

Strike Wave!

Rail Unions: Defy the Government!

In the most dramatic show of union power since last winter's coal strike, and with far more immediate economic impact, railroad workers brought the nation's trains to a screeching halt on September 24. The shock wave sent out by the picket squads which shut down rail yards from Washington, D.C. to Washington State was so great that within hours federal courts were issuing restraining orders. By Friday President Carter had obtained a sweeping injunction under the Railway Labor Act. But it was only the capitulation by their own union leaders which took down the pickets. And even that was not enough to extinguish the unexpected wave of strike action which has swept the country in the last two months. The "miners' fever" so feared by the bosses is still alive.

The two-month-old strike of 4,700 clerks against the Virginia-based Norfolk & Western railroad exploded when the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC) threw up picket lines at intersection points with 43 other railroads that have been moving scab N&W freight throughout the strike. Thumbing their noses at a flurry of federal court back-to-work injunctions, the pickets spread the next day to 73 rail lines, as BRAC targeted the companies which have been contributing \$6 million a week to N&W in a strikebreaking mutual aid pact.

The power of the picket line was immediately felt. Despite desperate attempts by the railways to maintain service with supervisory personnel, an estimated 350,000 railroad workers respected the BRAC picket lines in 42 affected states. Nearly two thirds of the nation's 200,000 miles of railroads, freight shipments and passenger service was tied up. Chicago, the nation's key rail hub, was hardest hit and the Midwest industrial heartland began grinding to a stop. Seventy percent of coal, grain and industrial supplies and parts were stalled and the auto and steel industries immediately felt the squeeze.

With their hands clenched firmly around the bosses' arteries, the strikers were nevertheless ordered back to work by BRAC president Fred Kroll after four days of escalating government threats. On Tuesday, federal courts had responded in knee-jerk fashion to the rail companies' requests for restraining orders prohibiting picketing. But the



Above: Firemen confront National Guard in Memphis. Below: Striking rail clerks demonstrate in Chicago.

court orders were simply ignored. On Wednesday, Labor Secretary Ray Marshall high handedly decreed a 24-hour deadline to end the dispute. The deadline passed with pickets still spreading. On Thursday, President Carter invoked the Railway Labor Act and ordered the strikers back to work. He, too, was ignored.

On Friday, Justice Department attorneys and lawyers for over 100 railroads finally got U.S. District Judge Aubrey Robinson who the day before had declined their entreaties to issue a temporary restraining order halting the walkout. Still the pickets waited for word from their union leaders. When the word finally came from Kroll to pull down the pickets, it was clear that it was the union's instructions, not the government's, which ended the walkout.

The enthusiasm with which the BRAC strikers dispatched their picket squads and the eager response and solidarity of the other railroad unionists were at least partly inspired by the combative coal miners, whose roving

pickets shut down hundreds of scab mines for 110 days last winter, defying state police, National Guardsmen, presidential decrees and court orders. The impact of the miners' militancy is evident not just in the BRAC action, but in the strike wave that has swept across the U.S.

So far it has only slightly involved the key industrial unions, none of which have contract expiration dates this fall. But it is hardly the quiet autumn of labor peace which Carter's economic braintrusts were predicting. It is some of the traditionally most quiescent sectors of the working class, often led by conservative craft union officials, who have been walking out. This undoubtedly expresses a mood of anger and frustration among the ranks, as every one of the recent strikes has been greeted with enthusiasm. And it reflects as well the growing estrangement of the labor bureaucracy from the peanut millionaire they helped put in the White House.

Centered in the public sector, where teachers' and other municipal workers'

strikes have hit dozens of cities this fall, the growing number of strikes is by no means limited to government employees. In the Pacific Northwest, pulp and paper workers have been on strike for three months against 12 manufacturers. In California, Teamsters are engaged in a bitter and prolonged strike against the major grocery chains. In the Midwest and South, teachers, firemen and sanitation workers have held center stage, while in New York City, the newspaper unions hit the major city dailies with a solid two-month strike.

In addition, major strikes were only narrowly averted in the key New York Transit Workers Union and the U.S. Postal Service, where contract rejection votes have been frustrated by the incredible cowardice of union leaders afraid to lead their members against the bosses' no-strike laws.

Everywhere the strike movement finds itself confronting stepped-up government strikebreaking. Coal miners and now rail workers are slapped with presidentially ordered back-to-work injunctions. Teachers are locked up in one city after another. California Teamsters see their pickets run down and murdered by scab drivers while the courts ban mass picketing and cops police the picket lines.

This crackdown reflects the Carter administration's escalating offensive against labor. Every one of the labor leadership's pet legislative projects (Humphrey-Hawkins "full employment" bill, Labor Reform Act, common situs picketing) has been slaughtered in Congress. Meanwhile, with Carter's anti-inflation jawboning tactics getting nowhere, the administration is gearing up a drive to impose across-the-board wage guidelines of 7 percent per year. This is less than the current rate of inflation and far less than the double-digit inflation rate most economists are predicting for the next two or three years.

Even the traditionally reliable waterboys in the trade union leadership are now hostile to the White House. Arch-reactionary George Meany has come out against the wage guidelines and liberal Doug Fraser walked off the presidential Labor-Management Advisory Group bemoaning big business' "one-sided class war." Last week William Winispinger, head of the International Association of Machinists, declared that his union had "written Carter off" and would not support his re-election. The trade-union tops are now looking to promote Ted Kennedy

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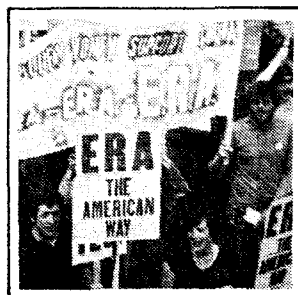
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Stamberg
on Ballot
in NYC



NOW: Jimmy
Carter's
"Ladies'
Auxiliary"



SWP Scabs
on Railroad
Strike

Courts Gag "Free" Press

Ever since the U.S. defeat in Vietnam and Nixon's Watergate debacle there has been a steady stream of disclosures of CIA/FBI skulduggery and murder. The initial response of the American bourgeoisie was to proclaim a new era of "open government," while limiting the damage with a technique which could be termed "cover-up by investigation." Recently the imperialist state has gone over to the offensive in seeking to clamp a lid on embarrassing exposés. The result is a full-scale campaign to bind and gag freedom of the press through court-ordered police raids, jailings and censorship.

Open hunting season on the press was declared May 31 when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized police raids on newspaper offices for purposes of gathering "evidence" of "crimes." The decision, *Zurcher v. Stanford Daily*, produced angry editorials from almost every major bourgeois daily. Significantly, the case grew out of a bloody attack on the left. In 1971 a large Stanford student antiwar demonstration was brutally assaulted by Palo Alto police. In textbook fashion the rampaging cops beat and gassed scores of demonstrators, then arrested their victims. But several days later, in a new twist, the cops picked up a search warrant and burst into the offices of the Stanford student newspaper, ransacking it for evidence with which to bring more prosecutions. When the Supreme Court upheld this procedure, the result was an ominous new weapon in the legal arsenal of state repression.

What terrified the editors of the *New York Times* et al. was not the obvious threat of wholesale repression of the left, but haunting memories of Richard Nixon's vindictive campaign to demolish the loyal capitalist political opposition. The *Times* obliquely recalled the deposed president's "enemies list" of troublesome journalists and liberal personalities: "In this decade, it is hardly fanciful to worry that public officials bent on obstructing justice might invoke such authority malevolently" (*New York Times*, 6 June). Howard K. Smith, ABC-TV's news commentator, was more direct, calling the decision "a police-state action" and "Nazi-like ruling."

Hardly had the editorial outcry died down when a *New York Times* reporter was thrown in jail for refusing to reveal confidential news sources to a New Jersey court involved in a murder trial. On August 5, Myron Farber, whose only "crime" was investigating and reporting a series of killings in a New Jersey hospital, began serving an indefinite sentence for refusing to name names before the court. The *Times* was fined \$100,000 outright and \$5,000 for each day Farber remained silent, while the judge slapped a \$2,000 fine on the reporter personally (*New York Times*, 25 July). Under the arbitrary contempt powers of the court, Farber was never even permitted the opportunity to explain why the information should be withheld.

If the capitalist media felt obligated to



Myron Farber

AP

protest the Supreme Court decision against the *Stanford Daily*, they proceeded to make a hero out of Myron Farber. Virtually every major daily coast-to-coast stated its defense of Farber, recognizing that attacking a reporter's right to protect confidential sources threatens to smother any and all investigative reporting. Some, including the *Detroit News*, even offered to assist in the payment of the fines. Twenty-seven days after walking into Bergen County Jail, Farber was freed, but only after he and the *Times* turned over some of their files to the court. Farber still faces a hearing that could return him to jail.

Judicial Persecution of the Press

Myron Farber and the *Stanford Daily* are not isolated victims of overzealous prosecutors. The government campaign of intimidation has advanced across a wide front, causing even the *Wall Street Journal* (23 August) to protest in a major article entitled, "A Judicial War on the Press?" More than 20 reporters nationwide have recently faced the threat of jail for refusing to disclose sources. In addition, in early June the Justice Department won a civil suit to seize royalties received by Frank Snepp, an ex-CIA agent, from publication of one of the many "insider" accounts of secret police skulduggery. The information Snepp has is so safe that even the CIA didn't label it "classified."

Earlier, on May 19, Ronald Humphrey and David Truong were sentenced to 15 years in jail for "spying" for Vietnam. Their "crime" had been to release documents that had been openly reported in Congress! With the espionage convictions of Humphrey and Truong the government won the "right" to use "warrantless wiretaps" whenever it claims the "national security" is endangered.

As in the case of the *Stanford Daily*, the left is frequently the target of these attacks. Since 1972 more than 500 reporters have been ordered before grand juries and courts. Over a dozen

actual jailings have occurred. And of these, with perhaps two exceptions, it was either the activities of the left or a muckraking investigation of bourgeois corruption which caused the state to seek reprisal (*New York Times*, 26 July 1978). The practice of subpoenaing reporters began in the mid-1960's with the rise of the New Left, black nationalism and the ghetto explosions. Prosecutors attempting to fabricate criminal charges against left and black militants discovered that reporters' notes could provide them with "evidence." The major 1972 Supreme Court case which blessed this activity grew out of the FBI's murderous Cointelpro campaign to "get" the Black Panthers. Earl Caldwell, a *New York Times* reporter, was subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury attempting to frame the Panther leadership on "conspiracy to assassinate the president" charges.

The first major test of a reporter's right to protect sources involved Mark Knops, a journalist for a Wisconsin "underground" newspaper. Knops, in 1970, served by far the longest jail sentence of any reporter—nearly six months—for refusing to disclose the source of a Weatherman "communiqué." And one of the latest subpoenas was served July 6 on Mark Allen, a reporter for the *People's World* (the

find. By forcing disclosure of reporters' confidential sources, the state seeks to turn the press into an investigative arm of the district attorney's office.

It is not as if Jimmy Carter is staging a personal vendetta against the press in the style of Nixon and Agnew. He is simply carrying out his election mandate from the American ruling class. After the disaster of Vietnam and the stench of Watergate, the credibility of the U.S. imperialist state was greatly damaged. Carter cast himself in the role of Mr. Clean, the outsider capable of reestablishing the bourgeoisie's authority for future imperialist adventures. He got the job, and one of his first tasks was to halt the erosion of the secret police apparatus... by stopping the leaks! The government's campaign amounts to an attempt to enact an official secrets act by state repression rather than legislative action. If the legal power doesn't exist to jail Daniel Ellsberg and "Deep Throat," then the press must be intimidated into not publishing what they say.

For the loyal bourgeois media, however, the agreed-upon ends should be reached by other means. If only the excesses of the U.S. spy agencies could be curbed, then America could reassert its claim to be the great defender of democracy. But even "responsible" exposés run head on into the need of the



Oliphant

"The Supreme Court media style book prefers a semi-colon to a comma after the use of the past pluperfect subjunctive."

West Coast newspaper of the Communist Party). Allen flatly refused to release his notes on a strike against Automatic Plastic Molding, a union-busting employer which is suing the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). Allen had written an article covering a vicious police assault and arrest of striking ILWU members in 1976, as did *Workers Vanguard* (see "Drop Charges Against ILWU Strikers!" *WV* No. 115, 25 June 1976).

Mark Allen has so far avoided jail. Contempt charges have not yet been brought against him. But the obvious threat to the left and labor movements posed by these attacks has not disappeared. By raiding newspapers of organizations they assault, cops can ransack the files for membership lists, internal documents, anything they can

secret police to murder efficiently—that is, in darkness and not in the light.

Unlike some banana republic, in the U.S. the media are not simply a mouthpiece for the government. The press has a certain degree of independence from direct state control, a status it seeks to preserve. Every high school civics book relates the victorious defense of John Peter Zenger, tried for "seditious libel" of a British colonial governor in 1735. The emerging American bourgeoisie even wrote freedom of the press into the Constitution.

However, the relative independence of the U.S. media has its limits—largely self-enforced. If the press sees its role as a "watchdog" it is in terms of the broader "national interests"... of the bourgeoisie. They do not wish the abolition of the secret police; they merely disagree with the choice of victims. Says Myron Farber:

"I am not a fanatic or absolutist... I believe that the First Amendment means what it says about the freedom of the press and that it was annexed to the constitution with full knowledge that an unfettered but responsible press was crucial to our nation." [our emphasis] —*New York Times*, 25 July 1978

And as "free but responsible" journalists the media have for years willingly indulged in self-censorship. Thus the *Times* refused to publish advance news of the Bay of Pigs invasion, even though it had learned of preparations weeks beforehand, and it selectively printed articles throughout the early years of the Vietnam war to



Frank Snepp

McElhinney/Newsweek



Daniel Ellsberg

UPI



Philip Agee

AP



Daniel Schorr

McElhinney/Newsweek

Mass Graves in Nicaragua

After 14 days of bombings, mortar attacks and street fighting the town of Estelí—the last held by Nicaragua's courageous rebels—was retaken by the National Guard September 22. Dictator Anastasio ("Tacho") Somoza still holds the country in his bloody grip, but managed to smash the popular uprising that has been raging for over a month only through virtual genocide—massacring a whole section of the population. "What remains is hatred," wrote *Le Monde* (27 September). "The prevailing sentiment today, more than sadness in defeat, is a desire for vengeance."

The rising against the hated Somoza regime was sparked by the populist Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), but it was the teenage youth who responded and manned the barricades. To Somoza's National Guard every young man and boy became an enemy of the state, and with a policy of taking no prisoners the Guard methodically went about the mass murder of "los muchachos." "To be young in Nicaragua today is a crime punishable by death," lamented one grief-stricken parent.

What took place in Nicaragua in the last two weeks of September was the biggest bloodbath in Latin America since the Chilean coup of 1973. In a miserable little country of 2.3 million people, more than 4,000 were killed by the patriarch's praetorian guard. Proportionately that would be the equivalent of more than *four hundred thousand* deaths in the U.S. So now the Organization of American States (OAS) is investigating to see if any "violations of human rights" were committed by Somoza's private army!

In Estelí, a town of about 30,000, the Red Cross dug a mass grave for 400-500 persons. Many more deaths are suspected since families were forced to bury their dead in backyards as it was impossible to transport bodies—decomposing in the streets with flocks of vultures descending on them—through the aerial bombardments.

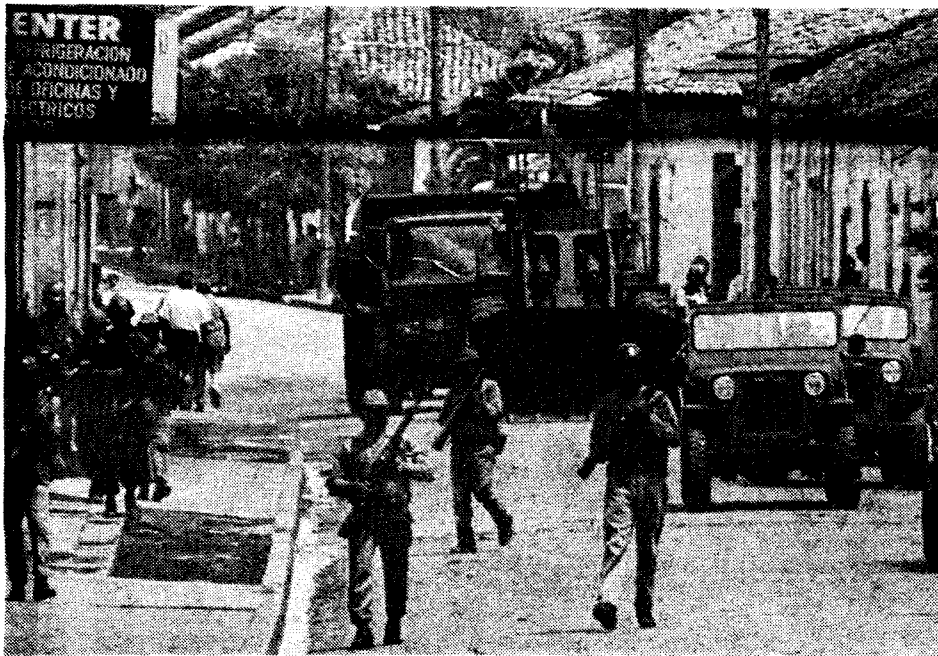
The entire city of León has become a vast cemetery with at least 1,000 known dead. (The total population was only 80,000.) The National Guard used the same tactics in León as elsewhere: the majority of deaths resulted not from fighting on the barricades but from house-to-house searches. The army dragged unarmed men and boys as young as 13 into the streets and summarily executed them. In a barri-

caded slum on the northern edge of the city all residents of a particular block were ordered into the street. Women and girls were marched north while 21 men and boys were herded south for one mile, ordered to dig a shallow grave at the side of the road and then shot.

The mass killing was not even hidden by the Somoza regime. Where other dictatorships would deny such atrocities, Nicaraguan newspapers published grisly photos of decapitated bodies "in order to teach the youth a lesson." The killing has been so wanton and cold-blooded, in fact, that the populace is willing to talk to reporters within earshot of the National Guard. They are so sickened by what they have experienced that they readily risk death rather than continue to silently endure Somoza's terror.

Nicaragua's major cities lie in ruins. Downtown areas have been reduced to rubble by the aerial bombardments and mortar attacks. In the last stages of the siege of Estelí, mass starvation and a malaria outbreak threatened to decimate those who survived the Guard's machine guns. Thousands are fleeing on the highways and into the hills while the entire country is in the throes of economic disaster.

With a temporary "peace of the graveyards" descended on the country, Somoza is now willing to accept the "friendly cooperation" of outside forces. He had previously made it clear that any negotiations must take place "within the constitutional framework"—i.e., he remains determined to complete his



Somoza's troops search for rebels in Masaya.



Naythons/Gamma-Liaison

Red Cross workers burn bodies of victims of street battles.

term, which doesn't expire until 1981. "Friendly cooperation" refers to the OAS mediating team set up at U.S. initiative to negotiate "an enduring and democratic solution" with the bloody dictator. Publicly Washington is asking only that Somoza clean up his act, but many worried liberals reason that a "second Cuba" can be averted by removing the Nicaraguan strongman.

The bourgeois opposition in Nicaragua is also counting on "friendly cooperation" from Jimmy Carter. The work stoppage begun last August 24 by the Broad Opposition Front (FAO), a coalition of businessmen and labor

groups, was called off last week in favor of "mediation with the regime for institution of a stable democracy." The FAO also dropped its earlier insistence that Somoza agree to step down as a precondition to negotiations. But any "deal" with this butcher means trampling on the bodies of Nicaragua's dead. It means protecting the hated National Guard at a time when the survivors are demanding vengeance.

By allying with the opposition businessmen who are appealing to Washington the FSLN hopes it can topple this universally despised despot. But a "stable democracy" which maintains the power of those who only yesterday were Somoza's partners in plunder will not raise the Nicaraguan masses out of their impoverished misery. Only by imposing a workers and peasants government—which would seize the vast properties of the tyrant and his cohorts, expropriate industry and the latifundia, smash the National Guard and punish the Somoza criminals by people's tribunals—can the Nicaraguan working people root out the dictatorship and take charge of their destiny.

No deals with the murderous Somoza clan and their private army—For a revolutionary constituent assembly! No reliance on the treacherous bourgeois opposition and Carter's "human rights" demagoguery—Not the petty-bourgeois nationalism of the Sandinista Front, but a Trotskyist party to fight for a Central American workers republic! The blood of the Nicaraguan masses must not have been spilled in vain! ■

shore up Johnson's propaganda. When Daniel Schorr in 1976 handed the suppressed and sanitized House Select Committee on Intelligence report to the *Village Voice*—for which act he was very nearly held in contempt of Congress—he did so because his own CBS News would not use the material.

The "free but responsible" journalists have been unwilling to mount a serious defense of the First Amendment. During the 27 days Farber spent in jail the nearly unanimous support he first received was seriously eroded. The *Washington Post* didn't like the case as a constitutional test. Syndicated columnists such as Haynes Johnson, Joseph Kraft and even McGovern-liberal Anthony Lewis felt the case wasn't sufficiently compelling. Meanwhile the *Times* offered to do a deal, proposing to turn over some of Farber's notes to the court. As to the threat of police raids growing out of the Supreme Court's *Stanford Daily* decision, the press responded by supporting a host of bills in Congress that replace cop raids by warrant with cop raids by subpoena (*New York Times*, 14 July)!

Sanctimonious invocations of the First Amendment to the contrary, the press will not be truly free until the bourgeoisie's monopoly of the means of widely disseminating news and opinion is smashed. Throughout the capitalist world the mass media—radio, television and the major daily newspapers—are either under direct state control or overwhelmingly in the hands of powerful press monopolies. The working-class press, lacking the enormous financial resources of the media barons, has to be "content" with a far more restricted audience. Moreover, even where a degree of press freedom is permitted the capitalist state apparatus seeks to control what news is "freely" printed (intimidation of publishers, CIA "disinformation," etc.). To this day state licensing of newspapers exists in France, Italy, Spain and a host of other European countries. In the rare case of a backward capitalist country which has the forms of parliamentary "democracy," the state frequently controls news output by monopolizing the distribution of scarce newsprint. Where legal censorship is not sufficient, the

working-class press has periodically been suppressed, either by the state directly or by fascist gangs in the service of capital. During the McCarthyite period in the U.S. the government effectively managed the media by inducing them to carry out anti-red purges through blacklisting and firings.

Marxists resolutely oppose any effort by the capitalist state to interfere with freedom of the press. This bourgeois-democratic right is vital in enabling the workers movement to defend itself against the attacks of capital, and for the revolutionary vanguard to prepare the proletariat for the seizure of power. And where the government attempts to stop leaks of secret police atrocities, the labor movement demands public disclosure of their crimes. Today, reporter Myron Farber is jailed for refusing to reveal confidential sources while Attorney General Griffin Bell remains free after refusing to disclose the names of FBI provocateurs and informers in the Socialist Workers Party. The widest exposure of the counterrevolutionary secret police requires a press as free as

the strength of the workers movement can insure. Publish all CIA/FBI files! Stop government attacks on the press! ■

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Exchange on NYC Newspaper Strike

September 12, 1978

To the editor:

While I agree with the general line of the article on the New York newspaper strike (*WT* No. 214, 8 September), I think some further light can be shed on the question of the "interim" newspapers being printed in N.J. These papers, while they are printed in union shops and are written by people who are working there because they wouldn't scab on the N.Y. strike, nevertheless objectively serve the interests of the N.Y. publishers by serving to lessen some of the heat they would ordinarily have been under from their advertising customers.

However, in dealing with this question, I think the article could have gone a little further than it did. For instance, since most ITU [International Typographical Union] (and I assume, other printing trades unions) contracts contain "struck-work" clauses, we could have put forward the idea of N.Y. newspaper workers picketing the N.J. plants and demanding that the N.J. workers observe elementary working class solidarity and refuse to work on the *Metro* et al. for which they have a perfect legal cover—i.e., making it difficult to justify an injunction.

Mainly, however, I think that the thing we missed was the narrow basis on which the printing trades bureaucracy operates. For example, there are no chain-wide contracts in the newspaper industry even though most of the daily papers in the country are owned by multi-media and even multi-national conglomerates. It makes no sense to anyone but the bureaucrats to strike just one newspaper of a chain at a time. (About as much sense as the UAW striking one Chevrolet or Ford plant.) This is a conscious policy at least on the part of the ITU bureaucrats. Their excuse is that if common expiration dates were negotiated and then a chain-wide or even nation-wide strike were pulled to get a contract, that the federal government would step in with Taft-Hartley injunctions and the leadership would be sent to jail and the union ruined with fines.

Another aspect of this is the question of merger among the individual craft unions with the aim to form an industry-wide industrial union. The thought of an industrial union didn't even occur to these hacks until the attacks of the publishers had shrunk the dues base to the point where their jobs were threatened. And now, when they've finally begun to move on the question, typically, they have done it in the most undemocratic and bureaucratic fashion possible.

When the ITU-Guild-Mailers merger is voted on next week or the week after, included in the proposal is a clause that

will extend the term of office of all officers from one year to three years—a constitutional amendment the ITU hacks have put up for a vote three times in five years and lost overwhelmingly every time.

A few small points:

Using the example of the 1926 British general strike newspaper as an example for N.Y. workers is good in that it is one in which the workers were in political motion, but it might also have been pointed out that the Trotskyist movement used the same tactic when they published the *Organizer* and later the *Northwest Organizer* in the mid-1930's.

Also, regarding Jimmy Breslin, this scabby S.O.B. has a long history of this sort of thing and the workers should be made aware of it. Back in the '62 strike Breslin published a piece in the *Newark Evening News* which came out against the ITU (the initiator of that strike), because he claimed that by striking a newspaper and preventing him from publishing his column that the union was violating his individual first amendment rights. He ridiculed the ITU as a religious cult and implied that if any of the N.Y. publishers had the guts to publish, that he would certainly scab. He seems to have proved his point.

Comradely,

Riker

September 16, 1978

To the editor:

Just an addendum to my letter of Sept. 12, to give you a picture of the situation in the newspaper industry here on the Coast.

Besides the long ago lost-cause strikes at the L.A. *Herald-Examiner*, *Portland Oregonian* and San Rafael *Independent-Journal* there are the current strikes at the *Sacramento Bee* and Vallejo *Times-Herald*. These are far more typical of the strike strategy used by the printing craft union bureaucracies than that in New York and you should have some knowledge of them in order to get a better grasp of the New York situation.

The typical strategy usually involves a particularly determined owner who defeats all subterfuge and tricks by the bureaucracy and finally forces them out on strike or just plain locks them out.

If the paper continues to publish (90 percent sure), the unions then mount an "aggressive" campaign of educating the public by (1) buying advertising space on city buses (L.A.), and (2) canvassing the city to get subscription cancellations (Vallejo and just about everywhere else).

The next thing that usually happens is that the union bureaucrats try to get "pro-union" advertisers to pull their business out of the struck paper. That leads to complaints by the advertisers



WV Photo

Newspaper Guild pickets outside the Daily News building in June.

that the struck paper, usually a monopoly, is the only place where they can advertise. The unions then combine to produce an "interim" paper to relieve the problem (Vallejo). The paper usually goes broke, along with the strike. This pattern has been repeated in city after city with millions and millions in union money being poured down the rat hole that these papers represent. In several cases the unions actually floated stock deals to finance the papers (Portland), and then peddled the worthless investment to their own ranks.

The strikes in San Rafael and Sacramento represent variations on the theme. Sacramento, which is still going on, was lost from the very beginning when nearly half the union members in the plant crossed their own picket lines and became scabs—after only a few days on strike. This of course prevented the usual ploy of putting out an "interim" paper for lack of resources and enough union printers loyal to the strike to put it out. In this instance the workers had to be content with a strike bulletin—that sold advertising and kept the record of the defeat of their strike.

The strike in San Rafael was interesting in that it was led by the Social Democrats and supported by the Stalinists in the Bay Area Typo Union. Because of the peculiarities of the Bay Area labor movement, the leadership of

the typographical union and to a lesser extent the Guild are to the left of the national leadership. They have carried out a number of moves, such as merging all the local unions in a fifty-mile radius with the Oakland and San Francisco locals, thereby creating a common bargaining unit and, potentially, the resources to prosecute a militant strike.

Putting on a left face when the San Rafael strike was forced on them, the local bureaucrats called for mass picket lines and both the longshore and Teamsters responded with pickets and boycotts of all goods in or out of the paper. The owners appealed to the municipal and county government, at which point sheriff's deputies attacked the picket line with clubs and gas and jailed a number of pickets. The plant's mechanical superintendent was shot under peculiar circumstances and the bureaucrats backed off. The scabs got in, the embargo was broken along with the strike. Subsequent suits by the owners resulted in judgments that cost the unions involved over a million dollars.

The interesting thing is that now this strike is used by the bureaucrats to "prove" that it can't be done. Whenever they're attacked on their leadership of the Vallejo strike, they point to San Rafael as an example of what happens when "hot heads" get their way in a strike.

So you can see that the New York strike represents a departure for these unions—in that they have managed to stop production with a strike. And while it is true that strikes in the New York newspapers usually result in stopping production, it is not true of virtually the rest of the entire industry.

And you can see that the "interim" papers take on a different character when viewed from a national perspective. The union bureaucrats aren't going to go after these papers. In fact, if they didn't spring up the way they had, given their past performance they would probably have gone to New Jersey and set up the papers themselves!

The day when the highly skilled printer walked off the job and everything came to a halt is over. With some of the newer technology it is now possible to put out a paper without any printers, union or scab. Printers are now merely semi-skilled production workers like any other. In fact, the publishers' offensive of the last 10-15 years merely reflects their attempt to rationalize the production of newspapers in view of this new reality.

Our line on this strike is correct. This is a watershed event in this industry. If it is defeated, it is probably a blow that the New York printing unions, and in fact the New York labor movement, will take years to recover from. If the strike is turned around a victory could serve to educate the ranks in these unions that the only way to win a strike is to stop production. Just about everything else is secondary to that fact of life.

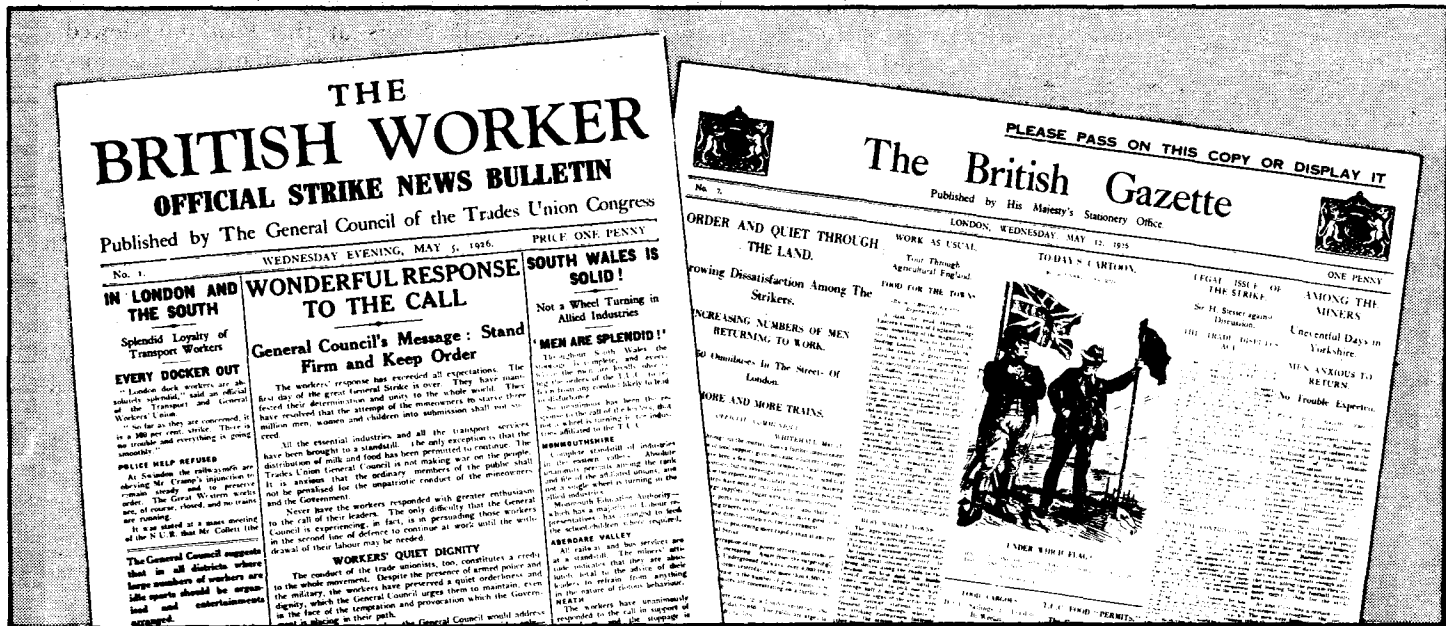
Comradely,

Riker

* * * * *

WV replies: Your letters provide an interesting account of some of the recent strikes in the newspaper industry, underscoring the crucial importance of shutting down the major dailies at the point of production. It is precisely, as you have noted, the success of the NYC unions in preventing the appearance of a full-fledged scab paper that thus far distinguishes this strike from the many other press strikes that have been smashed by the publishers.

You also correctly point to the need to shut down the interim papers printed in New Jersey. These papers, while hardly journalistic substitutes for the struck



The workers' paper and the capitalists' paper during the British General Strike of 1926.

Support the Stamberg Campaign

Spartacist Party on Ballot in NYC

NEW YORK CITY, October 1—Marjorie Stamberg, Spartacist Party candidate for New York State Assembly, was officially placed on the ballot for lower Manhattan's 64th Assembly District when the Democratic Party declined to substantiate its challenge.

Stamberg's supporters have already begun actively campaigning, as brochures emblazoned with the slogan, "For a Socialist Fight to Save New York," are being distributed on the streets to community groups and sent to friends. Meetings and street rallies single out the Democrats as the bankers' hatchmen in capitalism's devastation of this city. As the campaign committee brochure explains:

"Since the Great Financial Crisis of 1975, the Democratic Party has engineered the loss of 60,000 jobs, frozen wages in the midst of skyrocketing inflation, closed hospitals and firehouses and cut back everything from subway service to college admissions....

"...The Spartacist Party is running against all the capitalist political parties. As revolutionary socialists, we are running against the divide-and-rule strategy of pork-barreling ethnic politics. In the 64th Assembly District, we are opposing William Passannante, the Democratic incumbent for the past 23 years. Passannante voted for the Emergency Financial Control Board—a bankers' veto on labor contracts—and joined the crusade for stiffer jail sentences for youth."

This week the Spartacist campaign committee sent out an urgent fund appeal which stressed how the capitalist parties have stacked the electoral deck, including financially:

"Behind Passannante stands the well-oiled New York City Democratic Party machine with all the resources, money and influence which it commands.

Behind Marjorie Stamberg stands a program that can change the world. Passannante can count on substantial support from banks, businesses, newspapers—all those whose interests he, in fact, represents. Marjorie Stamberg is counting on you.

"To carry a political campaign to the people of New York takes more than the endless hours of hard work by volunteers. It takes money to cover the costs of printing, phone, rent, transportation and other expenses...."

Readers of *WV* are probably familiar with our revolutionary program to meet the crisis of New York City. Our analysis of New York has told the hard truth about killer cops, ethnic vigilantes, desperate lumpen criminals. We have exposed the phony schemes and electoral cretinism of reformists like the Socialist Workers and Communist Parties. And we have shown the way forward from the defeatist conservatism of the middle-class cynics and ecology faddists with their holy war against the Concorde and Westway.

The Stamberg campaign calls upon the city labor movement to lead the population in struggle against the banks and Democrats—a united fight on behalf of all the oppressed, breaking through the union/black confrontations which cripple working-class struggle. The Spartacist program means a class-struggle opposition in the trade unions to dump the traitors whose parochial job-trusting practices and class-collaborationist strategy have paralyzed the powerful New York City labor movement. It is a program that explains how only a socialist revolution can solve the enormous problems of this rotting city and its working people.

At a Spartacist League forum last Saturday at Columbia University,



Marjorie Stamberg talking with strikers at Daily News.

WV Photo

Stamberg illustrated the impact such a program might have to beleaguere New Yorkers by relating an incident which took place during the petitioning drive. An elderly man was asked by a petitioner if he would help put an independent candidate on the ballot.

"What kind of independent candidate?" the man inquired in a suspicious tone.

"A socialist candidate," replied the petitioner.

"And what kind of socialist candidate?" he persisted. "The red, revolutionary kind?"

"Yes, a revolutionary socialist."

"Well, good," said the old man, with surprised enthusiasm. "I haven't voted

since Gene Debs died."

To that man and many others we can say: we have your candidate! But to get our program out to them is an expensive proposition. *WV* hopes its readers will respond generously to the Spartacist Party campaign committee's fund appeal. We can do no more than repeat the closing sentences:

"With your help the residents of the 64th A.D. and the entire city are in for a campaign like they have never seen in their lives. They will hear the truth for a change—and have a chance to vote for a candidate with a fighting program of working-class revolution! Help us bring our program to the residents of this besieged city. Your contribution is the weapon the Stamberg campaign needs now."

dailies, limit the strike. They keep the heat off the publishers from both the big advertisers and the populace. In short, they isolate the strikers while at least to a small degree satisfying those who are most acutely inconvenienced by the strike. Therefore, we want to break up this configuration. At the same time, however, the union bureaucracy and much of the membership see the parasitic interims as also keeping the pressure off them. They don't want to be held responsible for a press blackout; the pressmen fear that unless Guild members are given employment, they will be willing to cross their picket lines. So the existence of "struck work" clauses notwithstanding, an immediate military confrontation over the interim papers, picketing, burning delivery trucks, could well backfire, particularly if it is the axis of the policy not of the

union leadership but of class-struggle militants. What is necessary to formulate the correct tactics is an alternative strike strategy to the narrow, defeatist approach of the bureaucracy; it is necessary to expose the parasitic papers as scab rags, while mobilizing the strength of the labor movement behind the strike.

The demand for a labor daily was formulated precisely as a bridge to realize the actions you propose. Such a paper could well be published in the same New Jersey shops that publish the parasitic interims; the provision of NYC union scale for the New Jersey pressmen would act as a major impetus to a campaign to raise wage rates and manning scales in the suburbs to the NYC level, thereby undercutting the runaway movement by the publishers. It

continued on page 11

Pressmen Settle with Murdoch's Post

As we go to press, *New York Post* publisher Rupert Murdoch has negotiated a separate deal with the striking Printing Pressmen's union. In an attempt to get the money-losing *Post* ahead of the other dailies and reap potential millions in advertising revenues, the *Post* agreed to defer the hotly disputed manning scales issue with the pressmen and accept whatever terms they subsequently arrive at with the *Daily News* and the *Times*.

The publishers of the *Times* and *News* are reportedly "seething" over this breach in their united front. Pressmen's union chief Bill Kennedy, who now says that Murdoch was the "dove" all along and is painting the *Times* negotiators as the hard guys, is "happy" with the arrangement. The pressmen ratified it today in a mass meeting by a ten-to-one margin.

But while the publishers' initial strategy—of essentially locking the unions out, sitting tight and waiting for disunity and scabbing to begin—has suffered a reverse due to Murdoch's defection, under this lousy "me-too" deal the pressmen have won nothing! They should have turned it down. The pressmen continue to be under pressure from the Allied Printing Trades Council, the Council's "watchdog" in the talks. Ted Kheel, and Driver's union leader Doug LaChance, to be more "flexible" in the talks. They still have to fight to save their jobs in the continuing strike against the other two papers. The

"settlement" with the *Post* is not a contract at all, but merely throws the ball to the *Times* and *News* to fight it out with the pressmen.

Furthermore, the drive to resume publication of the *Post* puts enormous pressure on the Newspaper Guild unit at the paper, which is also on strike and is now behind the eight ball. Murdoch has been at war with the Guild for months, seeking the right to fire reporters at will, remove many from union jurisdiction, eliminate the grievance procedure, slash salaries for new employees and cut severance pay. According to Guild members at the *Post* interviewed by *WV*, the very existence of the union is at stake.

Instead of joint bargaining with the publishers, each of the striking unions has pursued its own negotiations and now the Pressmen have struck a separate deal. The never distant threat that the other unions might cross their picket lines has put heat on the pressmen to give in at the bargaining table—this same pressure will now be on the Guild.

After a long string of smashed newspaper strikes and mutual scabbing by the unions, the dramatic power of the New York strike has been its solid union front. What can be won by this unity must not be sacrificed in back-room high-pressure tactics to force either the Pressmen or the Guild to make damaging concessions. Don't give up one single job to the publishers! Defend the Guild! Victory to the NYC press strike!



The "interim" parasite press.

NOT DEBS BUT LENIN!

Activists vs. Stodgy Cold Warriors in SPUSA

"The Socialist Party U.S.A.? Who are they?" This would be the predictable response of the vast majority of the American left upon reading our headline. For official social democracy in this country has been moribund since the 1940's and virtually went out of existence during the Vietnam war, when its "State Department socialism" made it anathema to an entire generation of radicals who came of age in the antiwar movement. But over Labor Day weekend the fifth national convention of the "reconstituted" SPUSA collapsed in disarray amid bitter charges of "Leninist totalitarianism" and "McCarthyite redbaiting."

The scene of this unlikely event was Iowa City, Iowa where some 75 delegates gathered to do battle in a factional dogfight that has paralyzed their organization for months. (The SPUSA's *Socialist Tribune* has not appeared since April.) Squared off against each other were a youthful, politically heterogeneous left wing calling itself the "Debs Caucus" and an underground right-wing faction around long-time Socialist Party stalwart Frank Zeidler (former mayor of Milwaukee) and pacifist old-timer Dave McReynolds (secretary of the War Resisters League).

The convention was dominated by some of the most outrageous bureaucratic shenanigans since the heyday of the New Left. Raising the spectre of a "Leninist takeover," which would turn the SP into something that would "make the Marine Corps look like a parliamentary democracy," the Zeidlerites stampeded the apolitical center into aborting the confab. After a small majority voted to rescind the party's previously tendered application for membership in the Socialist International, the right wing used every trick of parliamentary maneuvering to cut off debate on "party principles" and cancel planned elections for national officers and the National Committee.

After cancellation of elections, the threat of a walkout by the frustrated Debs Caucus (which provides most of the manpower of the SP apparatus) appeared so great that middle-of-the-road delegates forced through a "mediating committee" to patch things up. A new convention is now planned for May 1979, and a promise of no expulsions of "Leninists" in the interim was extracted. However, at a gathering immediately following the stymied convention the right-wing-dominated National Committee voted to bring charges against National Secretary Tom Spiro, who joined the Debs Caucus on the eve of the meetings. The charges? That Spiro had arranged "an impossible convention agenda" and had "led a militant faction which tried to disrupt the convention."

Viet Cong Overran the SPUSA

The organization which just made a shambles of its convention is well-nigh invisible, without functioning branches in virtually every major U.S. city. Yet the SP is not lacking in historical luminaries, among them Norman Thomas, the holier-than-thou pacifist, and Eugene Debs, the prairie radical who got 6 percent of the vote in the 1912 presidential elections. So why is a party claiming the heritage of Debs and

Thomas today nothing but an isolated, internally disintegrating, hopelessly faction-ridden and despised sect?

From the beginning of the cold war, the SP became a handmaiden of the U.S. government, largely escaping the blows of McCarthyite witchhunting due to its ferocious anti-Communism. As its domestic influence dwindled, SP supporters working with the CIA, such as United Auto Workers (UAW) international affairs director Victor Reuther, played a major role in splitting the European labor movement and setting up anti-Communist unions. At home, Socialist Party members could occa-

Goldwater in 1964—calling instead to "Vote No for President"—the party tops simply dissolved their youth group and changed the locks on the office. With its ties to the fanatically anti-Communist Meanyite labor bureaucracy, the SP steadfastly refused to call for U.S. withdrawal from Indochina. This made it absolutely impossible to recruit in the late 1960's as the tens of thousands of antiwar activists who rallied to Eugene McCarthy in 1968 and McGovern in 1972 were subjectively far to the left of the Socialist Party.

Politics, like atmospheric pressure, abhors a vacuum. Thus the role earlier

of liberalism by throwing out the Dixiecrats.

In the aftermath of McGovern's humiliating defeat at the hands of Nixon the Socialist Party underwent a three-way split in early 1973. The right-wing majority changed the party name to Social Democrats USA (SDUSA)—the term "socialist" was considered too radical—to become the most active supporters of Henry Jackson and George Meany. Harrington pulled out to set up the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) as a pressure group on the McGovern/Kennedy liberal wing of the Democratic Party. And a small rump group, led by Zeidler and centered on his Milwaukee base, retook the name Socialist Party while proudly upholding its tradition of "independent" social-democratic electoralism.

Milwaukee was the one place where the old SP was more than simply a Democratic Party ginger group. This Wisconsin city had been the stronghold of the "municipal socialist" right wing of the party. Victor Berger, the boss of the SP right wing, was repeatedly elected to Congress from Milwaukee from 1910 into the 1920's, and the Bergerite machine continued to be a force in the city long after the party elsewhere was reduced to being the Democrats' shadow. Frank Zeidler was a "non-partisan" mayor of Milwaukee from 1948 to 1960, right through the McCarthyite era.

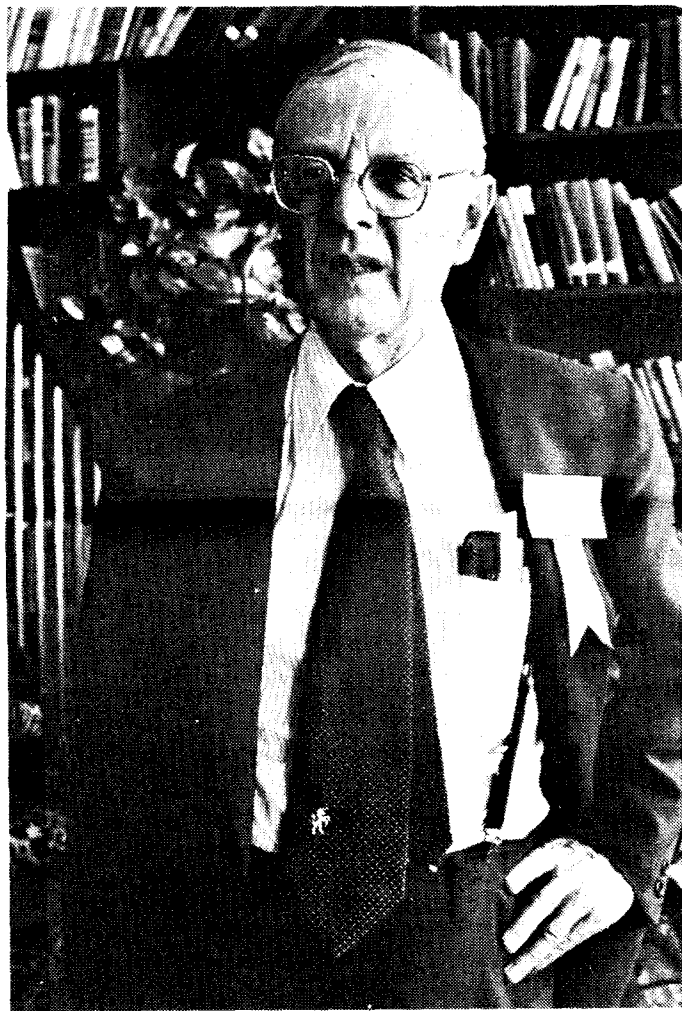
Thus the remnants of the Berger machine opposed liquidation into the Democratic Party not out of leftism but due to organizational conservatism. Apart from this, Zeidler's Debs Caucus in the old SP was not significantly to the left of the Harrington group. Indeed, it is ironic that Debs' name was taken by the lineal descendants of his arch-rival, Victor L. Berger.

Zeidler himself is a redbaiting cold warrior along with the best of them. Today he is a labor mediator, i.e., an arbitrator who serves the capitalists under the guise of "impartiality" and the myth that a "fair" compromise can be reached between capital and labor. And as mayor of Milwaukee Zeidler ran not as a Socialist but as the candidate of the "Public Enterprise Committee," a coalition including prominent local Democrats.

In office, Zeidler showed to what treachery his "democratic socialist" policies can lead. During the UAW's long, bitter 1950's organizing strike against the violently anti-union Kohler Company, a plumbing equipment manufacturer, a labor boycott succeeded in stopping a ship with raw materials for Kohler from unloading in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The ship was thereupon rerouted to Milwaukee. After Zeidler unsuccessfully tried to mediate the dispute, the city council voted not to allow the Kohler supplier to unload. The "socialist" mayor, however, vetoed the council decision, thus becoming a strikebreaker for one of the most reactionary capitalist concerns in the country.

Because it opposed liquidation into the Democratic Party, the Milwaukee-based group around Zeidler did willy-nilly attract left critics of the SP leadership, particularly on the Vietnam

Frank Zeidler, leader of SPUSA anti-Communist old guard and former mayor of Milwaukee. During bitter Kohler strike he broke the labor boycott. Zeidler combines the "sewer socialism" of Victor Berger and the "State Department socialism" of Norman Thomas.



Mary Locke

sionally provide useful services mobilizing support for ADA liberals.

In the early 1960's the SP youth group, the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), managed to attract a number of militant pacifists through the vehicle of the Student Peace Union. YPSL could also be counted on to organize demonstrations for a Hubert Humphrey civil rights bill—and to make sure the Stalinists and Trotskyists didn't take it over. Meanwhile, SP leader Michael Harrington, author of *The Other America*, was recognized as the father of JFK's "war on poverty." But as the Kennedy administration's foreign policy took on an aggressive anti-Communist hue following the Bay of Pigs (1961) and the Cuban missile crisis (1962), more radical forces quickly displaced the YPSL/SP.

It was the Vietnam war which finally did in the State Department socialists. While protest was brewing on the campuses, later extending to mainstream Democratic liberals, the SP leadership maintained its rigid cold war line. When YPSL refused to support Lyndon Johnson against Barry

played by Norman Thomas' SP was taken over in the late 1960's by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), a once-Trotskyist organization turned reformist. The SWP became an extra-parliamentary agitational agency for the liberal Democrats. As the "best builders" of an "independent antiwar movement," it channeled thousands of radicalized youth into the orbit of the McCarthys and McGovern.

Last Gasp of Municipal Socialism

By the early 1970's the SP's formal organizational independence from the Democrats was completely at variance with its political aims. The far right-wingers like Bayard Rustin and Penn Kemble, in particular, were anxious to devote all their energies to combating the menace of New Leftism within the Democratic Party. Michael Harrington wished to hark back to the heady days of JFK's Camelot, when he could pad along the red-carpeted corridors of power in the White House. His "Realignment Caucus" called for transforming the Democratic Party into the voice

war question. But at a time when thousands of radicalized youth looked to the NLF and North Vietnam Stalinists as a revolutionary model, this group limited itself to the weepy pacifism of Dave McReynolds. And since going independent the SPUSA has continued to have extremely right-wing politics (support for disarmament, the UN and Israel) under a thin New Left veneer.

A Left Opposition Emerges

The "new" Socialist Party was born in a semi-comatose state. The Bergerite leadership was a smug lot, whose main activity seems to have consisted of reassuring each other that Frank Zeidler was really the Norman Thomas of today. *Socialist Tribune* rarely came out from 1973 to 1976, and most of the nominal members did nothing, not even pay dues. It did, however, manage to attract some young activists in the political backwaters of its Midwest base. And it managed to fuse with two New Left leftovers, the California Peace and Freedom Party and the Michigan Human Rights Party.

In 1976-77 some of the younger, more energetic members began to react against the do-nothingism of the old fogies around Zeidler. They wanted an activist orientation to the radical milieu around such issues as the Equal Rights Amendment, South Africa divestment, Bakke, etc. In addition the Young Turks were frustrated with the bureaucratic highhandedness of the Zeidler regime. They got a big boost when a newcomer took over as SPUSA national secretary



Victor Berger

ossified social-democratism of the Zeidler regime. In this respect there is a certain similarity to elements who have been trying to infuse life into the De Leonist Socialist Labor Party (SLP) and ran into resistance from the remnants of the Arnold Petersen regime (see "In Terminal Crisis... SLP Goes Trendy..." *WT* No. 192, 10 February 1978). This left activist current crystallized as the Debs Caucus just before the September SP convention.

The Debs Caucus program is characterized above all by abstractness, consisting of vague statements about the desirability of socialism and opposition

determination. We reject both Comrade Zeidler's contention that the U.S.S.R. is the greatest threat to self-determination and world peace as well as Comrade Kissell's assertion that both U.S. imperialism and the foreign practices of the U.S.S.R. are equally 'evil' and both should be equally opposed. We feel that both positions are anachronistic and are objectively complicit with U.S. imperialism."

—Joel Miller, "A Call to Reconstitute the Debs Caucus" (September 1978)

While this rejection of State Department socialism and "third campism" places the Debs Caucus in the left wing of contemporary American social democracy, it provides no guide for principled revolutionary politics. In effect they declare the U.S. the main enemy because it now plays a more aggressive reactionary role in world politics while the Soviets stand for "progressive" causes and détente. If it is "anachronistic" to describe the Kremlin as the greater enemy, then this was presumably a true statement in the past (perhaps in the early cold war years?) and could be so again in the not-so-distant future.

During the convention debate Zeidler taunted the Debs Caucus, "You cannot associate yourself with Leninism without taking responsibility for early Bolshevik government." While this is certainly true, the Caucus could give no answer due to its political heterogeneity. A majority consider themselves Marxist, a minority view themselves as perhaps heading in the direction of Leninism and at least one member of the Caucus describes himself as a "Leninist-Trotskyist." They are united mainly in opposition to Zeidler and in calling for a "multi-tendency Democratic Socialist

The Russian question was also posed sharply in the debate over affiliation to the Socialist International. As a result of a 1977 convention decision the SPUSA had applied for membership in the organization of Helmut Schmidt and Mário Soares. However, in the meantime the Second International (SI) had cut the ground out from under Zeidler by recognizing Harrington's DSOC as its American affiliate. Debate began when the SPUSA international secretary Kissell opposed formal ties to the SI and recounted some of the crimes of the Portuguese Socialist Party, such as returning expropriated land from collective farms to former landowners.

Another delegate pointed to a "60-year history of betrayals" by social democracy: hostility to the Russian Revolution; the murder of Luxemburg and Liebknecht; refusal to make a united front with the Communists against Hitler; the treachery of the Spanish popular front. (On the other hand it was pointed out that the "Democratic Socialists of Cuba in Exile," a Miami group, had approached the SPUSA. This group favors the counterrevolutionary restoration of capitalism as against Castroite rule.) On a roll-call vote the motion to withdraw the application to the SI was passed by 34 to 24; however, this was immediately sabotaged by the right wing which had sufficient votes to require a referendum of the SPUSA membership.

Overall the convention battle must be judged a draw. The Debs Caucus, with the support of most of the new recruits (who were allowed to attend only over the objections of the right wing), had the best of it in the early rounds, scoring a knockdown in the debate over the SI. However, the mediating committee truce proposal still left power in the hands of the outgoing National Committee.

Against the "Debs Tradition"

All American social-democratic organizations, from the Meanyite SDUSA to the "third camp" International Socialists (I.S.) and the ostensibly

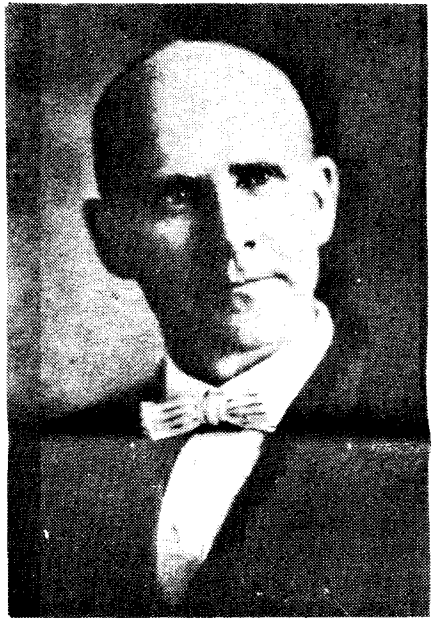
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Debs and Lenin

The founder of American Trotskyism, James P. Cannon, was a younger contemporary of Debs as an IWW organizer and SP left-winger in the 1910's. Writing four decades later, Cannon described Debs' centrist role in the old Socialist Party:

"Debs' refusal to take an active part in the factional struggle, and to play his rightful part as the leader of an organized left wing, played into the hands of the reformist politicians. There his beautiful friendliness and generosity played him false, for the party was also an arena of the struggle for socialism. Debs spoke of 'the love of comrades'—and he really meant it—but the opportunist sharpers didn't believe a word of it. They never do. They waged a vicious, organized fight against the revolutionary workers of the party all the time. And they were the gainers from Debs' abstention.

"Debs' mistaken theory of the party was one of the most costly



Eugene V. Debs

mistakes a revolutionist ever made in the entire history of the American movement.

"The strength of capitalism is not in itself and its own institutions; it survives only because it has bases of support in the organizations of the workers. As we see it now, in the light of what we have learned from the Russian Revolution and its aftermath, nine-tenths of the struggle for socialism is the struggle against bourgeois influence in the workers' organizations, including the party.

"The reformist leaders were the carriers of bourgeois influence in the Socialist Party, and at bottom the conflict of factions was an expression of the class struggle. Debs obviously didn't see it that way. His aloofness from the conflict enabled the opportunists to dominate the party machine and to undo much of his great work as an agitator for the cause.

"Debs' mistaken theory of the party was one of the most important reasons why the Socialist Party, which he did more than anyone else to build up, ended so disgracefully and left so little behind."

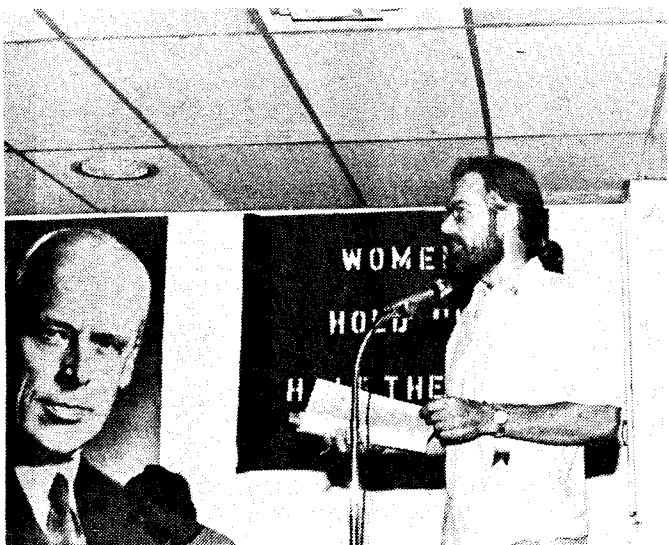
—*The First Ten Years of American Communism* (1962)

HELP WANTED

National Secretary - Full time employment at the National Office; charge of the National Office, its records, employees; correspondence; minute taking at all national meetings; representation of the Party at various events. Qualifications: basic understanding of democratic socialism, member of the Party in good standing for one year, touch typist, 30 wpm or better. Salary \$6000 yr. plus one-half of all dues collected.

Publications Secretary/Administrative Aide: Same as above; aid the Tribune collective in the production, distribution, and publication of the Tribune; take charge of the publication of other Party literature; work with the National Secretary in organizational and administrative activities. Same qualifications as above, other office skills and journalistic experience helpful. Salary \$6000 yr.

How to apply: Send vita, list of qualifications, a short paragraph detailing your ideas for the growth of the SP, and other helpful material (letters of recommendation, etc.) to the National Office, 135 West Wells #325, Milwaukee WI 53203



Above, "help wanted" ad placed in the SPUSA newspaper *Socialist Tribune*. Left, speaker at recent SP convention in Iowa City.

Mary Locke

in mid-1977. The party had advertised in its newspaper for a national secretary, offering a most unusual piece-rate salary:

"National Secretary... Qualifications: basic understanding of democratic socialism, member of the Party in good standing for one year, touch typist, 30 wpm or better. Salary \$6000 yr plus one-half of all dues collected." [our emphasis]

The man who landed the job was Tom Spiro.

Seeking to appeal to the radical milieu, whose attitudes are still largely shaped by 1960's New Leftism and where the organized forces generally claim to be Leninist, the young SPUSA activists came into conflict with the

to racism, imperialism and other bad things. It resembles nothing so much as the early (social-democratic) New Left circa 1965, particularly in wanting to ignore the basic historic divisions in the workers movement. Thus on the key issue which has divided social democrats and Leninists since 1917—the "Russian question," i.e., the historic role of the Bolshevik Revolution and the nature of the society which emerged from it—the Debs Caucus seeks to duck the question. It approaches the global conflict between the U.S. and USSR in terms of greater or lesser evilism:

"We recognize that U.S. imperialism is the dominant world system and the greatest threat to world peace and self-

SWP Scabs on Rail Strike

CHICAGO, September 30—*Picket lines mean don't cross!* This elementary principle of trade unionism was the weapon used to shut down railroads across the U.S. for four days last week. When members of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airlines Clerks (BRAC) threw up pickets at rail yards and terminals of 73 different railroads, some 300,000 unionists refused to cross those lines. From the West Virginia coalfields to the Chicago railway yards, the picket line is the battle line of the class struggle: company finks and scabs on one side,



Pat Grogan



Andrew Pulley

union loyalists on the other.

It ought to be a clearly understood principle of collective survival. It was for the 180,000 miners who held out for almost four months against the companies and the government, who go out on massive "wildcats" when even a lone picket shows up at the portal. And it certainly ought to be a reflex action of socialists.

However, at a forum here tonight, entitled "Ferment in Steel," the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) featured two of its "leaders" in the steel industry—Pat Grogan and Andrew Pulley—who had been daily crossing the picket lines of the striking railroad workers.

Grogan is employed at U.S. Steel's South Works plant in South Chicago and is a member of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 65. She is also SWP candidate for U.S. Senator from Illinois. Pulley is a member of USWA Local 1066 at U.S. Steel's Gary, Indiana Tube Plant and is SWP candidate for mayor of Chicago. Picket lines were up for four days at both plants, manned by BRAC members employed by the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway (EJ&E), a wholly owned subsidiary of U.S. Steel. EJ&E hauls most of the finished steel from the plants and supplies South Works with coke from Gary's ovens. Its operations within the sprawling steel plants are crucial for production to continue.

There is no excuse for crossing the BRAC picket line. Yet the SWP forum was a platform for excuses and apologies for scabbing. The picket line which means nothing to the SWP is nothing less than the class line, often drawn in blood. What is instinct to tens of thousands of coal miners—that you never cross a picket line—is "ultraleftism" to the "leaders" of the SWP.

Solidarity vs. Scabberding

Grogan and Pulley were confronted at tonight's forum by Jay Frank and Gene Goldenfeld, steel workers who had respected the BRAC lines. Frank, a member of Local 65, had gone on Chicago-area television to answer an anti-union editorial attacking the

BRAC picketers. He also co-authored a leaflet with other Local 65 members calling on the Steelworkers union to respect BRAC lines. The leaflet denounced the criminal policy of the USWA local and District 31 leadership—the core of the Sadlowski "reform" group—who were condoning and encouraging the membership to cross the railroad workers' lines. The leaflet emphasized:

"The scab policy of our union leadership served only to divide the labor movement and help the companies. It must be defeated!"

"Those of us who have no intention of crossing the BRAC lines demand that our union adopt the following policy:

- "1. FULL SUPPORT TO THE RAILROAD STRIKE;
- "2. MILITANT OPPOSITION TO ANTI-STRIKE RESTRAINING ORDERS AND ALL GOVERNMENT STRIKEBREAKING;
- "3. THE PICKET LINE IS THE BATTLE LINE OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE—DON'T CROSS;
- "4. DEFEND ALL THOSE VICTIMIZED FOR REFUSING TO SCAB ON THE BRAC."

Goldenfeld, a member of USWA Local 1014, had similarly respected BRAC lines and distributed a leaflet to Gary steel workers:

"Right now, the rail companies are getting anti-strike injunctions from the federal courts. Rail workers must not allow this government strikebreaking attempt to intimidate them! Carry the strike through to victory! The USWA and the rest of the labor movement must come to the aid of the BRAC strike with whatever actions of militant labor solidarity are necessary to win the strike.... PICKET LINES MEAN DON'T CROSS!"

The reaction of rail workers at South Works and Gary to this militant solidarity was enthusiastic and appreciative. At Gary, EJ&E pickets handed out 2,000 of Goldenfeld's leaflets to steel workers. At South Works a BRAC picketer told *WV*: "Local 65 is not sympathetic. It would be a whole different ball game if they were. Just imagine if steel and rail went out together!"

But the SWP scabs were not moved by the manifest desire of the BRAC to have steel workers respect their lines. Nor did they care that across those same picket lines came steel foremen who directly replaced the struck labor of the railroad workers. The SWPers followed the lead of Local 65 president John Chico, who ruled a motion mandating respect for the picket lines "out of order" at a September 28 union meeting. At Gary, Andrew Pulley repeatedly crossed the BRAC lines at the Buchanan Street gate where picketers were distributing Goldenfeld's leaflet asking steel workers not to cross!

At tonight's forum, Grogan and

Pulley tried to rationalize their scabbing with a stream of lies and contradictions. Grogan claimed they were not picket lines "around steel, the picket lines were around railroads" even though dozens of pickets were at three gates of the South Works plant where she works. She claimed to have received permission to cross the line from the pickets. We wonder which pickets she and Pulley asked. Not the ones handing out Goldenfeld's leaflet at Gary. And the pickets who attempted to close off the road leading to Gary were not about to invite the SWP to cross. The cops came and pushed the pickets apart. But to the SWP's Grogan and Pulley it was only a picket "around the railroad."

In these dog days of the bureaucrats' "informational picket line" Grogan may have had the conversation she reports. She may have received permission from one of the bureaucrats who ordered this treacherous erosion of elementary principle. Perhaps she talked to a worker who had simply become worn down by the scabberding policy of the bureaucracy. The union tops capitulated to the anti-secondary boycott provision of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act by instituting the "informational picket line." Therefore, the younger generation of workers do not in general understand that a picket line means don't cross. However, the SWP claims to be a revolutionary proletarian organization and it *does know* what a picket line means. If Grogan and Pulley appeal to the backwardness of most steel workers on the picket line question, this is just a flimsy excuse for their *political* opportunism.

In the same vein, Pulley tried to ridicule the militant steel workers who had respected the picket lines, saying that Frank and the others were the only ones who "thought the BRAC workers were picketing to shut down the steel mills. Everybody else missed it, even the BRAC leaders." Pulley's claim to stand with the BRAC bureaucrats, while telling much about where his real sympathies lie, is itself a lie. For even the

BRAC leadership under the pressure of the strike recognized the elementary duty of picket line solidarity. Al Goodfader, a spokesman for BRAC headquarters in Washington, D.C., told the press:

"When pickets show up, it's fairly obvious. If your union comes along and here's another union picketing, you're not going to cross it. It's a commonplace union thing to observe picket lines. Not just with this union, but with any union."

But not with Pulley. Grogan and the SWP! For them, respecting picket lines is only an "optimum idea," as Pulley put it at the forum, which "we want to realize at some point." Yet in the next breath, Pulley had to admit that thousands of coal miners in West Virginia have been honoring the picket lines at Norfolk and Western throughout BRAC's two-month-old strike!

Gene Goldenfeld spoke up at the forum to explain what motivates the SWP to cross picket lines: "For the Maoists, it's being one with the masses. If the masses scab, then we'll scab. For the SWP, it's being one with the bureaucrats. If the bureaucrats tell the workers to scab, then we'll scab." Among ostensible leftists in the Chicago-area steel mills, the SWP was not alone. At South Works, trustee Roberta Wood, a prominent supporter of the Communist Party-backed National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee, crossed the picket lines, as did members of the Revolutionary Communist Party-supported "Break-out" group.

But the SWP falsely claims the banner of Trotskyism and is making a particularly big deal out of its recent "turn" to the working class. Steel workers, rail workers, coal miners: all should know that the SWP "leaders" cross picket lines without a blink of the eye. The SWP has tied itself to the treacherous, scabberding labor bureaucrats and will go down with them in disgrace when the union movement casts out the bureaucratic parasites and their hangers-on. ■

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Strike Wave...

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as the step-in replacement for the ever-more discredited Carter.

No reshuffling in the Democratic Party, however, will halt the anti-labor offensive. The multi-millionaire Kennedy is no less a representative of the capitalist class than Carter. The fundamental paradox of the American workers' movement is that it faces the economic and political power of the capitalist class with no political party of its own. Without a break from the capitalists and the forging of a workers party committed to mobilizing and unifying the working class around its own interests, strike struggles will run aground against the political monopoly of the capitalist class.

Railroad Unions vs. the Government

Probably no better case for labor independence from the bosses' government, their parties and legislative-judicial controls can be found than in the experience of the railroad unions. Among the oldest and once most powerful sectors of the labor movement, the rail unions have long been shackled by laws designed to prevent strikes and curb the unions' power, enforced with equal vigor by the Democratic and Republican parties. Indeed, the most notable thing about the BRAC strike was that it happened at all. It was the longest tie-up of the nation's rail system in well over three decades!

The 1926 Railway Labor Act governs collective bargaining in the rail industry. Its provisions empowering the president to invoke 60-day "cooling-off" periods before strikes even occur have been repeatedly invoked. Last week, Labor Secretary Marshall rather bluntly dispelled any illusions about the "even-handedness" of the law: "The whole purpose of the Act is to prevent strikes."

When this has proved insufficient, emergency acts of Congress have been quickly passed to halt strikes, as occurred in 1967 and 1970. Other threatened strikes have been averted by special congressional action imposing compulsory arbitration. And "friends of labor" Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman seized the railroads in 1943 and 1946 to head off strikes, threatening to

draft railroad strikers into the Army for good measure.

Though Kroll was willing to initiate the mass picketing in the fight against N&W, he has carefully avoided challenging the government/court restrictions on his union. Earlier in September BRAC had thrown up pickets at N&W interchanges with other companies in Buffalo, Chicago and Columbus, Ohio but called them off when a court injunction was issued. The mass picketing last week was launched when an appellate court voided that injunction. And the picketing spread to railroads contributing to the mutual aid pact only after Chief Justice Warren Burger dismissed another lower court order which the companies had obtained prohibiting it. Then when the federal court in Washington enforced Carter's request for an injunction ending the four-day strike, Kroll again toed the line.

The BRAC president is so locked into the current maze of government controls that he has called on Congress to seize the railroads "for the duration of the dispute." Congress is expected to pass special legislation banning another strike if the 60-day cooling-off period does not produce a settlement. But the unions have never and will never win on Capitol Hill what they are unwilling to fight for on the picket lines.

Strike Wave Against Take-Aways

The same kinds of take-away demands the railroads are imposing on the rail unions (see accompanying article "Issues in the Rail Strike") have characterized most recent negotiations and have fueled the current strike wave. In what was supposed to be a "light" bargaining year, the number of strikes has steadily risen since January. The Department of Labor reports that in August the amount of lost time due to strikes was at a five-month high, and this was before the outburst of teachers' strikes which began with the opening of schools in September.

Teachers have struck 32 school systems this fall, affecting at the high point an estimated one million students in 14 states. Though this figure soon fell to 300,000, it has not changed for two weeks as a number of bitter disputes drag on. In nearly every case, the teachers are attempting to break through fiscal austerity budgets and

wage freezes that have shrunk their real income over the past few years.

The largest of the school strikes is in Cleveland, where 10,000 employees, including teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and nurses, have been out for the last month in the largest public workers' strike in Ohio history. Cleveland teachers have not had a pay hike since 1976 and the \$9,100 starting salary is one of the lowest in the U.S.

In Bridgeport, Connecticut, the biggest mass arrest of striking teachers in U.S. history landed 274 teachers in jail, including the union's entire negotiating team. After 17 days on the picket lines, the longest teachers' strike in state history ended September 24 in negotiations concluded at the National Guard barracks where the teachers had been incarcerated.

Other public employees have been striking over the same wage demands as the teachers. An indication of the deep discontent prevalent in the working class was that even the backwaters were striking. Firemen in Biloxi, Mississippi; Wichita, Kansas; and Butte, Montana struck this month, in addition to the bitter firemen's strike in Memphis which saw picketers facing National Guardsmen in a conflict reminiscent of the 1968 Memphis garbage men's strike. Sanitation workers in Detroit, Tuscaloosa and San Antonio have recently been out. And last month transit workers snarled Washington, D.C. while thousands of public workers tied up Philadelphia last month in a pay dispute.

The range of public employee strikes extends from small Mississippi towns to the nation's capital, and they could well be but a small portent of things to come. Though numerous, public employee strikes are atomized from city to city and occur when few major national contracts are up. But next year, nationwide contracts covering the Teamsters, rubber workers, electrical workers and auto workers expire. It is precisely because the Carter administration faces this major round of bargaining that it is trying to crack down on wage demands now.

Meany vs. Carter at the Steelworkers Convention

The major protagonists in the public eye had a chance to square off at the 19th Constitutional Convention of the

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"No trade unionist should ever cross a picket line..."

The following is a transcript of the remarks by Steelworkers Local 65 (U.S. Steel South Works) member Jay Frank, broadcast on WMAQ-TV (Channel 5) in Chicago on September 27, at the height of the railway clerks strike.

The management of Channel 5 aired a vicious anti-union editorial which condemned the widespread sympathy-strike action of railroad workers in the Chicago area. As a rank-and-file member of Local 65, I refused to cross the picket lines thrown up around the South Works by railroad workers because I know that the strike is the only weapon that working people have to defend themselves against the profit-hungry companies and the government which represents them.

Like the mine workers who struck last spring and like the pressmen currently on strike in New York City, the railroad workers are on strike to defend themselves against attacks on their jobs and living standards. In the last few years, 1,800 railway clerks' jobs have been abolished by the railroad companies.

The labor movement has fought throughout this century and won, through widespread strike activity, such things as the eight-hour day, the right to unionize, the abolition of child labor, social security and unemployment benefits. For the wealthy few, every strike is an atrocity against the "public." For poor and working people, every victorious strike is a step towards a better life. I believe that no trade unionist should ever cross a picket line and that the entire union movement should stand in solidarity with the railroad workers to defeat the government restraining orders and injunctions and to win this strike.

Issues in the Rail Strike

The long-quiescent rail unions have been victims of the mass of government repressive legislation, failing railroad lines, a workforce divided against itself in a multiplicity of craft unions and a narrow and extremely conservative leadership. This combination of liabilities has aided the industry's long war of attrition to cut back the workforce.

The strike which began July 10 against Norfolk & Western was over just this issue. A major coal hauler and one of the nation's most financially successful railroads, the N&W has for two years of on-going negotiations resisted BRAC's demands for income security for clerks threatened by computerization. The BRAC leadership has not been demanding a shorter workweek to preserve jobs, but merely a five-year income guarantee for workers laid off due to automation, an agreement already in effect with many other rail lines. The union also wants jurisdiction over 1,000 jobs considered by management to be supervisory, hopefully opening the door to organizing similar jobs on other lines to offset the 20 percent membership loss BRAC has suffered on the rails since 1970.

When BRAC finally struck against N&W's intransigence, the company

kept half its normal freight load moving with supervisors and the assistance of 43 other railroads who picked up N&W freight at interchange rail yards. Despite the long strike and revenue losses of 90 percent, the N&W was able to post third quarter profits due to the \$6 million a week funneled to it by 73 other companies linked together in a mutual aid pact. The fund was established precisely to aid rail lines engaged in battles against the unions which the member companies deemed of interest to them all.

BRAC has also been resisting a national contract signed in mid-July between the National Railway Labor Conference, representing the major railroads, and the other major rail unions: the 180,000-member United Transportation Union (UTU), the Locomotive Engineers, Signalmen and Sheet Metal Workers. Lest anyone think the BRAC president is a fire-breathing militant, it should be noted that Kroll's objection to the pact is merely over the structure of the 35 percent wage package—he wants a large guaranteed wage increase with a large "cap" on the cost-of-living adjustments, making him one of the only bureaucrats

in the U.S. who believes inflation will soon go down!

Negotiations for a new national rail agreement had been underway months before the January 1 contract expiration date. When the contracts expired, right in the middle of the coal strike, there was a tremendous opportunity to link up with the most militant section of the U.S. labor movement. Instead, the rail union bureaucrats toed the line of legal requirements for extended bargaining, compulsory federal mediation, etc., and the opportunity to really shut down the country was lost.

Throughout the talks, rail industry negotiators were pushing for a nationwide uniform agreement on reducing the size of train crews. The railroads won the last major confrontation on this issue in the mid-1960's, when firemen were eliminated and new "work rules" slashed 150,000 jobs. This time around the railroad bosses were demanding the elimination of one of two brakemen who are part of the four-man train crews. Instead of taking on this assault directly, the operating unions, led by the UTU, insisted that the crew size issue had to be settled on a road-by-road basis, not in national bargaining. Such a

posture could only weaken the union's collective strength, as a strike at any one line would have limited impact compared to a national strike, as the recent BRAC strike so vividly showed.

The impasse was finally broken in April, when the Milwaukee Road broke ranks with the rest of the industry and signed an agreement with the UTU. The contract provides for the elimination of one brakeman over time, through an attrition rate of about 5 percent a year. In exchange, the reduced crews will receive \$4 per man per trip and the company will put \$48.25 per crew trip into a "productivity fund" which workers can draw on at the end of every year. By July, the rest of the railroads decided to allow the crew size issue to revert to road-by-road negotiations and the national contract was signed. On September 14, Conrail—which employs 25 percent of the UTU's membership—agreed to the same deal arranged with Milwaukee Road and it is widely anticipated that the rest of the industry will follow this pattern. Though it will take them a while and will be more expensive than they would have liked, the rail employers have taken another big step toward cutting back the railroad work force. ■

Defend Steel Militants!

CHICAGO Company bosses at U.S. Steel's Gary Works are trying to fire steel worker Gene Goldenfeld for refusing to cross a picket line during last week's nationwide rail strike. They handed him a three-day suspension for "unauthorized absences" and on top of that a five-day suspension for "instigating" in violation of the contractual no-strike clause. At U.S. Steel a five-day suspension is nearly always a prelude to firing. Next door at Chicago's South Works, three more steel workers—Jay Frank, Damon Lewis and Tom Knight—were hit with one-day suspensions for respecting the BRAC picket lines.

The United Steelworkers, in particular Locals 65 and 1014 and Chicago/Gary District 31, must immediately come to the aid of Goldenfeld and the other victimized militants. And in the context of the explosive national railway strike all labor, in particular the rail unions, must defend these brothers who are being victimized for respecting the

most basic principle of union solidarity: don't cross picket lines.

These reprisals are intended to intimidate all steel workers. What was Goldenfeld's "crime"? He "instigated," says the company. That is, he called upon his union to honor the picket lines of the striking railway workers (who are, moreover, employed by the same conglomerate). A leaflet becomes a firing offense.

These victimizations trample on the democratic rights of all trade unionists. The U.S. Steel bosses go after these militants as part of a generalized attack on the right to strike. They are worried that the example of the coal miners, who held out for almost four months in the dead of winter because of the strength of their union traditions, will infect the rest of the working class, leading to the kind of militant actions which built the mass industrial unions in the 1930's.

Mobilize the power of the unions against these anti-labor victimizations! No firings! Drop all discipline charges!

Strike Wave...

(continued from page 9)

United Steelworkers of America (USWA), held in Atlantic City the week of September 18. Speaking on the first day of the convention, AFL-CIO chieftain George Meany, as expected, denounced the government's plans for wage restraint (even after secretary of labor Marshall had tried to dissuade him from such a course at a secret conclave in the Poconos). Meany criticized Carter's recommended 5.5 percent annual wage limit for government employees and warned of "trouble ahead for every union that goes to the bargaining table."

When Carter addressed the delegates two days later, he had the good sense not to detail his new plans for a toughened-up anti-inflation posture. "To bring inflation under control, we must have cooperation among business, labor and government," Carter said, adding that he would ask for "restraint" and "sacrifice" from all sectors of the economy. Workers, grab your wallets! We have heard this refrain before, most recently from Richard Nixon, who called for "equality of sacrifice" as his wage-price controls held down paychecks while consumer prices went through the ceiling.

Carter's decision to appear before the USWA convention was not accidental. Of the major labor unions, probably no other bureaucracy so abjectly kowtows to the administration's economic policies. Though USWA president Lloyd McBride told a pre-convention news conference he thought a 7 percent wage "guideline" would cut into steel workers' cost-of-living raises, he never mentioned the issue to the delegates in the week-long convention, reserving his criticism for the kind of formal wage controls imposed by Nixon. Instead, he welcomed Carter with open arms. Carter equally welcomes McBride's no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA), which prevents the ranks from shattering the bureaucracy's "responsible" contracts with the steel companies.

The ties of all sections of the labor bureaucracy to the capitalist system are also reflected in the rightward shift of the so-called "opposition" wing of the USWA bureaucracy, centered on Ed Sadlowski and District 31 director Jim Balanoff. With the debacle of the Arnold Miller "reform" leadership of the United Mine Workers of America, Sadlowski & Co. have stood as the beacon of labor "progressivism" for crusading liberals. When Sadlowski was running for USWA president a year and a half ago, he bad-mouthed the ENA

and ballyhooed the right to strike. But the ensuing economic difficulties of the steel industry (and his electoral defeat) have considerably toned down Oil Can Eddie's exhortations. At this convention, there was not so much as a peep from the Sadlowski forces for the right to strike or against the ENA. Instead, these "reformers" trimmed their sails and merely asked for the right of the rank and file to ratify contracts. Without the right to strike to back up contract rejections, however, the right to vote "no" means... compulsory arbitration under the ENA. The Sadlowski-kites have been reduced to seeking the same status for steel workers as the postal workers were stuck with in their contract turmoil. After massive "no" votes and East and West Coast walkouts against the government's despicable contract offer, compulsory arbitration saddled postal workers with almost exactly the same rotten terms.

For Militant, Democratic Unions—For a Workers Party!

The current strike wave, highlighted by the powerful rail workers' walkout, is testimony to the desire and willingness of American workers to fight to preserve their jobs, wages and working conditions against the capitalist offensive. For nearly a decade, the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy has been able to keep a lid on labor struggles. But workers who saw their standard of living eroded by the late 1960's Vietnam war inflation, Nixon's 1971 wage freeze, the 1974-75 depression and now renewed inflation have begun to say, "Enough is enough."

With major contracts in trucking, electrical equipment, rubber and auto coming up beginning next March, the possibility of launching a labor counter-offensive is posed. The trade-union bureaucracy will do everything in its power to straitjacket any upsurge in militancy. Thus, despite their largely verbal nose-thumbing at Carter, the Krolls, Meany's, and Frasers have backed down from every serious confrontation, such as the current rail strike. Their real aim is to try to steer the emerging strike struggles into a "Draft Kennedy" movement.

Instead there should be an all-out battle to break through Carter's anti-labor wage "guidelines," combined with a political struggle to break the working class from the capitalist Democratic Party, by building a workers party, based on the unions, to fight for a workers government. Both these tasks require purging the labor movement of the quisling misleaders. Only then will the growing strike movement be extended into the fight for labor's political power. ■

SPUSA...

(continued from page 7)

Trotskyist SWP, invoke the "tradition of Eugene V. Debs." Such invocations are cynical attempts to deflect charges of "international communist conspiracy" by adopting the coloration of native American radicalism. They are also ploys to mask the fundamental division in the socialist movement as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution, harking back to the "good old days" when Debs could give militant speeches while Bergerite right-wingers controlled the party. However, the left oppositionists in the SP are probably sincere in the belief that their politics are in the true spirit of the founding leader of the Socialist Party.

In a sense it is meaningless to call oneself a "Debsian socialist" in 1978. There is no living Debsian tradition in the American left. When Debs died in 1926 he left no organized following. The left-wingers of the pre-1917 SP, who had seen in Debs a champion of their cause, had either split or were expelled en masse in 1919-21. The best of them formed the American section of the Communist International. In his later years Debs was simply a figurehead for the party's right-wing reformist leadership. The man who had once symbolized a socialist challenge to bourgeois politicians in 1924 supported the Republican Robert LaFollette for president on the Progressive Party ticket.

As Leninists we do not disregard the revolutionary proletarian traditions of our own country. The 1966 "Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League" states: "We also look for inspiration to the example of such revolutionists in the United States as F.A. Sorge, Vincent St. John, Daniel De Leon, Louis Fraina and James P. Cannon" (*Spartacist* No. 8, November-December 1966). The name of Debs is conspicuously and deliberately absent from this list. Unlike his contemporaries such as left-wing leaders De Leon and St. John, Debs' career cannot serve as an inspiration for revolutionaries today. Even before 1919 Debs, despite his good intentions, was the honest socialist face behind which the aspiring Eberts and Noskes of the American SP, the Victor Bergers and Morris Hillquits actually ran the party.

Faced with the rise of revolutionary syndicalism associated with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the right-wing leaders were determined to maintain the parliamentarist respectability of the SP. In particular they wanted to destroy the influence of "Big Bill" Haywood, who was both a leader of the SP left wing and of the IWW. When Haywood (as well as Debs) defended two trade unionists charged with bombing the *Los Angeles Times* building, the Hillquit/Berger forces responded to the ensuing red scare by pushing through an amendment to the SP constitution at the 1912 convention:

"Any member of the party who opposes political action or advocates crime, sabotage or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working class to aid in its emancipation shall be expelled from membership in the party."

Shortly thereafter this amendment was used to expel Haywood from the National Executive. In response many of the most radical working-class elements left the SP. And despite his genuine desire for party unity, Debs did *nothing* to prevent the right wing from driving out the revolutionary syndicalists. In his usual manner he kept aloof from the Haywood-Hillquit fight and did not even attend the critical 1912 convention. In fact, after 1904 Debs didn't attend *any* SP conventions, on the grounds that he hated to see socialists fighting with one another.

Among those who tout the "Debs tradition" today is the SWP, which explained their brand of socialism to striking coal miners in the Cabin Creek

area as "like Mother Jones and Eugene Debs" (*Militant*, 24 March 1978). At the Iowa City SPUSA convention the SWP was waiting on the fringes, hoping to pick up the Debs Caucus as part of its broader orientation toward fusing with social-democratic groups. The fact that the Caucus is far from having clarity on the Russian question or Leninist party norms would be no obstacle, as the SWP leaders wrote about the SLP last year.

On the other hand, some members of the SP left wing look with favor upon the SWP, seeing in it a more effective, dynamic version of what they would like the SPUSA to be: an organization capable of effectively pressuring the left-liberal milieu. In recent months the Milwaukee SP has participated in various of the SWP's class-collaborationist "movement coalitions," and currently the SWP and SPUSA are supporting each other's candidates in Milwaukee elections.

Particularly after the recent aborted SP convention, some Debs Caucus members may be attracted to the SWP out of reaction against the heavy-handed bureaucratism of the Zeidler NC majority. To such SPers, we warn you: the Barnes gang is no better. In the early 1970's a major left opposition developed in the SWP, the Internationalist Tendency (IT), which opposed the cowardly legalism of the party leadership. Barnes & Co. were coming under pressure from bourgeois reactionaries who labeled the IT "terrorist" for advocating petty-bourgeois guerrillaism in Latin America. So on July 4, 1974, in an act of patriotic bureaucratism, Barnes summarily expelled the entire IT—155 SWP/YSA members in all (see "SWP Stages Mass Purge," *WV* No. 49, 19 July 1974).

The fact that some SP members are open to an ostensibly Leninist organization indicates that they have in part broken from the anti-Communist State Department socialism deeply rooted in their party in recent decades. Some Debs Caucus members may be attracted to the SWP not because it offers a flashier version of reformism, but because it claims the Leninist-Trotskyist tradition. Such militants should carefully study the major works of Lenin and especially Trotsky and then compare the record of the SWP and the Spartacist League during the past ten years on the major questions of the day.

They will discover that where Lenin called for turning imperialist war into civil war and denounced petty-bourgeois pacifism, the SWP refused to take sides in the civil war raging in Indochina and formed a political bloc with the liberal doves of the capitalist Democratic Party. Where De Leon and Lenin denounced the "labor lieutenants of the capitalist class," the SWP acts as errand boys and cheerleaders for the liberal union bureaucrats such as Arnold Miller and Ed Sadlowski, who in turn deliver their ranks to the Democratic Party on election day in November (in addition to stabbing strikes in the back). And in Portugal the SWP politically apologized for Mário Soares' SP at the very moment that it was allying itself with fascist elements against the supposed threat of a "revolutionary takeover" by the CP and the "far left."

They will discover that the Spartacist League together with Cannon tell the truth about Debs while the SWP cynically perpetuates the myth of a Debs tradition in order to appear American as apple pie. The SL continues the revolutionary tradition of Lenin and Trotsky, while the SWP can only give them a more effective version of the "independent" reformism which the stodgy anti-communists of the Norman Thomas/Frank Zeidler SP can no longer deliver. Like their predecessors these social democrats of the second mobilization can offer the working class nothing but new betrayals. ■

Exchange...

(continued from page 5)

would provide employment for some of the locked-out workers, while undercutting the press blackout in New York, and serve as a rallying point to draw in support for the strike from the rest of the labor movement. The provision for no capitalist advertising would further increase pressure on the publishers. Were such a policy pursued by the unions, it would quickly isolate the interim papers and make it easy to generate broad labor support to halt their production and distribution.

Of course, such a labor daily would be qualitatively different from the union-sponsored papers published during the West Coast strikes. Such papers were essentially last-ditch, desperation measures undertaken by the unions after the decisive battle had been lost at the point of production and the bosses had resumed large-scale scab publishing. A policy for a labor daily must be conceived as having a bold and aggressive character, designed to consolidate the unity of the workers and throw the enemy on the defensive; once the solidarity of the unions has been decisively smashed, as on the West Coast, then of course this tactic is robbed of its real impact and power.

You are certainly correct in citing the importance of the *Organizer*, published by the Trotskyist leadership of the Minneapolis Teamsters during the great 1934 strike. This was, in fact, the first strike daily ever published in the United States, and it proved an invaluable antidote for the strikers to the lies circulated in the bosses' press. However, we focused on the British example because it involved a *general press blackout*.

Interestingly, at the time of the 1926 general strike, the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) leadership initially had no plans to publish their own press. The *New Statesman* at the time observed far more sagaciously: "In a newsless world, Governments must inevitably be almost omnipotent." The British bourgeoisie, in any event, had no intention of forsaking a propaganda arm during the general strike. The government took over the premises of the *Morning Post*, expropriated newsprint from the struck papers, recruited printing personnel from among foremen, supervisors, students, the military, etc., and published the *British Gazette* during the course of the strike, the first issue appearing May 5 under the direction of Winston Churchill.

Only when it got word of the government's schemes did the TUC make any plans to publish its own press, the *British Worker*, which was printed on the premises of the *Daily Herald*, the

organ of the British Labour Party. However, because of the belatedness of the decision of the bureaucracy and the lack of prepared coordination beforehand, the *British Worker* never appeared in anywhere near the quantities in which it was demanded.

The 1926 general strike was of course defeated, not by the greater circulation of the *British Gazette* or even by the military strength of the bourgeoisie but due to the treachery of the TUC leadership, which was not prepared for the political consequences of a direct confrontation with the state. Likewise, the call for a daily newspaper published by the labor movement is not a *deus ex machina* which can guarantee victory to the NYC newspaper strike. What it does do, however, is point the way to broadening the struggle so that the press unions do not go down to defeat in isolation, as occurred in the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* strike, the *Washington Post* strike and others. ■

Fascists...

(continued from page 12)

Unfortunately is but a reflection of the political weakness and lack of organization of the anti-fascist forces.

Other leftist organizations participating in the Brick Lane counter-march, notably the International Communist League (I-CL), advocate physically confronting the fascists regardless of the balance of forces. The I-CL, hitherto a left tail of the pacifistic ANL, is now pressuring the SWP to return to the adventurist anti-fascist actions of last year. But substitutionist adventurism is not the answer to the pacifistic popular frontism of the ANL. In a sense it is the opposite pole of the same opportunist methodology. What is necessary is the difficult fight to bring out the mass organizations of the working class, above all the trade unions.

The struggle to build workers defence squads will never be undertaken by the worthies who grace ANL platforms. Rather the fight to mobilise the power of labour to crush the National Front is inseparably linked to the fight to oust the Labour tops, both the Callaghans and Benns, and the union misleaders, the Duffys and Scargills, and replace them with a new revolutionary leadership of the workers movement.

Such a leadership cannot be built on the basis of bourgeois popular frontism in the style of the ANL and its partisans, but only through the fight for the programme of proletarian revolution. As the SL/B said in its leaflet for the Brick Lane counter-march: "Break with the ANL popular front! For working-class action to smash the National Front!" ■

Pass the ERA!

NOW: Jimmy Carter's "Ladies' Auxiliary"

A hundred thousand people marched in Washington in support of the Equal Rights Amendment last July. The leaders of the National Organization for Women (NOW) are still congratulating themselves. NOW's fake-socialist tailists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) are gearing up to redouble their efforts to become the "best builders" of moribund liberalism and bourgeois feminism, their appetites whetted by this unexpected show of strength. Preaching "confidence and unity," the SWP greets the upcoming NOW National Convention with happy cries that a strategy of "visible protest" is what brings results.

And the result that all seek is passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, a formal statement of token equality under the law for women. The ERA should be passed. We of the Spartacist League support its passage. But we are under no illusions that bringing legal hypocrisy in line with liberal sentiment will really alter the lives of women, whose oppression is fundamentally rooted in capitalism and the nuclear family.

Passage of the ERA will change the lives of women—particularly oppressed working-class and minority-group women—about as much as the passage of the Equal Rights Act of 1964 changed the lives of most blacks, whose living standards have plummeted under the impact of the economic crises of decaying capitalism. The outpouring of liberal, radical and minority group energies that went into passing legislation to protect the rights of black people was not exactly wasted. It is a good thing that civil rights laws were passed, for they made life a little harder for landlords and employers addicted to unusually overt racist practices. And they made life a good deal easier for a small layer of petty-bourgeois and aspiring petty-bourgeois blacks.

But nobody but a wide-eyed liberal would deny that things got worse for the bulk of American black people. And nobody but a cynical reformist can turn a blind eye to the way the capitalist government of "human rights" Jimmy Carter has been attacking every real gain won in struggle. From busing to abortion, the liberals' cherished reforms are being wiped away with a stroke of the pen by the very same Congress and courts which liberals claimed could become the protectors of the oppressed. The capitalists have killed busing, closed down the poverty programs, struck down open admissions in the name of the "rights" of Alan Bakke.

But NOW continues to beseech the capitalist rulers to show themselves more sensitive to women's needs. NOW has its own class-based program, the bankrupt program of bourgeois liberalism, whose first concern is keeping the oppressed tied to "lesser evil" capitalist politicians. NOW's basic strategy includes the manipulation of the just grievances of the oppressed against the one force potentially capable of leading them to victory—the organized labor movement. NOW's recipes for advancing women's rights include government

"affirmative action" schemes and anti-discrimination court suits against the unions union-busting weapons which place the doubly oppressed women workers on the *wrong side* in the crucial battle for trade-union independence from the capitalist state.

And the slickest arguments for this suicidal strategy of relying on the class enemy to fight the labor bureaucrats' discriminatory policies come from NOW's supposed left wing, the SWP. The vicious red-baiting which the SWP has suffered at the hands of the NOW leadership is ironic. For the SWP offers no programmatic alternative to NOW's pro-capitalist leadership, but simply presents itself as the advocate of a more "visible" protest strategy in support of the same classless reformist aims.

The SWP likes "visible protest" because it likes to pretend that being "in the streets" constitutes "independence" from the Democratic Party. And it is delighted with NOW's choice of the ERA as the single issue. Why? As the SWP explained to its recent "Active Workers Conference": "In the unions, the ERA remains the issue most likely to get the broadest response from the ranks and the least opposition from the officials" ("Building the National Organization for Women," *SWP Party Organizer*, Vol. 2, No. 6, September 1978).

Indeed, the ERA is a godsend to left-talking elements of the union bureaucracy—such as the SWP's darling, Ed Sadlowski of the Steelworkers, or its latest discovery, Doug Fraser of the UAW—in cultivating a "progressive" image on the cheap. These promise-them-anything fakers are as staunchly opposed to unleashing the real power of the labor movement against the capitalist government as are the overt reactionaries.

The masses of working women will never be won to actively supporting the middle-class reform aims of organizations like NOW which seek to bind them ever more tightly to their illusions in the "democracy" of the ruling class and its government. Only a program which does not pit strata of the working people against each other (women against men, blacks against whites and unionists against the unemployed) for a share of the shrinking capitalist "pie," but goes outside the framework of the capitalist status quo to pose a real fight on behalf of the working class and all the oppressed, can advance the struggle for equality. Only a class-based struggle for the rights of the oppressed can wrest real gains from the capitalist rulers as it organizes to sweep them away and open the road to real freedom through socialist revolution. ■

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Correction

A reader has brought to our attention that Roberto Clemente was a Puerto Rican baseball star, not Dominican as we identified him in the article "Nicaragua in Flames" (*WV* No. 215, 22 September).

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Organized Labor Must Smash Fascists in Britain

LONDON The long economic decay of British imperialism has reached the point where the living standards of its workers are now lower than those in Spain. Simultaneously, a significant black and Asian population, the after-effect of a once great colonial empire, is crowded into the ghettos of Britain's major cities. These explosive social conditions have spawned a racist anti-immigration "backlash" as well as an aggressive fascist movement, the National Front (NF).

The Front scored a victory Sunday, 24 September, when it organised a 2,000-strong "March Against Communism" through the Asian immigrant area of Brick Lane in London's East End. Perhaps 1,200 leftist and immigrant counter-marchers were prevented by the police from getting near the fascist demonstration. Front leaders John Tyndall and Martin Webster could boast: "We have never been stronger." About 50 of the fascist hooligans later celebrated their successful march by rampaging through the Asian neighborhood, breaking windows and threatening residents.

Did the balance of forces in Brick Lane on the 24th indicate that anti-fascist forces in Britain are so small and impotent? Not at all! *That same day* the Anti Nazi League (ANL) attracted *sixty to one hundred thousand people* to its second Fun and "Magic" Carnival, held



Tyndall addressing a rally of fascist thugs.

Spartacist Britain

in Brixton far from the NF march. In the words of Tony Cliff's reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the guiding force behind the ANL, "The sun was out, the faces of the people were bright, happy.... All was celebration" (*Socialist Worker*, 30 September). Not so in Brick Lane.

How did this unbelievable situation come about? Why were tens of thousands of supposed anti-fascists carnivaling with smiles on their faces while

the National Front was terrorising Asian immigrants?

Last year the SWP organised a series of small, adventurist attacks on the Front, for which it was furiously rebaited by the bourgeois press. In typically opportunist fashion, the Cliffites reacted with a 180-degree turn. They sought the comfort and respectability of a pacifistic, social-patriotic and class-collaborationist bloc with left Labour MP's, union bureaucrats and sundry

Liberals, lords and bishops: the Anti Nazi League. The ANL is a perfect replica of the peaceful "anti-fascist" protest movements that the Stalinist Communist Party erected in the 1930's, full of hot air and pious gestures and with all the fighting strength of a soggy biscuit.

So tens of thousands "rocked against racism" in Brixton to the music of Tom Robinson while Tyndall and Webster's vile bullies were smashing windows in Brick Lane. The reformist bureaucrats and liberals in the ANL are of course happy to back dangerous calls on the bourgeois state to ban the National Front. Such calls have repeatedly resulted in bans on *left-wing* and *anti-fascist* events. But they shrink in horror from mobilising the ranks of the unions and the black and Asian communities to crush the Front in the streets—the only strategy which can truly stop the fascists.

Not enjoying the luxury of revelling in the sun with the ANL, the East End immigrant community directly under attack by the Front reacted with a call for a counter-march initiated by the *Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee*. The Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B) responded to the call with approximately 50 supporters. This was the largest organised contingent in the counter-march, a fact which unfortunately

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Defend the Left!

SWP Chicago Offices Burned

In the early morning hours on October 2, the Chicago office of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) state-wide campaign committee headquarters were looted, ransacked and set on fire. SWP files were stolen and campaign literature was destroyed. An anti-communist outfit calling itself "Vietnam Veterans Against Communism" claimed credit for the attack, according to the Chicago police department's bomb and arson squad. More ominously, these thugs have promised more violence and issued death threats vowing to machine gun and kill SWP members and campaign workers.

The Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League resolutely condemn this vicious attack against the SWP by these right-wing hoodlums! This attack represents a serious threat to all left-wing, labor and minority organizations who are targets of ultraright paramilitary organizations, fascist groups and the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state. We demand that the scum who carried out this criminal attack be jailed and prosecuted. However, we also point out that assaults on left-wing offices, trade-union headquarters or black community groups are more likely to be met with indifference by the bourgeois state, whose interests these vermin openly serve.

Chicago police red squad unit ties to



The aftermath of terror attack on SWP's Chicago office, October 2.

WV Photo

fascist and paramilitary terrorist groups are notorious, well documented and acknowledged by all but police spokesmen, the Daley/Bilandic machine and obnoxious journalistic apologists. During the 1960's the fascistic "Legion of Justice," a group of murderous "patriots" operated as a virtual auxiliary to the police spy unit, staging several violent raids against Chicago SWP offices—while the cops stood lookout!—as well as terrorizing other

left-wing and antiwar organizations. The Legion's formidable armory was stocked by the 113th military intelligence unit based in Evanston, and these government-paid criminals even had access to an armored car kept behind their Northwest Side headquarters, a tavern owned by a prominent anti-busing conservative. Legion gangster Thomas Stewart later testified to a September 1975 grand jury that often the raiding parties left directly from

police headquarters (*Militant*, 26 September 1975).

The Spartacist League does not place any confidence in the bourgeois legal apparatus to fight right-wing terrorists. Despite countless investigations—including local whitewashes by a grand jury, court suits, high-level congressional committees, etc.—anti-communist terror groups which are aided, abetted, armed and financed by the cops and spy agencies have and will continue to target the left and labor movement.

Unlike civil libertarians who rely on court suits and pressuring the bourgeois state, the SL recognizes that no confidence can be placed in the class enemy to protect the exploited and oppressed. Against an earlier wave of racist night-terror attacks the SL called on the unions to take the lead in organizing labor/black defense. And in a statement condemning the bombing of the SWP headquarters, the Chicago Spartacist League wrote:

"The assault on the SWP's offices and threats against the lives of SWP members comes in the context of escalating rightist provocation in the Chicago area, notably the rash of Nazi race-hate rallies this summer. This latest act of reactionary violence redoubles the necessity for the left and the working class to defend themselves, in the first instance by standing ready to defend the SWP from rightist attack."