and the Democratic Front*

In reality the weakness of the LSNR was that it was not transformed into a genuine Leninist transitional organization, seeking to recruit both individuals and groups to its complete program and at the same time pursuing agreements for common action even with the "social-fascist" leaders of the petty-bourgeois black organizations and the reformist trade unions. By attempting to address the ranks of these organizations without politically confronting their leaderships, the LSNR assisted the reformists in maintaining a hold on their memberships.

TUUL and CP Black Work

The LSNR was made additionally superfluous because many of the tasks which might have fallen to a transitional black organization were absorbed by the "Third Period" "revolutionary unions." While the Sixth Congress still exhorted Communists to work in the "social-fascist"-led reformist unions, the CPs were expected to organize their own "revolutionary unions" even where reformist unions already existed.

In order to carry out this new turn the old industrial arm of the CP, the Trade Union Educational League, was converted into the Trade Union Unity League, at a convention in Cleveland in 1929. Departments of the TUUL, often no larger than the CP fraction in that particular industry, were converted into "red unions." These unions were supposed to be more than just the most militant defenders of the economic interests of workers. They were to organize the unemployed, organize the unorganized, champion black rights and directly struggle for power.

The program of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (which, like the TUUL and TUUL, was affiliated to the Red International of Trade Unions, the industrial arm of the CI) called for "Special Unions of Negro Workers" in the following cases:

"a. where white unions refuse Negro workers. b. in unions where Negroes are admitted but treated as second class members, without equal rights and privileges, special unions must be organized."

It combined the call for special black trade unions with the demand for "Negro Self-Determination in the Black Belt."

However, the CP "revolutionary dual unions" were the first serious effort to organize black workers and the first serious outside challenge to AFL Jim Crow unions since the demise of the IWW. The importance of this work was based on an objective reality which was in direct contradiction to the CI's characterization of the black question as an agrarian question, namely, two-thirds of the blacks gainfully employed by 1930 were *not* in agriculture.

While many were in the marginal service sector, blacks were also concentrated in unskilled jobs in basic industry, previously considered too "menial" for whites but which were becoming increasingly important to modern industrial capitalism. In mining blacks composed 7.6 percent of the workforce, in transport 10.3 percent, in steel 16.2 percent, in the building trades 22.7 percent and in the unskilled jobs in meatpacking, 25 percent.

Communist Black Work in the South

One exhortation of the "Resolution on the Negro Question" was "the beginning of systematic work in the South." Such work required the greatest courage, tenacity and self-sacrifice. In the 1930's the South still contained a large majority of the black population, two-thirds of which lived in rural areas. A large portion of the black rural population was composed of the elderly, the young and the unemployed—capitalism's "surplus population."

Those blacks who could find work on the land were subjected to peonage,

debt and convict slavery, vagrancy laws, disenfranchisements, segregation, lynching and mob violence. In the spring of 1931 the CP organized the Sharecroppers Union (SCU) in Tallapoosa and Lee Counties, Alabama. According to the *Birmingham News* of 20 July 1931, the unions were organizing blacks to demand "social equality with the white race, \$2 a day for work, and not ask but 'demand what you want, and if you don't get it, take it'" (quoted in Jamieson, *Labor Unions in American Agriculture*).

The struggle to organize the SCU was conducted in a state of perpetual civil war with both "legal" and extra-legal armed vigilante groups. One of the most serious events in this war was the shoot-out with vigilante gangs organized by the planters at Camp Hill, Tallapoosa County, in December 1932. Four blacks were murdered, twenty were wounded and five were given long prison sentences. The SCU was finally able to launch its first strike in the fall of 1934 when 500 cotton pickers struck for a wage rate of 75 cents per hundredweight, a demand won in a few areas. By 1935 the SCU claimed 10,000 members. In the spring of that year it led a strike of 1,500 cotton pickers for almost a month for a basic wage of \$1/day.

The Scottsboro Case

The most famous CP black work during the Depression centered around a defense case: the Scottsboro nine. On 21 March 1931 nine black youth, all under the age of 21 (the youngest was 13) were charged with raping two white girls on a freight train and were jailed in Scottsboro, Alabama. Despite contradictory testimony at the trial, a local court found eight of them guilty and sentenced them to death. The CP, through its defense arm, the International Labor Defense, rapidly rallied to the defense of the Scottsboro youths and turned their case into an international symbol of the horrors of southern lynch law.

The ILD was begun by James Cannon, who later became the founder of American Trotskyism. At the time of his expulsion from the CP in 1928 for Trotskyism, Cannon was also removed from the ILD. The ILD rapidly followed the "Third Period" drift into ultraleft phrasemongering and the sectarian "united front only from below" policies.

Thus, the ILD sent a telegram to the first trial judge threatening that he would be held "personally responsible unless the defendants were immediately released." Needless to say, such empty threats did nothing to win the release

of the Scottsboro defendants. Just before he became the most grovelling spokesman for the application of the "People's Front" to black work, James W. Ford wrote in an article inappropriately titled, "The United Front in the Field of Negro Work" (*Communist*, February 1935):

"...among liberal groups who still believe in democratic and civil rights, support will be gained when the fight for Scottsboro is bound up with the national liberation of the Negro people and with the struggle of the entire American working class for the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Nevertheless even the CP/ILD's most persistent and nagging critic at the time, the NAACP, gave the CP and ILD grudging support for the power and effectiveness of their defense efforts. For example, the NAACP publication *Crisis* (December 1935) stated:

"The exploitation of Negroes by the South has been pitilessly exposed to the world. An important legal victory has been won against the lily-white jury system. As far as propaganda is concerned the whole Negro race is far ahead of where it would have been had not the Communists fought the case in the way they did."

The Scottsboro defendants were not executed, but were nevertheless given long prison terms; the last of the Scottsboro defendants was not released from prison until 1950.

CP Polemics in the Black Movement

There are important lessons for revolutionaries today in the CP's polemics with other tendencies in the black movement and in its ability to assimilate and transform a rapidly acquired black membership into a communist cadre. And in this area a most useful document is Harry Haywood's report on black work to the Eighth Convention of the CP in 1934, subsequently reprinted under a title which is in itself a polemic: *The Road to Negro Liberation: The Tasks of the Communist Party in Winning Working Class Leadership of the Negro Liberation Struggles and the Fight Against Reactionary Nationalist-Reformist Movements among the Negro People*. Haywood's attack on black nationalism, especially the "self-help" schemes of cultural nationalists and community-control advocates, still rings true today:

"These movements for the most part advocate a voluntary acceptance of segregation and Jim Crowism as inevitable. The fight against it is a folly, make the best of it. The Negroes must draw in upon themselves, build

EVENTS

[For information regarding SL/SYL public forums, see page 7.]

Binghamton

Class Series
BASIC MARXISM
Tuesday, 1 October, 7:30 PM. West Lounge, Univ. Union, Harpur College. For more information: (607) 797-9073.

Buffalo

Class Series
TOWARD THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Attica: What Defense Policy for Revolutionists?
Wednesday, 25 September, 8:00 PM. The Oppression of Women and Blacks—The Road for Liberation.
Wednesday, 9 October, 8:00 PM. Location to be announced. For more information: (716) 837-1854.

Ithaca

Class Series
BASIC MARXISM
Wednesday, 2 October, 8:00 PM. Room G-92, Uris Hall, Cornell U. For more information: (607) 277-3211.

Madison

Class Series
REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM: THEORY AND PRACTICE
Bi-weekly series begins Thursday, 19 September, 7:30 PM. Room to be posted. Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin at Madison. For more information: (312) 728-2151.

New York

Class Series
WHAT IS SOCIALISM?
Bi-weekly series beginning in October and given in two locations—Room 104, Wagner Hall, CCNY and SL/SYL Public Office, 260 West Broadway (near Canal St.), Manhattan. For more information: (212) 925-5665.

up their own life within the Jim Crow ghettos. Hence they propose fantastic schemes for building self-sufficient economies among Negroes within the walls of segregation, in the Black Belt of the cities, under the leadership of businessmen and professionals, advancing all sorts of illusionary schemes for the establishment of co-operatives and industry along Jim Crow lines, holding forth the bourgeois utopian perspective of eventually establishing industries which will be owned and operated by Negroes and furnish employment to Negro workers... Here presumably... [black petty bourgeois] will have the opportunity of exploiting 'their own masses' free from competition and develop into a full-fledged bourgeoisie."

Ironically, while no one denounced more vehemently than Haywood the "reactionary-utopian schemes" of the black petty bourgeoisie to build up a black self-sufficient economy in the "Black Belt" of the urban ghettos, there was also no stronger advocate of the reactionary-utopian scheme of black "self-determination" in the rural ghetto of the southern "Black Belt." This highlights the contradiction between CP black work in practice and the erroneous theories developed to analyze the condition of southern blacks.

Party, Race and Cadre

CP black work during the Depression, work among tenants and sharecroppers, among the unemployed, the unorganized black proletariat, tenants' councils, and so on, attracted thousands of black members to its ranks. But the enduring test of the party which aspires to lead the proletariat to power is its ability to transform members into cadre—into lifelong professional revolutionaries. And it is here that the CP in its "Third Period" may be judged and found wanting.

Many joined the CP but few stayed. Part of the problem was objective: Social oppression which is the fuel for the spontaneous indignation and rebellion of the masses, the motor force of revolution, also cuts across the all-sided development of human capacities which are demanded of the professional revolutionary. A few individuals rise above their circumstances. But the evicted tenant, the downtrodden sharecropper, a spinner working the 14-hour days of the Gastonia mills, found the yoke of social oppression so great that they could only follow the CP for the short-term struggle.

But part of the problem was with the CP itself. No matter how aggressively it might champion the black struggle for liberation and call forth from its membership enormous dedication and sacrifice, the CP was a bureaucratized party which was led by men who had traded their revolutionary perspective and integrity for Stalin's good favor. And this loss of integrity and perspective permeated all sides of the organization.

Thus when the Seventh CI Congress heralded the new period of the "People's Front" where yesterday's "social fascists" became today's "friends" of "democracy," labor or blacks, surprisingly little commotion occurred within the CP—few left or expressed opposition to this major turn. The "principle" of unprincipledness had already been established. The party members and leadership had become inured to the necessity (i.e., if one wanted to stay in the party or, in some cases, stay alive) of going along with Stalin's previous turns and zigzags (somewhat minor relative to the 1935 turn)—many of which contained the political kernel of the future "People's Front" policies.

The cynicized CPUSA went on to further discredit itself by its adaptation to Jim Crowism in WWII. The triumphant revolutionary proletariat will bring the CP leadership to account for its many crimes, not the least of which was squandering a whole generation of black Communists recruited from the heroic struggles of the 1930's.■

...FORD

Continued from page 5

cooperate" (*New York Times*, 21 August).

For revolutionists it is correct and necessary to enter the armed forces when drafted, just as the Bolsheviks "went to war" along with the masses of Russian workers and peasants in WWI. During the Vietnam war it was incumbent upon communists to conduct revolutionary defeatist propaganda in the army and to win the ranks of soldiers to the side of working-class struggles against capitalism. While we oppose individualist draft evasion and illusions that conscientious objection or pacifist resistance can effectively prevent imperialist wars, we demand complete and unconditional amnesty for those who refused conscription and stand in solidarity with them against the capitalist state.

Ford Selects the Butcher of Attica

Even Ford's appointment of Nelson Rockefeller as Vice President is being heralded as conciliatory to "eastern liberals." Plain old Jerry chose another plain American "to be a good partner for me... and the world" (*New York Times*, 21 August). Nelson Rockefeller is already "a partner of the world." His personal wealth has been estimated by friends at \$500 million, while the estimated worth of the family is \$10 billion.

Since he left the Governorship of New York State, Rockefeller has bankrolled and served as chairman of the Commission on Critical Choices for Americans. This group's declared objective is nothing less than solving all of the world's problems, but its real function is widely acknowledged to be a vehicle for Rockefeller's ambitions for the U.S. Presidency. Both Ford and Henry Kissinger are members of this commission, but liberal John Kenneth Galbraith is considered "too ideologically left" for these global problem solvers.

Rockefeller is viewed most of all

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 TORONTO: SYL, c/o Committee of Toronto Supporters of the International Spartacist Tendency, Box 6867, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

as an "internationalist." As "ambassador" for brother David Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank, Nelson Rockefeller was justly stoned by crowds of demonstrators in Latin America. In this capacity he also enlisted the help of Henry Kissinger, first as director of the Rockefeller brothers-funded Foreign Policy Studies in the mid-1950's, and then as his foreign policy advisor in 1964 and 1968. In 1964 Nelson Rockefeller said of the situation in Southeast Asia: "The Communist Vietcong guerrillas must be defeated. Winning the fight for freedom... is essential to all of Asia" (quoted in *New York Times*, 21 August 1974). And now Rockefeller and Kissinger are back together again.

missed the entire question of Watergate and impeachment with a couldn't-care-less "ho-hum." The latest issue of PL's *Challenge* (15 August) carries over the front page picture of Nixon the headline "Who Cares About This Runt?" and editorializes: "If Nixon keeps the tapes, gives them up, or eats them, our problems remain the same"! Unable to formulate a revolutionary program, PL/SDS abstains, thereby allowing the mass disillusionment and anti-Nixon sentiment to be harvested by the Democrats.

The fake-Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party/Young Socialist Alliance went so far as to offer as the "socialist alternative" to Watergate a court suit against the federal govern-

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During Rockefeller's administration as governor he earned a reputation within the spectrum of bourgeois politics as a supporter of state aid to education and welfare. Since 1970, however, he has demonstrated that he too knows how to run a sinking economy. On 30 October 1973 he said: "I'm not moving to the right. I'm just dealing with problems as they come up" (quoted in *New York Times*, 21 August 1974). He proposed residency requirements for welfare recipients and brutally long prison sentences for drug addicts. It was Rockefeller who refused to meet with the inmates' representatives during the Attica prison rebellion in 1971 and more than anyone else personally bears the responsibility for the ensuing slaughter.

The Left Stalls on Ford Presidency

The entire unfolding of the Watergate scandal and its aftermath have made it abundantly clear that it is the Democratic Party which is the most obvious beneficiary of the exposure and downfall of Nixon. Since it is through the Democratic Party that the Meany-Woodcock-Fitzsimmons bureaucracy ties the working class to the capitalists, any ostensibly socialist program which fails to pose a break with both capitalist parties is no alternative, but merely a left cover for continued class collaboration.

The Revolutionary Union-dominated Attica Brigade (now the Revolutionary Student Brigade) applied their arsenal of Mao-Thought to the question of Watergate and apparently without the least embarrassment determined that "the elimination of Nixon will be a great tactical victory for the people of the world and cause greater turmoil in the ranks of the monopoly capitalists" (*Revolutionary Student Brigade*, p.5). To publicize its reformist and totally pedestrian "Throw the Bum Out" campaign the Brigade led such adolescent, adventurist "struggles" as Burn-the-Bum and Drown-the-Bum effigy torching and submerging rallies, demonstrations to hurl eggs at Ford and seizure of the Statue of Liberty "to the applause of millions of Americans" (*ibid.*)! One bum down, another to go, right Brother Avakian?

The "revolutionary communist" Progressive Labor Party and its front group, SDS, took up an attitude which was essentially the flip-side of the same reformist coin. PL/SDS simply dis-

ment for harassment of the SWP/YSA. In an interview early this year the late James P. Cannon, chairman emeritus of the SWP, denounced "ultralefts" like the Spartacist League who allegedly are "doing nothing except occasionally yapping at us" and stressed that "the suit filed by our party in the Watergate case is a very correct tactic" (*Intercontinental Press*, 14 January). Cannon went so far as to equate the Watersuit with the principled defense work of the International Labor Defense of the 1920's, of which he had been a founder-leader. He correctly recalled, however, that the ILD had "announced that we were defending all prisoners—what we called class war prisoners—in connection with labor." But the SWP suit fails to mention any other left organization and represents only a civil-libertarian fight for the SWP's treasured respectability. This "socialist" solution to Watergate is both sectarian and legalistic.

For a Workers Party!

During the Watergate crisis we pointed out that impeachment was not enough and raised a class-struggle perspective:

"Socialists should support a congressional move to impeach Nixon. But impeachment is not enough!... Consequently it is necessary for the working class to reply with a political general strike of the organized labor movement to force new elections, so that labor can present its own candidate against the twin parties of capital."
 —*Workers Vanguard*, 7 December 1973

To the extent that the working class has been unable to take advantage of the Watergate crisis through independent political action Nixon's removal by the bourgeoisie represents a defeat. While the labor tops undoubtedly look forward to a "veto-proof" Congress and a "friend of labor" next president, the Democratic Party will almost certainly sweep the 1976 elections and take over from the Republicans the task of stepping up the exploitation of the American proletariat as U.S. imperialism faces greater economic chaos internationally and a plunging downturn domestically. To break the stranglehold of the labor bureaucracy and open the way for anti-capitalist struggle we have and will continue to raise the slogan: For a Workers Party Based on the Trade Unions to Fight for a Workers Government!■

Young Spartacus

The CP and Black Struggles in the Depression

Communist Party black work in the 1930's took place in the context of the so-called "Third Period." The Sixth World Congress of the by-then Stalinized Communist International (CI), held in 1928, heralded an impending "Third Period" of inevitable and final capitalist collapse in which the struggle for reforms was no longer possible. Thus, all reformist organizations, especially the "yellow" trade unions and social-democratic parties (which contained the majority of the organized labor movement), were now considered to be "social-fascist" organizations. Much of the CPUSA's work in this period was thus marked by sectarianism and ultraleftism.

While the CP of this period was deformed by dishonesty, political zig-zags and egregious departures from Marxism, nonetheless in the area of black work the 1930's represents the CP's heroic period. Despite the erroneous "Black Belt" theory and the call for "Negro self-determination" in this territory (a call which was never raised agitationaly but remained part of the CP's written propaganda), the CP's work in practice combined a proletarian orientation with an awareness of the strategic need to fight racial oppression throughout all layers of American society, especially to address the problems of poor and unemployed blacks.

Thus, the CP's black work took place in the labor movement, among the unemployed, in the South and in the area of legal defense. This work stands in stark contrast to the CP's subsequent plunge into abject opportunism (and even adaptation to Jim Crowism in WWII) and is rich in lessons on how to conduct and how not to conduct a genuine Leninist struggle against racial oppression.

The Depression, Blacks and the Communist Party

The catastrophic impact of the Great Depression on the U.S. working class was keenly felt by its most oppressed members, black workers. By March 1933 the Bureau of Labor Standards reported that 25 percent of the workforce, or 17 million workers, were unemployed. For those who could find work, wages on the average had fallen 45 percent. While separate statistics on the black population were not kept at this time, the National Urban League estimated that black unemployment exceeded white joblessness by 30 to 60 percent (a figure which has grown larger since the Depression). Most black employment was in marginal "service" jobs: 25 percent of the black non-farm, wage-earning population were domestics. T. Arnold Hill of the Urban League pointed out:

"Heretofore [the black's] employment problem has been chiefly one of advancement to positions commensurate with his ability. Today he is endeavoring to hold the line against advancing armies of white workers intent upon gaining and content to accept occupations which were once thought too menial for white hands."

—quoted in Raymond Walters, *Negroes and the Great Depression*
The Depression was a period of

massive social struggle on the part of workers and the unemployed in which blacks played a leading role. Much of this social struggle took place outside of the American Federation of Labor-dominated established labor movement. Only 10 percent of the non-farm workforce was organized and, of the 1.5 million non-farm black workers, only a little more than 3 percent or 50,000 workers were organized and one-half of the unionized black workers belonged to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

Much of this social struggle, especially on the part of blacks, was dominated by the Communist Party. At the very beginning of the Depression the CP launched National Unemployed Councils and by 6 March 1930 was able to organize demonstrations in major American cities with 1,250,000 participants.

CP defense work, conducted through its defense arm, the International Labor Defense (ILD), was in the forefront of the struggle against Southern lynch "justice," a struggle which found its most dramatic expression in the Scotts-

the *Liberator*, edited by Cyril Briggs.

The CP's struggle against Jim Crowism in the unions, though often conducted through the erroneous and sectarian "red unions" of the "Third Period," laid the foundation for the later success of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in organizing basic industry on a bi-racial basis.

The "Third Period" and CP Black Work

The Sixth World Congress of the CI, where the "Third Period" policies were laid out, also passed a "Resolution on the Negro Question in the U.S." which established the "Negro Self-Determination in the Black Belt" position. This was to haunt the CP until it was finally dropped in 1959 (see "Negro Self-Determination in the Black Belt," *Young Spartacus*, May-June 1974). But it was also this Congress and its special commission on the black question which spurred the CP into an aggressive orientation toward black work.

Prior to 1930 the CP had never had more than 50 black members. The

convention, Cyril Briggs, editor of the *Liberator*, defined the LSNR as follows:

"To begin with, it is a mistake to lay stress on the LSNR as a mass organization. The LSNR consists of groups of active supporters and followers of the *Liberator*. The aim is not to build a mass organization, but to build the *Liberator* into a mass organizer or the agitator and organizer of the Negro liberation movement. The LSNR supports the Communist Party as the only political party carrying on a struggle against Negro oppression, but the LSNR is not a political party. Nor is it a substitute for any political party. The LSNR supports the revolutionary trade unions of the Trade Union Unity League in opposition to the treacherous, reformist and Jim Crow policies of the American Federation of Labor with its fascist leadership. But the LSNR is not a substitute for the TUUL or any of its unions."

—*Liberator*, 11 November 1930

The program of the LSNR (published as a pamphlet entitled *Equality, Land and Freedom*) was not fundamentally different from that of



NATIONAL ARCHIVES (WASHINGTON D. C.)

CP leaders of Workers Ex-Servicemen's League called for march of jobless WWI veterans on Washington in 1932 to demand promised bonus. Black veterans in Bonus Expeditionary Force resist eviction.

boro defense case. The CP was the first organization since the populist Southern Alliance and the Colored National Farmers Alliance of the 1890's to go into the South to fight lynch law and vigilante terror, and to organize southern sharecroppers and tenant farmers.

The CP's launching of the weekly *Southern Worker* in Chattanooga reflected the commitment to work in the South. During 1930 the CP recruited its first substantial number of black members—1,000 blacks joined the party. The moribund CP black organization, the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC) was transformed into the League of Struggle for Negro Rights (LSNR) at a convention held in November 1930 and the irregular publication of the ANLC, the *Negro Champion*, was transformed into a regular weekly,

"Resolution on the Negro Question" stated that the moribund ANLC "continues to exist only nominally" and called for the CP to "strengthen this organization as a medium through which we can extend the work of the party among the Negro masses and mobilize the Negro workers under our leadership."

The next national convention of the ANLC was not held until November 1930, where the ANLC was transformed into the LSNA. This convention capped a recruitment drive which had brought in 1,000 black members. Harry Haywood, the most faithful and consistent advocate of the "Black Belt" position, was made chairman of the LSNR.

In his report on the LSNR founding

the ANLC. Its demands ran from a "boycott of newspapers and radios that portrayed the Negro in a derogatory manner" to "armed self-defense."

There was in fact enormous confusion in the CP on just what the LSNR was supposed to be aside from a weekly newspaper. While the Briggs report denied that the LSNR was supposed to be a mass organization, subsequent CP reports presented the LSNR in another guise. For example, the *CP Party Organizer* for May-June 1932 reports: "We have in the Party in Chicago alone approximately 500 members.... We organized 13 groups of the LSNR with over 1,000 members, 80 percent non-party, 20 percent Negroes."

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