

Boycott the Phony Referendum—For Workers Revolution!

Massive Strikes in Spain Say No to Francoist Monarchy

NOVEMBER 30—In the year since the death of dictator Francisco Franco, the regime headed by his hand-picked successor King Juan Carlos has been unable to douse the Spanish masses' burning desire for freedom. U.S. rulers cast worried looks toward Madrid as successive "reform" cabinets have been unable to put together a coherent power base in order to carry out a peaceful transition to semi-bonapartist "Spanish democracy." As diehard Falangist ultras rail against Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez' "concessions to Bolshevism" and a "democratic opposition" ranging from aristocratic conservatives to Communists calls for an end to the dictatorship, the spectre of Portugal and the vividly remembered Spanish Civil War looms over the shaky Francoist monarchy.

Following the death of the Generalissimo, virtually every month has seen massive demonstrations and political strikes. Last December experienced one-day strikes in Madrid and Barcelona that were followed by tens of thousands of workers. In January the capital's subways were struck for the first time in history and the main factories of Madrid's industrial periphery shut down in a *jornada de lucha* (day of struggle). The next month there were successive Sundays of mass demonstrations in Barcelona demanding "liberty, amnesty and a statute of autonomy" for the Catalan region. In March the cold-blooded murder of four workers by the hated *grises* (riot police) in Vitoria led to a funeral procession of 40,000 and the most massive general strike since the fall of the republic, affecting the entire Basque region.

April saw bloody street fighting between riot police and leftists in Madrid and Barcelona. Timid attempts to publicly celebrate May Day were met with baton charges and hundreds of arrests. While the protests diminished somewhat over the summer, June saw the beginning of the bitter Motor Ibérica strike which lasted more than 100 days, and in July 100,000 demonstrated for full amnesty for political prisoners and exiles. In pressing for concessions from the government the Communist Party (PCE) threatened a "hot autumn" of labor unrest if its demands were not granted.

And the autumn turned out to be hot indeed. Twice the Basque country exploded: first over the police murder of

a trade unionist and again on September 27 when 500,000 struck on the anniversary of the execution of five ETA (Basque nationalist) and FRAP (Maoist) militants by Franco the year before. In the same region, Basque construction workers struck for a month and a half, and as soon as they went back Pamplona construction workers walked out.

The biggest protest of all was a one-day general strike throughout the Spanish state on November 12, the first such action since the Civil War, drawing well over a million strikers. Strike activity was most intense in Barcelona, where tens of thousands of metal workers participated; in Galicia, where shipyard workers walked out; and in Asturias, where 50,000 miners joined the action. The government responded with a total mobilization of its repressive forces, deploying 100,000 police, manning each Madrid subway car with two cops armed with machine guns, arresting leading members of the PCE and launching a general round-up of "far leftists."

Boycott the Referendum—For a Constituent Assembly!

While continuing to rely on military force to repress workers' protests, beginning immediately after being sworn in last June Suárez has sought to push through a series of reform palliatives in the hopes of striking a deal with the bourgeois "democratic opposition." The linchpin of his program was the parliamentary reform passed by the largely Franco-appointed Cortes on November 18. By a vote of 425 to 59 the Falangist relics approved a package providing for a bicameral parliament; the new "constitution"—which the *Economist* (27 November) terms "almost-democratic"—will be submitted to a popular referendum on December 15.

Even though the right-wing opposition in the Cortes centered around former minister of the interior Manuel Fraga Iribarne eventually knuckled under, the hardline "Bunker" did not. On November 20, the anniversary of Franco's death, tens of thousands of blue-shirted Falangists and fascists marched in the streets of Madrid. Proclaiming their loyalty to the stinking corpse of Francoism, they surrounded the Cortes, demanding the resignation of Suárez and shouting "We



Demonstration in Madrid on September 14 to protest austerity measures.

don't want democracy!" and "All power to the army!"

However, the Spanish bourgeoisie has been frightened by the "hot autumn" (as well as the equally hot summer, spring and winter which preceded it), and is clearly banking on the halting reforms of the Suárez government. They certainly contain more than sufficient guarantees for the right. The anti-democratic upper house is elected on a regional basis (favoring backward rural areas), with one-fifth of the senators appointed by the king. Moreover, the government has stated clearly that it will not legalize the PCE and it is even in question whether all the Christian Democratic and other bourgeois opposition formations will be permitted to run in the elections.

Some liberal opposition currents were tempted by the parliamentary reform. On the day after the vote in the Cortes, *Diario 16* came out with a banner headline "Adios Dictatorship." Aging right-wing Christian Democrat José María Gil-Robles, the butcher of the 1934 Asturias miners insurrection, announced: "We will not make a declaration explicitly rejecting the referendum" (*Cambio 16*, 22 November). And earlier in the fall the issue threatened to split the popular-front Coordinación Democrática (CD) down the middle, as the Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) initially opposed taking a hard line against Suárez' "reforms."

However, the PCE opposed the sham "democratization" which would still leave it outlawed. While the other

members of the CD have no scruples about knifing their "ally" in the back—rumors are rife that the PSOE would agree to participate in spring elections even if the PCE is still ruled off the ballot (*New York Times*, 22 November)—they are reluctant to openly break with the party that today exercises predominant control over the key sectors of the workers movement. Without the support of Santiago Carrillo & Co., who will keep the proletariat in line? Thus the bulk of the opposition will undoubtedly end up abstaining on the December 15 referendum.

However, they do *not* demand an immediate end to the dictatorship; abolition of the monarchy, dissolution of the special police forces, the right of national self-determination and a constituent assembly. The Coordinación Democrática program is explicitly for a "negotiated breakthrough" with "reform" elements of the government. The CD (including the Communists) simply want a better deal from the Francoist monarchy. Revolutionaries would call for abstention on the Francoist referendum and demand a democratically elected constituent assembly; and while fighting for democratic demands they insist that the "immediate program" of the proletariat must be to erect the only government that can sweep away Francoism once and for all—a workers republic of soviets.

Division in the Working Class

While the November 12 general strike was massive, the leadership (largely in

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Exchange on Feminist Sectarian Gala:

Invitation to a Betrayal

November 15, 1976

Women's Commission
c/o Spartacist League

Dear Sisters,

We are writing to invite your participation as co-sponsors of a cultural and political event being organized by Action for Women in Chile [AFWIC] and the Marxist Education Collective, around the international repression of women, especially women political prisoners, by imperialism. This event, which will be held on December 11 at Washington Square Methodist Church and will be emceed by Annette Rubinstein, will feature the singing of Suni Paz and poetry readings, as well as the reading of testimonials from women political prisoners in Chile by AFWIC, women who have been sterilized without their consent and without the right to free abortion by the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse, and women involved in the South African liberation struggle.

In addition, Bonnie Mass, author of *The Political Economy of Population Control in Latin America*, will speak on the imperialist healthcare policy, and one of the sponsors will point out the unitary character of imperialism's attacks on women through its state apparatus: openly on women freedom-

fighters as prisoners, and in less obvious ways on all of us, especially Third World Women, as recipients of imperialist "health care." We have also been in contact with the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, and Lureida Torres, if available, will discuss the U.S. government's use of the grand jury to repress the Puerto Rican socialist and independence movement.

We feel that the issues to be raised in the testimonials and speeches—the torturing of women in Chile, the arrest of Puerto Rican women (and feminists) in the U.S. through the use of the grand jury, the forced sterilization of minority and poor women in the U.S. and throughout the world—are clear evidence of the unified attack of imperialism on all of us. Therefore, a united action to call attention to these attacks by a broad spectrum of women's groups, demanding the support of all progressive people, would be a significant step forward in our common struggle against the imperialist state that calls for our united self-defense.

Please contact Mary Boger or myself at the School for Marxist Education, at 989-6493, so that we can get your views on this.

In Solidarity,
Juliet Ucelli for MEC [Marxist Education Collective]

repudiating the defense of reactionary activists fulfilled itself this year when USLA, outdoing even the Stalinists in sectarian venom, lined up against the campaign to save Mario Muñoz, the Chilean trade-union leader who became the target of a murderous manhunt in Argentina, where he had sought refuge after the Chilean coup. The campaign which brought Muñoz and his family out of Argentina to safety was also an important weapon in exposing the media's screen of lies about the "gentlemen's coup"; it brought hope for the tens of thousands of left-wing refugees still trapped in Argentina that their plight would not go unnoticed.

As you know, the Muñoz campaign was co-sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC), the class-struggle anti-sectarian defense organization which is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. It was founded as an alternative to the liberal/Stalinist "defense" tradition of libertarian cretinism and criminal sectarianism. For you to now pronounce yourselves in favor of sectarian defense work defined along sex lines is a setback to the united defense of the working people against reactionary repression.

Logically, the "event" which you ask that we co-sponsor should take no interest in the successful battle to wrest a male trade unionist from the bloody hands of the Videla junta, but it should salute the safety of Mario Muñoz' *compañera*, Olga Meneses Ibaseta, and that of her daughters (but not her sons)! Or, looking at another case which the PDC has recently publicized, it should solidarize with Maria Regina Pilla but ignore her companion, Paulo Antonio de Paranagua, the Brazilian surrealist filmmaker. And what would your attitude be toward the *Workers Vanguard* interview with Richard and Cristina Whitecross which publicized their harrowing account of torture in Argentina?

Your unfortunate defense-for-women-only "event" is a product of New Left multi-vanguardism. It exposes your rejection of the accumulated Marxist experience of the struggle against the special oppression of women, as well as of the traditions of anti-sectarian class-struggle defense work. In the course of the SL's communist work among women, we have witnessed and struggled against the debilitating effect of feminist ideology upon the development of revolutionary class consciousness in women. Your proposal lays bare the destructive logic of feminism.

As Marxists, we understand that the struggle against the special oppression of women must not be the concern of militant women alone, but is of urgent concern to the working class and its vanguard in combating backwardness and reactionary bourgeois ideology among the entire working people. If it is criminally wrong to pose a women-only strategy for the emancipation of women, it is equally wrong and ludicrous besides to split up along sex lines the issue of reactionary repression, where male and female unionists and left-wing militants are manifestly jointly victimized by the common class enemy. We find your defense "event" sadly reminiscent of the divisive slogan which the Socialist Workers Party some years ago thought appropriate for black antiwar activists: "Bring Our Black GI's Back Home Now."

Right-wing terror is simply not sex-determined. Women are specially oppressed, but that is not the reason they

are rounded up along with men by the military butchers. In fact, many more men than women are victimized by right-wing repression. The greater number of male militants whose names will be found among the defense propaganda of left-wing organizations is not a result of "male-dominated" groups ignoring the women's cases, but is a reflection of the real social oppression of women. This oppression, located at bottom in the material conditions of class society, means that most working-class women, isolated in their family homes, are less politically active than their husbands, brothers and sons. It means they are less likely to become the trade-union leaders and left-wing spokesmen, and therefore less often the direct targets of repression.

The women in Chile's jails are certainly tortured differently by Pinochet's sadists than are their male comrades. Yet they are not being tortured *because* they are women, but because they are class-struggle militants. Even women who are victimized because they are feminists are being attacked for their radical political activity rather than because they are women. In *Workers Vanguard* and *Women and Revolution*, we have solidarized with the defense of victimized feminists in accordance with our anti-sectarian principles. For example, we call for freedom for Susan Saxe. We have also publicized cases such as those of Drs. Edelin and Morgenthaler, men persecuted for performing abortions. And we have denounced Jane Alpert, whose feminist ideology allowed her to line up with the capitalist state in the prosecution of the "male-dominated" New Left.

The SL Women's Commission, as you should be aware, is not some autonomous "women's caucus" inside

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29 November 1976

Marxist Education Collective

Dear Comrades,

The Commission for Work Among Women of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League/U.S. declines your invitation to co-sponsor your "cultural and political event being organized around the international repression of women." It would be deeply unprincipled for an organization committed to the united defense of class-war prisoners to endorse such a shameless display of feminist sectarianism.

As you are aware, the international Spartacist tendency is actively committed to militant defense work on behalf of the victims of right-wing terror. The broadest possible defense efforts against savage junta terror in Latin America and throughout the world have consistently been among our urgent concerns. But the defense of class-war prisoners against right-wing repression can only be damaged by the sectarian/feminist "event" you are planning.

Your sex-defined strategy for political defense would not in principle

preclude the defense of, for example, an Isabel Perón, or a Nazi like Hermine Braunsteiner Ryan, who is certainly a political prisoner in imperialist West Germany. Your attempt to apply the feminist concept of "sisterhood" to defense work leaves you with no way to separate the defense of women prisoners in the torture centers of Chile from the cases of *other women who are their class enemies!* At the same time you reject any concern for the men who are victimized alongside their female comrades by the same butchers for the same "crime" of resistance to junta terror. Your defense "event" draws the sex line where it is absolutely crucial to draw the class line.

Our tendency has consistently been the most committed defenders of the whole of the working people without sectarian or factional regard (and now we must add, with reference to your proposal, without regard to the sex of the victim!). As you certainly know, following the murderous coup in Chile the SL stood virtually alone on the U.S. left in insisting on the urgency of defending, along with Allende's bourgeois ministers, Communist Party head Luis Corvalán and "United Secretariat" spokesman Luis Vitale, the "far-left" victims of the coup such as the militants of the guerrillaist MIR. The international Spartacist tendency launched a worldwide campaign to focus attention on the peril of MIR leaders Bautista Van Schouwen and Alejandro Romero.

By way of contrast, the Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) Latin American defense organization USLA demonstrated at the time of its foundation that its commitment was to the courtship of liberals rather than to a militant defense of the oppressed, by rejecting a proposal to explicitly renounce any defense for outright reactionaries (the Nazi Mrs. Ryan would be a good contemporary example). In this early confrontation over defense work a decade ago, the SWP foreshadowed its current insistence on the fascists' "right" to "free speech."

The logic inherent in USLA's refusal ten years ago to draw the class line by

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Weekly
of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

EDITOR: Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Karen Allen

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Anne Kelley

EDITORIAL BOARD: Charles Burroughs, George Foster, Liz Gordon, Chris Knox, James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

Published weekly, except bi-weekly in August and December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 260 West Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10013. Telephone: 966-6841 (Editorial), 925-5665 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, G.P.O., New York, N.Y. 10001. Domestic subscriptions: \$5.00 per year. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

SPARTACIST LEAGUE LOCAL DIRECTORY

ANN ARBOR(313) 769-6376
c/o SYL, Room 4316
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Spain...

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the hands of the PCE) prohibited street demonstrations and limited demands to purely economic issues (across-the-board pay raise, eight-hour day, right to strike and trade-union liberty) in order to demonstrate its respectability. And even though massive protests by the workers have occurred at one place or another in Spain almost weekly during the spring and fall they never linked up into a unified general strike against the dictatorship. Instead, both the PSOE and PCE consciously divide the working class and seek alliances with sectors of the bourgeoisie. It is their class-collaborationist reformism that has been responsible for the episodic and impotent character of the hundreds of strikes in Spain over the last year.

The government is seeking to play on these divisions by driving a wedge between the PCE and its allies, particularly the social-democratic PSOE (in the hopes that the latter could, with tacit official toleration, overcome the Stalinists' "head start" in the trade-union field). Thus, for example, the PSOE-led General Workers Union (UGT) was permitted to hold an open convention in April while the national conference of the PCE-led Workers Commissions (CC.OO.) on September 28 was explicitly banned and had to be held clandestinely. The PSOE congress, originally planned for November 4, was banned in order to avoid irritating Francoist deputies who were being lined up to back Suárez' parliamentary reform. However, it has now been rescheduled for late December, by mutual agreement with the government, and will include an all-star cast of international dignitaries (Willy Brandt, Mário Soares, François Mitterand, Olof Palme).

In order to aid the crystallization of a credible alternative to the PCE among the militant Spanish workers, the government has finally decided to abandon the corporatist syndicates which were a keystone of the Francoist

"independent associations" of workers, although it still intends to exclude the CC.OO.

While this signals the death knell of the syndicates, the 30,000 CNS functionaries may not be the only ones sad to see the "vertical unions" go. For the last few years, the PCE had sought to infiltrate and win control of the ready-made bureaucratic apparatus of the CNS. In July 1975 Communist-backed "democratic unity" slates won elections for shop delegates in Barcelona and Madrid. This led a wing of the Stalinists to hope that they could repeat the Portuguese Communist Party's successful coup in capturing the Salazarist "national unions," permitting the PCP to tightly control the Intersindical immediately after the April 1974 fall of the Caetano dictatorship. Sectors of the PCE hoped to similarly inherit the CNS intact and use it as a power base for insuring the PCE a role in governing a "democratic" capitalist Spain.

In its most explicit form this position was expressed by two leaders of the Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya (PSUC—Catalan branch of the PCE), Isidor Boix and Manuel Pujadas. In an article entitled "The Leap Forward in the Democratic Occupation of the Syndicates" Boix and Pujadas labelled the successes of CC.OO.-backed slates in the CNS elections "a great leap forward in the constitution of a unified and democratic working-class trade union," and argued against the perspective of splitting from the CNS (reprinted in *Revista de América*, April-May 1976). This stance raised a storm of protest within the PCE because of the downgrading it implied for the workers commissions. Boix and Pujadas were suspended for taking this public position.

However, their views did not substantially differ from those of PCE secretary Carrillo, who was less interested in the future of the CC.OO. than in what pressure the PCE can generate within the Coordinación Democrática. He was quoted as saying, the "way out of the present situation is not to call for the

Drop the Charges!

East Boston Blacks on Trial for Defending Homes

BOSTON—At a court hearing on November 22, postponements were issued in the trials of Robert Phifer, Gary Franklin and Brian Swan, three black residents of East Boston's Maverick Housing Project who were arrested last year for defending themselves and their families against racist attack.

Swan was jailed in April 1975 for allegedly throwing a bottle after a 200-strong gang of white racists on a three-day rampage through the project had broken every window in his mother's home. Franklin and Phifer were arrested in August for assault and battery as well as firearms charges after Franklin was attacked by a club-wielding gang of white youths who followed him to his

Watkins have been thrown in jail on phony assault and battery charges stemming from a July 1975 incident when 70 ROAR members surrounded and attacked a CAR meeting in Hyde Park. The police later raided a CAR office and arrested 17 people at random. Of these, 13 have been freed and two more still face trial.

Clearly, appeals to the capitalist courts, cops or federal troops (as the NAACP liberals and SWP reformists propose) will not stop the right-wing mobilizations in Boston; nor will they win the freedom of those who have courageously defended their homes and families against racist assaults. ROAR and the rest of the vigilantes will only be



Committee to Free the East Boston Black Defendants

East Boston defendants at press conference.

uncle's home and heaved boulders through the windows. In both cases the racist cops arrived on the scene, did nothing to stop the attacks and then arrested the victims. As Robert Phifer said later: "The police are not out to protect blacks."

Four other East Boston black men—Melvin Bean, David Brydie, Sam Bell and Vernard Hoge—who were arrested in the summer of 1975, victims of the same type of police frame-ups, have since been released: Bell after spending three months at Deer Island prison for protecting himself and his baby daughter from a bunch of rock-hurling thugs. Hoge was acquitted this past August after a five-day trial.

At the time of these arrests, the court-ordered Phase Two busing program was about to be implemented in Boston. Racist anti-busing scum like ROAR, the KKK and the East Boston Marshals were on an all-out offensive to provoke violence, terrorizing black neighborhoods with lynch-mob frenzy. Over 25 black and Latin families, including Franklin and Phifer, were driven from their homes in East Boston fearing for their lives as the racists tried to keep these almost lily-white neighborhoods what Jimmy Carter would call "ethnically pure." Gangs of whites cruised the projects, armed with chains, pipes and clubs, smashed up cars and firebombed the homes of blacks. The year before, police turned one housing project into an armed camp with hundreds of police and snipers stationed on the roofs, busting up meetings of blacks and arresting black youths at will.

In October 1975, eight members of an integrated, organized defense group who had been guarding the homes of blacks in East Boston were railroaded through a one-day trial based on the incredible lies of racist cops and sentenced to from six months to one year in jail. Now, a year later, two members of the Committee Against Racism (CAR), unionists Rose Lewis and Wendell

stopped by the forces of the organized labor movement and the oppressed black population, mobilized into integrated defense guards.

The Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee demand the freedom of the East Boston defendants Franklin, Phifer and Swan, CAR members Lewis and Watkins and all the victims of the racist police frame-ups. Drop the charges! Further information can be obtained by writing to: Committee to Free the East Boston Black Defendants, PO Box 8875, Boston, MA 02114. ■



Blue-shirted Francoists march in Madrid on November 20, anniversary of Caudillo's death.

state. The "vertical unions" of the CNS provided employment for numerous Falangist functionaries and were intended to prevent the formation of an independent workers movement. However, during Franco's waning years the workers commissions established themselves as clandestine trade unions which in key industrial bastions completely overshadowed the CNS. This eclipse of the CNS has become even more pronounced in recent months as elected strike committees have begun to appear (Standard-ITT, Motor Ibérica). On October 8, the cabinet announced it would introduce a law to authorize

reinforcement of the traditional structures of the COs [workers commissions]..." (*Intercontinental Press*, 15 March 1976). But the leadership of the CC.OO., headed by Marcelino Camacho (also a top PCE leader) opposed liquidation of the workers commissions, while favoring participation in the *verticalista* elections.

The internal dispute was based on an acceptance by both sides of the PCE's need to more firmly establish bureaucratic control over the working class in the increasing turbulence of Spanish politics. It was soon resolved, moreover,

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Murderous Repression Against Student Movement in Sri Lanka

The following report on the vicious repression of students at the University of Sri Lanka was written for WV by veteran Ceylonese Trotskyist Edmund Samarakkody of the Revolutionary Workers Party. The police attack comes in the context of a continuing crisis of the coalition government headed by Sirimavo Bandaranaike and her reactionary nationalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). Since the SLFP unceremoniously booted the ex-Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) out of the government in September 1975, the coalition has suffered several by-election defeats; it already faced overwhelming opposition from the youth since its bloody repression of the JVP revolt in 1971.

Since the report below was written, student protests have continued. UPI reported on 22 November that in view of a threatened island-wide general strike all entrances to the capital, Colombo, would be guarded; armed riot squads were placed at police stations. Demonstrations on public highways were banned and the government threatened to arrest all students found outside schools and universities during working hours.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, November 16—The date of 12 November 1976 will go down as "Black Friday" for university students and the working class in Sri Lanka. On that morning 3,000 students of the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya campus, and strikers of the non-academic staff had gathered below the Senate building to protest the university president's decision to close the campus in response to a strike by 2,000 campus employees demanding his dismissal for notorious bureaucratic and dictatorial behaviour and maladministration.

by Edmund Samarakkody

The reaction of the hated bureaucrat to this protest action was to summon the police to break the strike and disperse the students, who had pledged full support to the striking employees. Without any real warning the police launched a murderous attack on the students. Simultaneously they tear-gassed, baton-charged and opened fire, killing one student and seriously injuring over 60 others, including 21 women.

That murder was the objective of the police is proven by the fact that they shot from a range of only five yards. And if more evidence of the extreme brutality of the police is needed, there exists the uncontradicted report that police dragged two women students by their hair, took them to a higher floor and flung them out a window, causing serious injury, including fracture of the spine.

As expected, the police version of the story, read by the deputy minister of defence to the National Assembly, was that the police were attacked by the students and strikers, who also allegedly set fire to one police vehicle and damaged others. But this version is flatly contradicted and condemned as a lie by the students and strikers, who allege that the damage to police vehicles was the work of the police themselves.

This murder and police brutality at the university was carried out as part of the government plan to break the growing struggle of employees and students of all campuses of the University of Sri Lanka against the now notorious University Act Amending Bill, through which the government sought to give the education minister dictatorial powers over university administration, undermining whatever autonomy the university had hitherto enjoyed. This bill furthermore completely denies the trade-union rights of employees and severely restricts the rights and freedoms of the students.

On November 1, 30,000 employees and students of all six campuses of the Sri Lanka University launched strike action which continued for three days, demanding withdrawal of the Amending Bill. And it was as a direct outcome of this struggle that the government suddenly put off indefinitely the debate on this bill in the National Assembly.

It was in this context that the Peradeniya campus president's maladministration and harassment of the university community led to the launching of strike action on November 12 by the non-academic employees, who demanded his removal.

The special committee appointed by the education minister to report on the allegations made against this hated bureaucrat unanimously recommended his removal. But instead of acting on this report, the government, through the

education minister, decided that the Peradeniya president should remain, thus causing the strike of the 2,000 campus employees. The government responded to this strike with a reaffirmation of its position. To all appearances it welcomed this confrontation as it had its own plans to deal with the strike and resolve the issue—the murderous police attack.

Sensing mass reaction against the government, the acting prime minister and his cabinet colleagues sought to defuse the situation by expressing "regret for the unfortunate incident" and by sending a two-man ministerial committee to make on-the-spot inquiries and visit the hospital where the injured students were warded. The SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom Party] cabinet, in the absence of Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike (who was appropriately wining and dining with

the butcher Marcos in the Philippines), decided on a commission of inquiry into the shooting and directed the removal of the hated campus president.

Meanwhile, the SLFP "radicals," led by the prime minister's son Anura, and the Communist Party (CP—the other partner in the government) are demanding the sacking of the involved ministers and officials of the education ministry and the interdiction of the police officers involved in the shooting. The aim of these SLFP "radicals" and the CP is to find scapegoats in order to protect the government.

While the education minister, his officials and the hated campus president are responsible for this murder together with the police, the direct responsibility of the SLFP/CP government for this murder and police brutality remains. It is not a matter of inefficiency or callousness on the part of the govern-

Ann Arbor Teach-in on Right-Wing Terror in Latin America

Right-wing terror in Latin America was the subject of a four-day teach-in held at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor on November 15-18. While concentrating on horror stories of gorilla (militarist) butchery, like many anti-junta demonstrations the teach-in was designed to build support for the same popular-front policies which led to the bloody Pinochet coup in Chile in the first place.

The featured speakers were Isabel Allende, daughter of the late Chilean president Salvador Allende, and Isabel Letelier, wife of the late Orlando Letelier, a former minister in Allende's government who was assassinated in Washington D.C. on September 21 by agents of Pinochet. While Isabel Letelier limited her remarks to decrying the massive repression in Chile, Isabel Allende went further, extolling her father's regime as the first attempt to build socialism by peaceful means. However, neither speaker commented on the fact that the Popular Unity government had actually preached confidence in the "constitutional officers" like Pinochet, in the name of utopian-reformist schemes for "a peaceful road to socialism," both politically and physically disarming the workers and peasants.

Some of the sharpest political exchanges occurred in the workshop on the status of labor unions in Latin America between Abe Feinglass of the Amalgamated Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen, who recently returned from Chile, and Keith Dodds, member of United Auto Workers Local 600 and a spokesman for the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC), a class-struggle, anti-sectarian defense organization which is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

Feinglass, a long-time proponent of Communist Party politics, stated that the Chilean masses will rise again—not to smash capitalist exploitation but to establish "a government of the people, by the people and for the people" according to the principles of Abraham Lincoln (!) and to secure "a better share



WV Photo
Isabel Letelier speaking at Ann Arbor teach-in.

of economic justice." (During the evening session Feinglass clarified his thoroughly reformist position still further by declaring that the strategy of proletarian revolution advanced by several SL speakers was "pie in the sky.")

Keith Dodds recounted the recently concluded PDC campaign which succeeded in freeing Chilean miners leader Mario Muñoz from the clutches of the Argentine junta and countered Feinglass' defeatism by citing the continuing resistance of Chilean and Argentine workers. The task for class-struggle militants is to draw the lessons of popular frontism in Chile and to prepare to seize the unfolding opportunities.

The absolute necessity of working-class independence was underscored by an SL supporter, who stated: "The key to preventing a recurrence of the defeat in Latin America for the working class is the building of Trotskyist parties in Latin America, opposed to the reformists' political coalition with the capitalist parties and reliance on the bourgeois armies." ■

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ment but, on the contrary, this is only the latest manifestation of the government's on-going attack on the working class and the toilers. Its perspective is to smash the trade unions and the left movement in order to consolidate an even more repressive "strong government" of the capitalist class. This is how the SLFP leaders, supported by the Stalinists, seek to respond to the pressing demands of workers, students and toilers.

It is with the assistance of the LSSP [Lanka Sama Samaja Party] and CP that the coalition government led by Sirima Bandaranaike began to strengthen the repressive apparatus of the state, the police and the armed forces following the 1971 youth massacre. This includes the adoption of a new constitution in which the hated Public Security Act was incorporated! A "State of Emergency" has been in effect for over five years, outlawing the right to strike and severely restricting a wide range of other democratic rights including that of assembly.

The best manoeuvres of the SLFP ministers, their "radicals" and their CP have failed to channel mass resentment over "Black Friday" away from the government. On the contrary, the other side of the masses' profound sympathy for the dead and injured is wrath against the SLFP/CP government.

The student population reacted with the greatest indignation. All six campuses of the University of Sri Lanka came out on protest strike for two days, and in a large number of secondary schools students staged sympathy strikes. Anti-police and anti-government slogans, including "Down with the capitalist SLFP-CP government!", were prominent. Striking students stopped buses and painted anti-government slogans on them.

While some individual work places staged sympathy strikes on the first two days after the incident, the three LSSP workers federations—the Ceylon Federation of Labour, the Government Clerical Service Union and the Government Workers Trade Union Federation—have called for a one-day token strike for Friday, November 19. Although the LSSP has criminally failed to make any attempt to draw other trade union federations into this token strike—which failure became an excuse even for trade unions not allied to the government, including the Ceylon Mercantile Union (led by Bala Tampoe, leader of the USec group), to stay out of the strike—it is likely that workers in these unions, including the SLFP/CP unions, will solidarise with this token strike.

It is undoubtedly in the interests of the students, workers and the rest of the toilers that the protest strike be a success. But the struggle against government repression cannot be confined to this action, for the struggle against this repression is none other than the struggle against the capitalist SLFP/CP government itself. Thus it becomes imperative to link the present action on this issue with the burning issues of the workers, students and toilers—for the further mobilisation of the masses in the anti-government and anti-capitalist struggle in the perspective of the realisation of the only alternative to the present SLFP/CP capitalist regime, the "workers and peasants government." Thus, what has been sharply posed before the workers, students, youth and the rest of the toilers of Sri Lanka today is the forging of the revolutionary leadership which is inextricably linked to the struggle against the LSSP-CP reformists and the centrists in the working-class movement. ■

Le Bolchévik

publication de la
Ligue Trotskyste de France
No. 2—Octobre 1976 0,50F
pour toute correspondance: Pascal
Alessandri, B.P. 336, 75011 Paris, France

At Forums in Chicago, NYC

Myths of Maoism Exposed

With the Maoist movement in turmoil over the power struggle taking place within the Chinese bureaucracy since the death of its "Great Helmsman" in September, the Spartacist League has taken every opportunity to cut through the incoherent gibberish of Mao-talk to present the Trotskyist analysis of Chinese Stalinism. In the last two weeks SL spokesman Joseph Seymour has given public forums in Chicago and New York entitled "Mao's Heirs at Each Others' Throats," in which he placed the murky clique fight in the context of perennial revolving-door bureaucratic purges in Peking. The New York forum took place on November 21, the day after a Conference on the International Situation initiated by the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), and dealt with many of the questions left unanswered at that conference.

The hesitancy of some Western Maoists to declare themselves for the new top dogs in the Heavenly Palace is not difficult to understand. Unlike Stalin's rule in the Kremlin—where the "Great Father of the Peoples" seemed immovable—years of experience have taught them that in China, today's heroic leader may be tomorrow's "capitalist roader": Hua may well be "China's Khrushchev." They fear that perhaps they will wake up one morning and find that in "socialist China" yet another group is in power, which claims yesterday's "great leader" was actually seeking to "restore capitalism."

Comrade Seymour dealt at length in his presentation with the Maoists' subjectivist revision of Marxism. He pointed out that just as George Orwell had noted in his 1945 article on "Politics and the English Language," "fascist" had become little more than "something one doesn't like," so today in China "capitalist-roader" is partly a meaningless political insult. At the same time, however, its current usage reflects a fundamental revision of Leninism and even something of a departure from classical Stalinism. We reprint below this section of his remarks.



Joseph Seymour speaking November 21 in NYC. WV Photo

I said before that in one sense the term "capitalist-roader" is simply a meaningless political insult. In another sense it's not. It is common for Stalinists when they're engaged in purges to attack the people that they're purging as "capitalist reactionaries." In the 1930's Stalin accused not only Trotsky of being an agent of the fascists, but everybody was an agent and a saboteur. The entire Central Committee of Lenin that had managed to survive—Bukharin, Zinoviev, Ryazanov, Tukhachevsky—all were accused of being agents of fascism. This is standard Stalinist practice.

However, the Maoists have given it a certain twist. Stalin's concept of "socialism in one country" always had as a component the assumption that Russia would catch up with the West economically in a relatively short space of time. However, China in the 1960's was so far behind the advanced capitalist countries—much farther by large orders of magnitude than Russia was behind the advanced capitalist countries in the 1930's—that socialism in China had to be redefined. It could not possibly be defined in terms of the economic superiority of the Chinese planned economy or its capacity to catch up with the West within a politically meaningful time period.

Therefore Maoism, insofar as it differentiates itself from classical Stalinism, represents the *subjectification* of classic Marxist categories. For Maoists, class society no longer rests on objective economic relationships. Those who sat in the workshop on the nature of the Soviet Union at the conference yesterday saw this. Lynn Turgeon—who is kind of an honest bourgeois academic

left liberal—said: Well, you know, China and Russia have the same system of agriculture; they have the same this, they have the same that. And the RCP said: That's not really what counts. What counts is that the government in one country is committed to socialism and in another to capitalism.

So within the framework of Maoist ideology there really is such a thing as "capitalist-roadism," because socialism is basically in the mind. If somehow you don't think right, you can transform the society back into capitalism. It's essentially a question of the will of the leading figures and has nothing to do with objective economic relations.

Now, before 1924 absolutely everybody, even the most backward, uneducated, raw recruit to any party calling itself Marxist—even some 16-year-old kid out of the coal mines—knew that socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat were fundamentally different concepts: that socialism was the first stage of communism and was the successful culmination of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was therefore irreversible. It was a classless, stateless society in which there was no specialized bureaucracy, and no specialized army or repressive apparatus. It was inconceivable that socialism could exist in an economically backward

society surrounded by hostile imperialist forces, if for no other reason than that the military exigencies would prevent the emergence of such a society.

However, the Stalinist movement has so miseducated radicals that it's necessary to go back to the ABC's, to say something to which the most raw recruit to the German Social Democracy in 1914 would have replied, "So what else is new?" Socialism does *not* exist in the mind. It's a state of society which has objectively determined economic relationships.

There's another aspect to it: the higher state of communism is essentially denied by Maoists. If you read Sweezy, for instance, the lower stage of communism is now identified with the higher stage, and socialism is identified with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Still another deduction of the Maoist subjectivist theory is that capitalism was restored in the Soviet Union—and presumably could be in China—basically through a successful conspiracy. Stalin died and this scheming "capitalist-roader" — Khrushchev — took over. In 1956 he made one speech denouncing Stalin, and by golly capitalism was restored!

Now, of course, this involves the rejection of the Leninist theory of the state, which holds that it's not only necessary to overthrow the state apparatus to achieve a workers state, but also in order to go from a workers state back to capitalism. It's just Khrushchev's "peaceful road to socialism" in reverse. And implicit in the Maoist theory is that if you can restore capitalism by conspiracy, presumably you can also overthrow capitalism by conspiracy. There's a kind of theoretical justification of the decades-long struggle of the Communist Party to take over the Democratic Party. You know, maybe some day you, a "socialist-roader," could weasel your way in as vice-president. Right? They don't know who you are. The president dies and, by Jove, you can usurp power without soviets, without a workers uprising. This is where the Stalinist theory leads. ■

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Behind Polish Workers' June Protests

When the Polish government announced last June 24 that meat prices would be raised by an average of 70 percent and other foods by 30 percent, it touched off a wave of workers' protests that shook the ruling bureaucracy to the core. The demonstrations and strikes which broke out the next day were quickly contained, but the nervous authorities knew they had come within a hair's breadth of a massive uprising on the scale of those that toppled Warsaw governments in 1956 and 1970, and which threatened to shatter the strait-jacket of Stalinist rule altogether.

The full extent of the strikes and unrest on June 25 is only now beginning to come out. As the London *Times* (22 November) has pointed out, workers struck in disciplined and determined protest in virtually every industrial center in the country. Troops were brought in to man the country's biggest steelworks at Nowa Huta near Krakow. Dockers in the Baltic ports refused to load food ships bound for Russia, and the Soviet oil pipeline at Plock was feared to be in danger. The *Times* account continued:

"More importantly, the real reason for the strikes has not been made clear. The outburst was provoked less by the proposal to raise food prices than by the accompanying proposals for adjusting wages and salaries. The average Polish worker, earning some 3,000 zloties [about \$120] per month, was not prepared to see his own wage packet increased by only 200 zloties, while that of people earning 6,000 zloties and over was to rise by 600 zloties. In the eyes of the man in the street, here was yet another example of state and party officials feathering their own nests at the expense of the working class, and as such was quite intolerable."

"Feathering their own nests" is only a small part of the capricious crimes of the bureaucracy. The Stalinist pipedream of "building socialism in one country" leads to attacks on the proletariat ranging from raising the prices of basic necessities to murderously repressing the workers' protests. In order to maintain their privileged position, the rulers of the deformed workers states conciliate reaction both domestically and internationally. In Poland last June this fact was reduced to a naked economic transaction, as the workers were told to tighten their belts so that higher prices could be paid to private farmers and quality meats could be exported to the West for hard currency.

The most dramatic protests on June 25 occurred in the industrial town of Radom and at the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw—where workers tore up the main railway line leading into the capital. We are printing below a detailed account of the events in Radom, translated by *WV* from the 15 November issue of the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, which clearly reveals the resentment felt by the working masses toward the parasitic bureaucracy which rules in their name. But in addition to the dramatic scenes of working-class solidarity related in the report, the rapid dissipation of the workers' militancy at Ursus and Radom showed that the key element for a victorious political revolution against Stalinist rule was missing: a

Trotskyist party standing at the head of the insurgents.

The report on the Radom protests originated from civil liberties supporters in Poland. These have formed a Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression which includes a number of prominent socialist intellectuals. Due to their efforts and widespread protests against the repression by the workers movement in West Europe, seven Ursus workers who received outrageous prison terms ranging from three to six years for damaging state property and blocking rail traffic had their sentences reduced to one-year suspended sentences by action of the Polish Supreme Court in late September. However, the imprisoned worker militants of Radom have received even harsher prison terms and more numerous convictions in ludicrous frame-up trials.

Hundreds of Polish workers have been fired from their jobs for participation in the June 25 protests. At the Ursus plant alone, the workforce has shrunk by 1,500 persons since the strike. The Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression has reported collecting and distributing some 360,000 zlotys [over \$13,000] to aid the families of fired workers in Radom and Ursus. In addition to attempts by the secret police to disrupt the Committee's activity and infiltrate provocateurs, at least two Committee members have been fired from their jobs in retaliation.

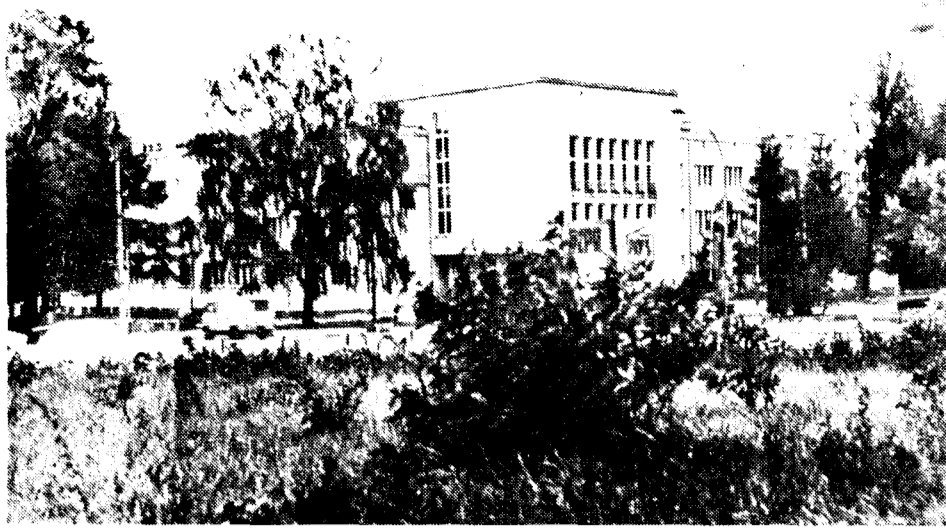
The victimized Polish worker militants need the support of class-conscious workers throughout the world, demanding that those imprisoned be immediately freed and the charges against them dropped, and all those fired be reinstated.

The unrest began on 25 June 1976 with a strike in all the factories of Radom. At 6 a.m. in the "General Walter" Works (an armaments plant), the workforce of department P-6 decided to take to the streets. Other sections followed their lead. The "Walter" workers broke open the door to the arms storehouse to arm themselves—in vain. The arsenal was empty. The night before, management had taken the precaution of removing the entire stock of weapons to the Radom military airport.

The "Walter" workers marched into the streets in exemplary order, with red-and-white [Polish] and red flags, singing the "Internationale." Workers from other Radom factories joined the demonstrators: from "Radoskór" (a shoe factory), from the telephone factory, the railway repair shops and many smaller plants.

Smaller enterprises, whose workers did not take to the streets, also took part in the general strike. In some of them, for example the factory for fire-resistant materials, party secretaries were beaten up by the workers. At other plants it was the representatives of management who received a thrashing.

The demonstrators, whose ranks had been swollen in the meantime by student youth and the populace of Radom, marched to the offices of the party



Der Spiegel

Party headquarters in Radom that were burned down by workers in June.



Der Spiegel

Workers at Ursus tractor factory.

district committee in May First Street. The demonstrators demanded to speak with the local party leadership, but district secretary Prokopiak refused to come outside. After a while, second secretary Adamczyk came out. To cries from the crowd that the workers wanted to speak with the party leadership he answered that he would not speak with a mob.

Then a woman stepped forward, a child in her arms. She was a widow, she said, with three children to raise and an income of 2,200 zlotys [about \$95] per month. Until now, she said, her wages were sufficient only to pay for bread and sugar for the children; with the price rises it wouldn't even be enough for that. Finally the woman asked: "And how high is your salary, comrade secretary?" Party Secretary Adamczyk answered by posing another question: "If your children's fate is so dear to you, why did you drag this child along with you instead of leaving it at home so it could rest?"

The woman lost her composure and took off her shoe to hit Adamczyk on the head with the heel. The agitated party secretary suggested that a delegation be formed: he would be willing to speak with a delegation. Then another woman called out: "So you want a delegation! Then you'll know whom to arrest. Very well, I'm the delegation and we'll talk right here and now!"

From all sides there came catcalls against the party secretary and the entire party. The tension was increasing. The agitated Adamczyk kept repeating that he wouldn't carry on a conversation with a mob. Thereupon a worker from the "Walter" plant stepped forward, dressed like all the workers in his dirty workclothes, and pointing to his garb said that he received a replacement pair once a year even though he was entitled to a new one quarterly. Then he pointed to Adamczyk's suit: "And what does your suit cost? Surely about 6,000 zlotys [almost \$300], if not more!"

Immediately there were cries from the crowd. "Undress him! Undress him!" A couple of young people rushed forward and forced Adamczyk to undress. The second secretary fled back into the building in his underwear while being

pelted with garbage. He fell down once, but then got up and ran on. According to unconfirmed reports he is said to have suffered a severe heart attack and was taken to the hospital.

Near the party offices a large bonfire was ignited, into which those workers who were party members threw their membership cards. When the door to the party offices would not budge, three tractors were brought up: a rope was fastened on to one of them, and both the door and doorframe were ripped out. With the aid of another tractor the demonstrators wrenched out the windowframes, after the glass had already been broken by stones. The third tractor was set afire and started off toward the building's open door; it went in and sent the party offices into flames.

Young people climbed in through the empty window openings, carried carpets to the windows and showed them to the crowd. The demonstrators reacted with cries of indignation and the carpets were thrown down onto the street.

The storeroom of the party committee's canteen was broken into and large quantities of expensive sausage and other foods were found. Everything was piled up in front of the building. Then the remaining rooms of the party building were set afire. The ground floor and the first two stories were consumed by the flames, while the third floor apparently was salvaged.

* * * * *

In the meantime, house walls in Radom had been covered with placards. "Down with the mercenary PUPW [Polish United Workers Party, the Stalinist party]!" and similar slogans could be seen. A large crowd laid siege to the municipal and district administration buildings and to the adjacent district police headquarters.

While this was going on the police made no use of their firearms. Instead they barricaded themselves in the building complex and launched tear-gas grenades into the crowd. The people in the streets were being photographed from the besieged buildings. Many of the most active demonstrators covered their faces with towels. Above the streets circled a police helicopter, from which security forces filmed the masses.

With the exception of the besieged building complex all of Radom was in the hands of the populace. People began to construct barricades. On May First Street, fire engines sent to the burning party headquarters were halted. With these trucks barricades were erected, blocking the streets to Ilza and Rzeszow. A young woman directed the building of barricades.

The first forms of organization appeared. As the barricades were being built a group of young people stood about guarding those doing the construction work. As a bus approached the young woman halted it with a hand signal and motioned to the driver where he was to park in order to close up the barricade. She explained, "If you want to eat ham, then you have to park here!" At first the driver objected, but then

steered the bus toward the gap pointed out by the young woman.

It's not clear whether he then attempted to oppose the order or just accidentally stepped on the gas pedal—in any case, several of the young guards leapt onto the running board next to the driver's cab while another let the air out of the tires. On instructions from the young woman another group got hold of a tank truck full of gasoline. As a test they poured some gasoline onto the roadway of Slowacki Street and set fire to it. Instantly the roadway was in flames and the asphalt caught fire. Then they concealed the tank truck in some bushes in a nearby park, in order to be able to use it in the event of a police or army attack.

During the unrest many military men were seen on the streets of Radom. They followed the events and observed the struggles with the police. It was clear that they were on the side of the populace and solidarized with it. In no case did they take action against the demonstrators or resist them.

In front of the party committee offices and the buildings of the city administration, police and security authorities, the official cars and private vehicles belonging to the big shots were set aflame. Following the attack on the Radom packinghouse tons upon tons of canned ham, for the most part intended for export, were distributed to the population.

At around 9 o'clock Radom was cut off from the international telephone network. Several dozen barricades had been erected in the streets. Pensioners were inciting the youth to take part in the demonstrations and the battle against the militia. They were heard saying, "Either now or in two or five years—in any case, you'll have to fight them! So get going—into the fight!"

* * * * *

The situation was unclear. According to an unconfirmed rumor, a policeman who was stoned as he drove past the party building could not get out of his car in time and was said to have been burned to death inside it. Another was allegedly beaten to death with his own club.

At about 12 o'clock the party leadership set up an airlift: the non-commissioned officers' school for police and security services from Pila landed at the Radom military airport with special equipment for street fighting. The special units arrived with army vehicles, four-engine aircraft of the "Ukraina" type and also two-engine planes. Columns of police from Lublin, Rzeszow,

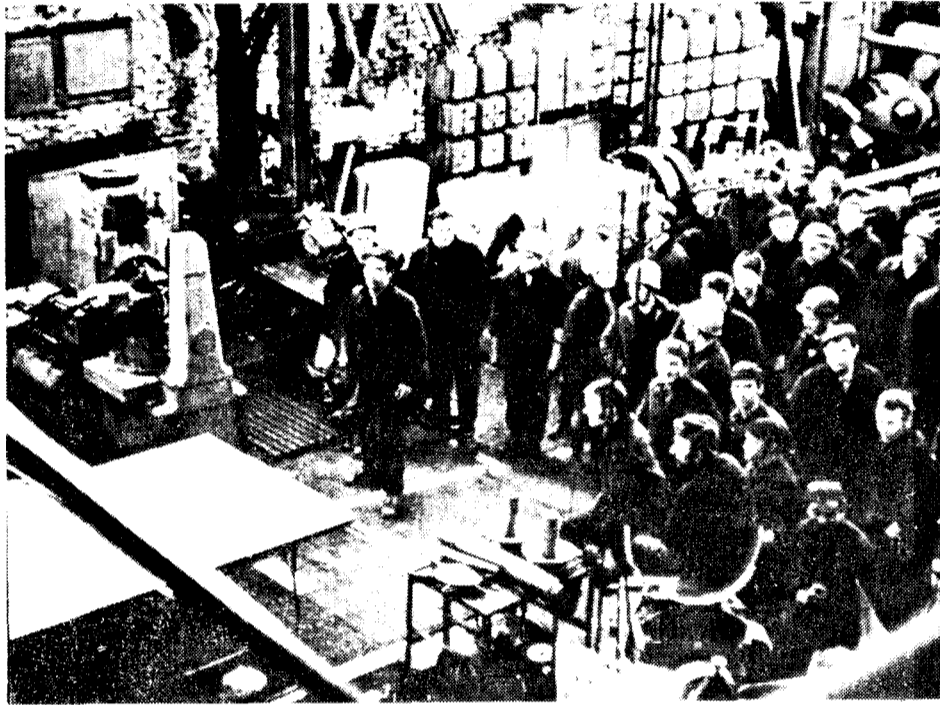
Tarnobrzeg and other cities raced toward Radom with their lights on at speeds of over 60 mph. Much later a special police unit from Golendzinow also arrived.

The equipment of the police included:

- Armored cars whose cannons shot tear gas to a distance of about 300 meters;
- Tear-gas cannons which were not mounted on armored cars;
- Troop carriers and prisoner transport trucks, jeeps and radio cars.

The militia units advanced by companies in attack formation with altogether about 1,000 men, their helmets on and with protective eye-shields, carrying nearly three-foot-long riot sticks and grenade throwers for tear gas. Light rockets were also fired into the crowd.

At one point a hard-pressed police unit was surrounded and had to form a



Der Spiegel

Warski shipyard workers in Szczecin hold strike meeting in 1970.

"porcupine"—covering themselves on all sides with their protective shields and firing off tear-gas grenades in all directions. Then a young man climbed onto the roof of a house just above the "porcupine" and began pelting it with stones.

Meanwhile, houses had been set on fire by the rockets. Toward 5 p.m. the crowd, heated by battle, began looting stores along the main street. In a short time goods worth several tens of millions of zlotys [hundreds of thousands of dollars] were taken. It can't be ruled out that the looting might have been started by agents of the security

services in order to disorganize the guarding of the barricades.

* * * * *

With the steadily growing military superiority of the police and security forces, as evening approached the street battles were transformed into a pogrom against the populace. In this the main role was played by the special units from Golendzinow, recruited for the most part from convicted criminals who are allowed to substitute service in police or security units for their prison terms.

It is certain that they were supplied with alcohol before the action; the rest was taken care of by the excitement of battle against an unarmed but militant crowd. Numerous eyewitnesses confirm that normal human beings would never have been capable of striking with such insane fury against women and even

Most of the wounds suffered by civilians stemmed from baton beatings; often a single person was beaten by several militia men. Many injuries were attributed to the gas grenades, which are encased in glass containers: the faces of people wounded by them looked like a bloody stew. The burns resulted from crossfire or from illumination flares shot into the crowds.

* * * * *

The arrests and settling of accounts with the populace began at once, affecting an undetermined number of inhabitants. Among other things, a young man was arrested for having three packets of cigarettes, although he explained to the militia men that he had bought them at a kiosk.

The activity of the "Special Courts" began as early as midday Saturday, meting out sentences of up to 10 years in jail. The most important "proofs" were statements of security and police functionaries. The "courts" consisted of one "judge" and a secretary. Those found guilty were immediately taken to various prisons around the country.

On Monday, June 28, five "Administrative Judicial Panels" went into action, churning out approximately 700 sentences a day. It is estimated that by July 4 approximately 5,000 persons were convicted by these panels. The most common punishment was three month's imprisonment and a fine of 5,000 zlotys [about \$200].

In one reported case, a woman judge scolded a defendant who had clearly been beaten—the traces were unmistakable—for not having washed before the court proceedings. The defendant answered: "Judge, you talk of washing when I haven't had anything to eat for three whole days." She replied: "That doesn't matter. You're going to jail now, and there you'll get your lunches for all three of the last days."

Militia patrolled the streets of Radom in groups of three. The inhabitants seek to leave the city using the most diverse pretexts. Radom looks like a ghost town; young people are scarcely to be seen—they are sitting in prison cells. Nevertheless, a week after the disorders, on July 2 a police car was destroyed by fire near the main train station. The militia is continually receiving anonymous warnings not to mistreat the population and the prisoners.

* * * * *

So far it has been extremely difficult to tell what has been the extent of the reprisals against the workers and the populace of Radom following the strikes and demonstrations of 25 June 1976. The number of those detained by the authorities on that day is estimated at 1,000, but it is known that the arrests continued into the first days of July....

Among the prisoners, three categories can be distinguished. During June 25-28 those arrested were primarily participants in the organized workers demonstrations, those who joined the protests and chance passers-by, such as those who happened to pass through the Zomo [militarized police]-controlled area on their way home from work. The latter group appears to have been fairly numerous. More than a dozen cases have been definitely established where people coming home from work late in the afternoon or the evening were arrested by the police who were pacifying the city.

The third category is made up of those in whose apartments the police found objects they believe were taken during the looting of the stores. These persons were arrested beginning on June 29.

In most cases, identification of the suspects was made on the basis of photographs taken during the demonstration. But it was often sufficient if during the house-to-house searches objects were found that came from stores which were looted on June 25, even if the items had been previously

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Der Spiegel

In 1970 workers burned party office in Szczecin.

small children. They were in a blood-thirsty rage.

At roughly 11 p.m. the security forces and party had the situation in Radom under control. Several thousand people were arrested. During the night, brigades of construction workers were forcibly brought up from Warsaw, Kielce and Kozenice, along with three "Voluntary Work Groups" stationed near Radom in order to clean up the streets, repair the façade of the burned-out party building, remove the slogans of June 25 which were hostile to the party from the walls and to tow away the burned-out cars.

* * * * *

According to rumors circulating among the population, approximately 17 civilians were killed [in Radom], among them perhaps one child, a pregnant woman and a 25-year-old doctor. As was the case with the victims of the December 1970 revolt, they are said to have been buried in the local cemetery with strictest secrecy on the night of June 26/27. Official communiqués in the party press speak of two persons killed, supposedly slain by their own comrades in the disorders.

It should be added that several additional people were probably killed during the investigations which followed the unrest. Several days later the corpse of a young man, known to have been imprisoned, was found on a country road.

The losses in the ranks of the security forces and the militia are not known, but it has been determined that the police delegations from Warsaw came to a burial ceremony for several security men on June 30. Some 75 security officials and militia members are said to have been injured, eight of them severely. According to eyewitness reports, the police were attacked with kitchen knives, stones and razors. Tear-gas grenades launched by the police were also thrown back at them.



Derg army

Nogues/Sygma



Derg rulers of Ethiopia; Gen. Mengistu at left.

Economist

Military Lashes Out at Labor, Leftists

Anti-Communist Terror in Ethiopia

NOVEMBER 22—Ethiopia's bonapartist military junta has executed 50 left-wing political opponents in less than a month. On November 2, Addis Ababa radio reported that 23 so-called "anarchists and reactionaries" had been killed, almost all of them members of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). Two weeks later, 27 more executions were announced. These death sentences summarily handed down by a secret military tribunal are part of a desperate campaign by the ruling military cabal—known as the "Derg" (junta)—to exterminate the EPRP.

Mass executions are as commonplace under the pseudo-socialist Derg as under the feudalist regime of Emperor Haile Selassie. Although it has also struck down many members of the aristocracy, the junta has from its accession to power clashed sharply with militant workers, peasants and students. Since the summer, its principal target has been the EPRP, which commands significant support among the discontented rural and urban masses.

Under a Special Penal Code promulgated July 5, anyone arrested for EPRP sympathies is liable to the death penalty. That same month, an air force mutiny linked to the party's influence was drowned in blood. In August, 20 peasants who had been arrested in Tigre province and were suspected of supporting the EPRP were gunned down. Other militants were reportedly tortured by being thrown successively into boiling oil and ice cold water.

This savage repression was escalated even further after a September 14 national radio broadcast labeled the party "subversive and anti-revolutionary" and accused it of "industrial and economic sabotage, robbery and acts of banditry in the rural regions, peasant unrest, propagating false information and attacks on electrical installations" (*Afrique-Asie*, 18 October). Subsequently, a round-up list of 150 party members—including trade-union leaders, student militants and members of peasant and women's associations—was issued. A notorious Israeli-trained terror squad, called the Nebelbal ("flame"), has carried out systematic raids in Addis Ababa and the EPRP peasant strongholds of Jimma, Harar and Sidamo. Several dozen young

leftists have been found shot or strangled in the streets of the capital since the witchhunt began.

The Derg's demagogic "Ethiopian socialism" with its half-baked program of land redistribution and government co-ownership ("nationalization") of industry has done nothing to stifle the raging conflicts which threaten to topple the isolated regime. Feudalist landlords, nobles and dissident military officers have raised private armies to defend their wealth and privileges against both land-hungry peasants (many of them armed) and the would-be bourgeois modernizers of the Derg. Some of these reactionaries, like the sultan of the Afars, have successfully challenged the government's control over large areas of the countryside.

At the same time leftist guerrillas control most of the province of Eritrea, and the junta has resorted to saturation bombings to terrorize the population, in the process turning many villages into ghost towns. Since 1962, an estimated 34,000 civilians have been slaughtered and 400,000 driven from their homes in this dirty war of national oppression which the Derg has pursued as savagely as the emperor. This spring the military attempted to smash the guerrillas by raising an army of 30,000 backward Christian peasants, whipped up to a fever pitch by communalist incitement against the largely Muslim Eritreans and promises of war booty. The guerrillas turned back this ragtag army in May with two bloody attacks.

With the bulk of its armed forces tied down in Eritrea or on the Somalia border, scene of a long-simmering territorial dispute, the central government has little power to stem the centrifugal tendencies of secessionism and feudal warlordism. Its manifest impotence has sparked greater repression and intensified the Byzantine intrigues, splits and assassinations that had reportedly reduced the Derg's largely anonymous membership from 120 officers in early 1974 to 40 by mid-1975 (*Financial Times* [London], 22 July 1975).

Nearly three years ago, the organized workers movement emerged as the leading force challenging both military bonapartism and feudal despotism. In a country where independence dates back thousands of years and whose feudalist

social structure exacerbates class divisions bourgeois nationalism and petty-bourgeois "African socialism" have little appeal to the working masses. The peak of the months of turmoil which led to the downfall of Selassie was a crippling general strike in February and March 1974, called by the 100,000-member Confederation of Ethiopian Labor Unions (CELU) (see "Army Topples Emperor in Ethiopia," *WV* No. 53, 27 September 1974).

Immediately after taking power, the military clique banned all strikes and arrested trade-union and student leaders who were demanding a civilian government. In October 1974, the junta's soldiers opened fire on a meeting of 1,500 CELU members protesting the arrest of their leaders. Two of the workers were killed.

Despite efforts by the Derg to put on a "progressive" face, it has been unable to stem the radicalization of the workers movement. At its June 1975 General Congress, the CELU voted to sever its ties with the traditionally U.S.-dominated International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Since the public emergence of the EPRP in August 1975 its influence within the labor movement has been apparent. On 12 September 1975 the officers organized a massive demonstration to celebrate the first anniversary of their power. EPRP supporters, however, carried anti-Derg slogans such as: "Replacement of the Military Junta by Popular Power," "No Socialism Without Revolutionary Party," "Down With Petty-Bourgeois Socialism" and "Immediate Release of All Imprisoned Students" (*Struggle—Journal of the World-Wide Federation of Ethiopian Students*, November-December 1975).

That same month, congresses of the CELU and the Ethiopian Teachers Association adopted resolutions reflecting the EPRP's opposition to the Derg and its classically Stalinist two-stage strategy for revolution. The labor congresses also rejected the phony state-controlled "National Party," which the Derg attempted to launch to undercut the opposition, particularly the EPRP.

The government responded sharply to this direct challenge. On September 25, the police prevented members of the Ethiopian Airlines Workers' Union from distributing the CELU manifesto.

In the confrontation, the police opened fire, killing seven workers and wounding 20. The airline union began a protest strike, which was supported by workers in other industries. On September 30, the Derg announced a state of emergency declaring, "Our Revolution will not be disturbed by strikes." The state of emergency lasted over two months and several thousand workers were arrested.

While repressing the workers and leftist opponents, the Derg, true to its bonapartist character, also sought this spring to steal the EPRP's political thunder through a public "ideological debate" culminating in a new program which, on key points, could have been cribbed word-for-word from the "Marxists." In place of the junta's former platform of "Ethiopia tikdem" ("Ethiopia first") the colonels have now declared their long-term goals to be "total eradication of feudalism, bureaucratic capitalism and imperialism," the laying of "a firm foundation for transition to socialism" and establishment of "a People's Democratic Republic" (*Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 27 August).

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party is an eclectic "Third World" Stalinist party, the first sizeable ostensibly Communist party in "black Africa." Under the blows of the Derg's repression it has taken up some relatively left positions and has no clear ties to any of the deformed workers states (despite occasional references to it in the bourgeois press as "pro-Soviet"). The political hodgepodge represented by the EPRP is encapsulated in the fact that at the 1976 May Day march in Addis Ababa its supporters carried portraits of both Mao Tse-tung and "Che" Guevara.

Founded in April 1971, the EPRP reflects the fluid, semi-Maoist currents of the Ethiopian students movement, especially among university graduates who have studied abroad. A spokesman described the party's origins in the student mobilization that has been growing in the country since 1965 (interview in *Lotta Continua*, 8 January 1976). Beginning at the 11th congress of the World-Wide Federation of Ethiopian Students (WWFES) there have been political divisions in the student movement between partisans of "armed struggle"—labeled Guevarist by their opponents and predominant in the

Ethiopian Students Union in North America (ESUNA)—and proponents of “mass ideological education,” who lead the Ethiopian Students Union in Europe (ESUE) and are accused by ESUNA of being soft on the “fascist” military junta.

The EPRP is evidently closer to the “Guevarist” positions, although both sides habitually express themselves in Maoist terminology (ESUNA speaking of “encircling the cities” in the manner of Lin Piao; the ESUE railing against “Soviet social fascism” in more up-to-date Peking style). What prevents the party from taking a straight-line pro-Chinese position is Mao’s support both for the murderous regime of emperor Haile Selassie and now for the junta butchers.

When the Negus was still on the throne, *Peking Review* (28 December 1973) hailed this “anti-imperialist” tyrant’s “historic friendship” with China, his “achievements in Ethiopianization” of industry and “tapping agricultural potential” (this in the middle of a famine that took 100,000 to 500,000 lives!). After the military took over, the Chinese bureaucracy hailed the Derg for ousting Selassie’s “feudal dynasty” (see the Spartacus Youth League pamphlet, “China’s Alliance With U.S. Imperialism,” January 1976). The EPRP spokes-

originally a committee of soldiers’ deputies elected along more or less democratic lines” (*Combat*, November 1975). An EPRP spokesman speaks of the junta’s arising out of “a progressive wing of rank and file soldiers and junior officers,” and points out that when Andom (the first head of state, pro-U.S.) was shot along with 55 other reactionaries, so also were six “progressive members of the Derg” (*Lotta Continua*, 8 January). The EPRP program (August 1975) meanwhile says only that the junta has “progressively divorced itself from the masses” and “Even within the Derg, power is exercised only by a small clique of elite officers....”

The EPRP’s most glaring capitulation to the bourgeois nationalism which is the Derg’s political calling card was its initial position on the war in Eritrea. The party’s program passes over the ten-year independence struggle in a single sentence, pledging “to condemn and to struggle against the military slaughter of the Eritrean people to solve the question: to ensure that the Eritrean question is resolved peacefully and democratically.” Throughout 1975, the EPRP and its supporters affirmed Eritrea’s “right of self-determination,” while pointedly refusing to call for Eritrean independence, i.e., the concrete

NY Court Messes Up MAC Boondoggle

NOVEMBER 29—Once again New York City is tottering on the brink of a financial collapse, triggered this time by a state Court of Appeals ruling November 19 that the “debt moratorium,” imposed one year ago to head off the city’s imminent bankruptcy, was unconstitutional. The court’s ruling in favor of a class-action suit brought by the Flushing National Bank plunged NYC money managers into a worse financial bind than they were in two years ago when the bank-manipulated financial crisis first began.

With the city given a 30-day deadline to come up with a scheme to pay back the \$1 billion owed to the holders of the short-term notes, it is clear that—as in the past—it will be the working masses who suffer the blows. Within hours of the court’s decision, the bourgeoisie was clamoring for yet another wave of massive municipal layoffs and cutbacks.

Ironically, it was the suit of a little neighborhood bank which toppled the debt moratorium, an elaborate scheme devised last November by the financiers in conjunction with the New York state government as the short-term “solution” to the city’s crisis. Although the banking conglomerates themselves held much of what at the time amounted to \$1.6 billion worth of short-term city notes, and although they had provoked the crisis in the first place, they began to realize that default in the financial capital of the world could trigger an international banking collapse.

With the Ford administration’s flat-out refusal of federal aid, the bankers decided on a moratorium. An elaborate

financial straits did not place it in this category.

Real Crisis Behind the Boondoggles

Behind the bankers’ boondoggles and the politicians’ shell games which have accompanied the “fiscal crisis” since its inception, New York has, in fact, been in the throes of a real crisis for the past two years—that of the inability of state and local governments to pay off their debts during periods of economic decline. Unlike the federal government, the city cannot extend credit to itself, the modern-day equivalent of printing more money. With the non-productive public sector becoming an intolerable burden to the capitalists, the bourgeoisie has been pushing during the current depression period for massive cutbacks in this sector, attempting to transfer these resources to private profit.

Thus the advent of the fiscal crisis two years ago was the result of a conscious and concerted decision on the part of the city’s major financiers to force drastic reductions in the city’s budget. At the time we wrote:

“The Rockefeller and Morgan banks created the fiscal crisis in the first place by refusing to routinely rewrite the city loans in June, then got the legislature to set up the ‘assistance’ corporation on whose board they are represented, then underwrote the new loans at an astronomical 9.5 percent interest rate....”
—*WV* No. 74, 1 August 1975

In addition, the *Village Voice* revealed recently that government investigators now have proof that between October 1974 and March 1975 the banks secretly



Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party supporters, May Day 1976.

man quoted above is forced to admit that the Chinese give technical help to some of the junta’s projects, while the USSR supports the Derg openly and “refuses any request for help from the left opposition”; the only ray of hope is that Peking has “never condemned the opposition.”

In the face of the Derg’s demagoguery, EPRP supporters have in some cases gone pretty far to the left for Stalinists. In “The February Upsurge in Ethiopia” (February 1975), ESUNA spokesmen wrote that:

“The accession to power of this petty-bourgeois military elite requires full acceptance of the repressive, exploitative and oppressive nature of the state machinery which it employed as a major mainspring for acquiring power....”

“The group of elite majors and colonels that have taken power have been transformed into a new ruling class, mainly that of the comprador and bureaucratic type....”

“Independent national capitalism whatever the degree of patriotism and national hysteria of its agents is obstructed by the nature of world imperialism.”

Another publication, in explaining why it was necessary to oppose the Derg, quoted extensively from Marx’s 1850 “Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League,” generally considered forbidden fruit by more orthodox Stalinists, although leaving out the passage in which he calls for “permanent revolution” (*Combat*, July 1975).

But the EPRP leaves the door open for supporting or allying with more leftist sectors of the armed forces. ESUNA writes of the Derg that it “was

exercise of the “right” for which tens of thousands of Eritreans have died. Recently the EPRP has changed its position and issued joint statements of solidarity with the Eritrean guerrillas.

The EPRP’s open door to class collaboration is theoretically expressed in its anti-Marxist program for a “two-stage” revolution, beginning with a “new democratic revolution” and a “people’s democratic republic” which, it claims, would be neither the class dictatorship of the proletariat nor of the bourgeoisie:

“The Party does not call for the immediate realization of its final aim....”

“In order to realize the New Democratic Revolution the E.P.R.P. joins hand with all anti-feudalist, anti-imperialist parties....”

“The People’s Democratic Republic... shall be based on the alliance of workers and peasants; and shall embrace all progressives, students, progressive intellectuals, small merchants, progressive soldiers, poor urban dwellers and their like.”

Furthermore, the EPRP proposes to “allow private business activities particularly in the industrial sectors as long as they are not linked with imperialism....” Through these formulations, the EPRP states its hope of finding some “progressive” capitalists and military officers with whom to build an “independent” (capitalist) economy with a relatively large state sector, such as is common throughout Africa.

The situation in Ethiopia dramatically and tragically demonstrates Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution. Even in this country with a tiny proletariat and a huge, impoverished

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From left: Felix Rohatyn of MAC, governor Carey and mayor Beame.

boondoggle was worked out under which investors could swap their short-term notes for a new, more profitable ten-year bond issue, underwritten by \$1.8 billion forcibly extracted from the city unions’ pension funds. Those bond holders choosing not to swap were guaranteed 6 percent interest for the next three years until they could cash in the notes.

Now Flushing National has upset the whole applecart by suing for its \$600,000 investment on the grounds that the notes had been backed by the city’s “full faith and credit.” The city had argued that it was an “emergency” situation under which it had a constitutional right to “police powers.” Two lower courts upheld this position, but the state’s highest court of appeals overturned it, ruling that “emergencies” referred to situations such as “nuclear decimation” and even the city’s dire

dumped \$2.3 billion in city securities on the market before the impending bond crash was known to the public (“Banks to City: Drop Dead,” *Village Voice*, 22 November).

The financiers’ message was loud and clear: organized labor and the city’s poor, not the banks, must pay for the economic decline. After first provoking the crisis, the financiers—unwilling to rely on elected officials whose ties to their constituents might impede carrying out the rigid austerity program—proceeded to set up an elaborate system of government controls. Through the creation of the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) the mayor’s office was placed under direct receivership to the banks.

Under Big MAC the budget was slashed, at the cost of incalculable hardship to the city’s working masses.

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MAC Boondoggle...

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The United Federation of Teachers alone lost over 20,000 jobs, while the city's largest municipal union, District Council 37 (DC 37) of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) lost tens of thousands more. Wage freezes were slapped on the union; cost-of-living clauses were thrown out; contractual fringe benefits were overturned. Equal blows fell on services largely benefiting the working population and poor: subway fares were raised; six major municipal hospitals were closed; the open admissions, free-tuition policy of the City University system was done away with, forcing thousands of students out of school.

By the fall of 1975, months after Big MAC began its work, it was decided that the draconian cuts were still insufficient and the city was on the brink of yet another "crisis." Big MAC announced its July bond issue was a failure because the "ma-and-pa" investors out in the boondocks were still shying away from investing in New York. *WV* had commented earlier on this charade:

"...the hypocrisy of the bankers is positively breathtaking. According to Big MAC this crisis (as opposed to the 'budget crisis' a few weeks ago, or the 'cash-flow crunch' before that) stems from the hesitancy of folks around the country to buy New York bonds because they think the Big Apple is soft on labor and welfare chiselers. 'No one knows who buys these bonds,' they say, conjuring up images of small investors in Toledo, Ohio, who are outraged at the thought of 'free college.' But just turn the page and you will find that 80 percent of MAC bonds have been bought by the banking conglomerates (Morgan Guaranty Trust, Chase Manhattan, First National City, Chemical), insurance companies and other financial institutions."

—*WV* No. 74, 1 August 1975

By November of 1975 Big MAC could announce that the city unions had been coerced into further "co-operation," agreeing to invest huge sums from their pension funds to underwrite a second

Big MAC fund drive.

From this point on, things rolled along relatively smoothly for the capitalists. Big MAC was socking it to the working class. But then, just as everything seemed to be in place, Flushing National wins its suit and the whole deal is off. Predictably the city's solution to the new crisis is...yet another bond swindle. On November 24 MAC board chairman Felix Rohatyn announced a plan to raise the money through another issue of Big MAC bonds, underwritten this time through diverting \$175 million now pledged to repay the pension funds and banks for interest on the previous issue.

Possibilities of a Carter "Bail-Out"

The court's decision last week sent Mayor Beame scurrying home from Tel Aviv where he was attending a conference on urban problems. But in sharp contrast to last year's bitter mood of despair, with Carter now in the White House both the Democratic mayor and governor are reportedly full of optimism. According to Beame, there is a "completely different relationship" now in which "everyone understands the importance of the problem—and everybody wants to help."

Such sentiments notwithstanding, there is still a cool billion to be raised, and by press time nobody was very sure where it would come from. The clear meaning of a 23 November *Wall Street Journal* editorial was that a federal "bail-out"—if one is forthcoming at all—will come with strings a mile long:

"The city has still avoided a frontal attack on the core of the problem—its over-ambitious range of services, such as the municipal hospitals; its middle-class subsidies like rent control; and its padded union contracts.... We suspect any help Mr. Carter will offer will come with onerous conditions, as is proper."

The only really sure bet is that the city's labor bureaucracy will once again swallow the new layoffs and cutbacks. On November 24 Beame and Rohatyn met with Victor Gotbaum, head of DC 37, trying to get his approval on the new plan to postpone payment on the union's investments. There was no objection from Gotbaum; if he demurred at proposals to sink still more

DC 37 funds in MAC bonds, it can only mean that there is nothing left to give away.

Things are so bad in New York City now that doctors are quitting the staffs of the municipal hospitals because they refuse to take responsibility for patient deaths caused by the massive cutbacks in personnel and services. So thin are the social services running that it is hard to imagine how they could lay off many more workers and still have the schools, hospitals and transportation and sanitation systems running at all.

There presently exists a felt need for the organization of a powerful resistance effort aimed at smashing Big MAC once and for all, presenting an enormous opportunity for the labor movement in a city whose plebeian masses have long been divided along racial and ethnic lines. A class-struggle leadership in the city unions at this time could unite behind it the city's poor, the minority populations, the students and beleaguered petty bourgeoisie into a struggle directly threatening the bourgeoisie's capacity to rule. The city union bureaucrats' abject refusal to mobilize the labor movement in defense of its standard of living constitutes an enormous betrayal of the poor and working masses.

As the Spartacist League has insisted since the fiscal crunch began two years ago, the attacks on working people of New York City must be met through the mobilization of NYC labor for militant union action up to and including a city-wide general strike against layoffs and cutbacks. Debt moratoriums and other useless, reformist schemes must be rejected and the exploiters made to pay for the crisis brought on by the continuing existence of the capitalist system itself. Labor must demand the debt be canceled and the banks be expropriated without compensation.

Moreover, it won't be long after Jimmy Carter's inauguration before it becomes clear that under the Democrats' administration the bourgeoisie's program for the masses of NYC will remain the same as it was under Ford: "Drop Dead!" The labor movement must break its ties to the Democrats and build a workers party to lead the way forward to a workers government. ■

Spain...

(continued from page 3)

by the organizational disintegration of the CNS, and the Stalinists were forced to rely on the workers commissions as the main vehicle for exerting their stranglehold over the Spanish proletariat.

Trade-Union Unity?

Meanwhile, the PSOE-led UGT and another social-democratic labor federation, the USO, which arose from Catholic opposition to Franco, have experienced rapid growth and sought to establish themselves as formal trade unions in the plants. Both were permitted by the government to hold open congresses as a counterweight to the influence of the CC.OO.

Moreover, during the last year the leadership of the workers commissions found itself repeatedly swept aside in the more militant strikes. Madrid has become a stronghold of Maoist organizations such as the Partido de Trabajo de España (PTE—Spanish Labor Party) and the Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores (ORT—Revolutionary Workers Organization). The PTE has support among postal workers, bus drivers, municipal employees and metalworkers in the suburban industrial belt. In the Basque region, Maoists, "Trotskyists" and nationalists were able to seize leadership of the more combative strikes (as in Vitoria).

The Maoists are by no means a qualitative improvement, however. Like the PCE and PSOE, they support the popular front (the PTE is a member of the Coordinación Democrática). And they are the equals of their reformist big brothers when it comes to sectarian backstabbing and dividing the working class as well: the relatively low participation in the November 12 strike by the Basque region and Madrid was due to the Maoists' failure to mobilize heavily for it!

The November general strike was called by the Coordinating Committee of Trade-Union Organizations (COS), made up of the CC.OO., UGT and USO. So far, efforts to turn the COS into a single union federation (particularly favored by the Stalinists, who would dominate it because of their wider influence) have run into objections from the social democrats, who prefer to build their own separate organizations. Faced with this rejection, the PCE decided to give the workers commissions the organizational forms of trade unions, simply in order to avoid being overtaken by its rivals. While claiming to have a democratic internal

Gilmore...

(continued from page 12)

always been criminally and incurably insane.

This much is certain: living on the brink of execution does terrible things to people. Few have been able to face this barbarity with dignity and courage. Among the exceptions are most often the political prisoners, who understand why a vengeful capitalist state is taking their lives. In this country, the Italian anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, who knew that the entire workers movement was fighting tooth and nail for their lives, are probably the best example of death-row dignity. In Utah, the same state in which Gilmore faces death, in 1915, labor organizer Joe Hill spoke to the entire working class when he uttered his famous "Don't mourn, organize." But the workers movement, which embraces the defense of its own martyrs, and of all the framed-up victims of capitalist "justice," also has compassion even for the indefensible criminals who sit in their five-by-nine cells waiting to be legally murdered.

U.S. prisons, which even many wardens concede are racist hellholes, undoubtedly have their share of mad killers. But not all killers are on death row—far from it. The organized death squads of capitalism's police forces have the real monopoly on organized criminal violence. And just as prison life can in time turn a young offender into a violent, hardened criminal, so life on the thin, blue front line of capitalism's security squad can turn a young class-

traitor into a hardened, sadistic murderer with a badge, or just a dangerous nut with a gun.

The cop who just shot a 15-year-old Brooklyn boy without apparent explanation (see pg. 12) is a case in point. The police spokesman who termed the incident "proper procedure" spoke more truly than he probably intended. The freeze on capital punishment did not stop executions. Temporarily frustrated on the juridical front, capitalism's hired gunmen simply stepped up their summary executions on the streets.

While Gilmore contemplates his film and publishing offers as he awaits a new execution date, another prisoner has emerged as perhaps the more likely candidate for the first execution in nearly ten years. His name is Robert Excell White, and he is a 38-year-old drifter from Mississippi, now in a Texas prison convicted of killing three people during a grocery store hold-up. Like Gilmore, White has asked to be executed without delay, saying: "I'm the one who killed those people and it's a hell of a thing to live with." He has been sentenced to die in the electric chair on December 19.

Although White presents a less sensational image than Gilmore, he, too, understands in some twisted way that his case is bound up in a public ritual in which he is the central figure. This understanding is expressed in his desire to be executed on network television. Showing just how mixed up he is—and how mixed up the business of capital punishment is with a popular culture of cruelty—White has offered as his reason for wanting to be electrocuted

on television not only "paying for his crime" but speaking out against capital punishment.

The Roman arena did more than punish rebels and feed hungry lions. It provided a form of popular entertainment. Likewise, hangings in Elizabethan England served as an occasion for family outings. In 18th-century England, the hangings in Tyburn Park were a daily occurrence, and still crime continued at a furious pace. Public hangings, like the present attempt to reinstitute the death penalty, served as a sensational diversion from the real sources of crime: poverty and lumpenization—the dehumanizing effects of the capitalist factory system, inequality and social injustice—the gulf between those who have and those who have not.

Americans have good reason to fear the increase in crime, but the capitalist system has no solution. Rather than less crime, the government offers instead more punishment, hoping thereby to hoodwink the American public into believing that severe and violent crime is due not to the deteriorating social conditions and violence of capitalist society but to permissive laws and lenient punishments.

The present media campaign to trivialize and confuse the issue of capital punishment must not divert the class-conscious workers from the task of uprooting the entire fabric of capitalist social relations which produce this savage cycle of crime and punishment. Stop the executions! Abolish capital punishment! Smash the Bourgeois State! For Working-Class Justice!

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WORKERS VANGUARD

life and the right to form tendencies, the restructured CC.OO. began by expelling leaders of the PTE in Sevilla. In response, rather than fighting this purge, the PTE and ORT walked out of the CC.OO., proclaiming the formation of "red unions."

What should be the response of a Trotskyist tendency to this rampant sectarianism? Despite the Spanish Trotskyists' implacable opposition to the popular front and their struggle in defense of working-class unity during the 1930's, the fake-Trotskyist groups in Spain today have failed to present a program for uniting the working class in revolutionary struggle for its class interests.

During the last four years there have been two organizations in Spain claiming adherence to the "United" Secretariat (Usec) of Ernest Mandel, the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—associated with the centrist Mandelite international majority) and the Liga Comunista de España (LCE—associated with the reformist international minority led by the American SWP). The LCE since its inception had a policy of a "strategic united front" around the workers commissions, pledging itself to submit to the discipline of the CC.OO. and occasionally attributing to these Stalinist-dominated bodies qualities of embryonic soviets. The second congress of the LCE referred to the "vocation [of the CC.OO.] as democratic forms of united front of the broad vanguard of the proletariat" ("Hacia la república socialista—Por el partido de la IV Internacional," 1974).

Earlier this year the LCE was calling for participation in the campaign to reinforce the CC.OO. and posed the conquest of trade-union liberty in terms of "the affirmation of the CC.OO. as a free and unitary trade union" (*Combate* [LCE], 16 June 1976). However, with the Stalinists cracking down inside the CC.OO., and after the departure from the LCE of a faction backed by the Argentine PST to form yet another Spanish Usec sympathizing group, the LCE decided to opt for "strategic unity" with the social democrats. Speaking for several hundred workers commission members who split to join the UGT, the Liga Comunista stated:

"We accept the statutes and decisions of the UGT congress and we are not going to struggle to destroy it. Rather we will

Ethiopia...

(continued from page 9)

peasantry, it is the working class which must lead if the power of the feudalists and capitalists is to be overthrown. But the working class in power, with the support of the peasantry, cannot limit itself to purely "democratic" tasks. In the epoch of capitalist decay the bourgeoisies of the semi-colonial countries are so closely bound to the imperialists and feudalists that they must—as they have in Ethiopia—oppose such urgent democratic tasks as an agrarian revolution to wipe out feudal conditions in the countryside. The victorious workers must set up their own class dictatorship, "which would inevitably place on the order of the day not only democratic but socialistic tasks as well, and would at the same time give a powerful impetus to the international socialist revolution" (L.D. Trotsky, "Three Concepts of the Russian Revolution," 1939).

No doubt a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Ethiopia would find many committed militants in the EPRP. But to come over to the position of permanent revolution they would have to break sharply with all forms of Stalinism; rather than seeing their struggle within narrow national limits of one of the most economically backward countries of the world, they would have to fight to build a world party of socialist revolution, a reformed Fourth International. ■



Cambio 16

Communist-led workers commissions.

strengthen the UGT and be a sector of its left wing which fights for unity and for the socialist society."

—Cambio 16, 18 October

It's the same tailist policy as before—the LCE is just tailing after a new master. The switchover to the social democrats is doubtless part of the increasing homogenization of the LCE around the SWP line. Where this will lead them can be seen in the SWP's slavish propaganda for the virulently anti-Communist Portuguese Socialist Party of Mário Soares.

The LCR, on the other hand, shares the Mandelite majority's policy of constantly searching for "new mass vanguards" in which it can immerse itself, thereby gaining influence while

Poland...

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purchased. So far there is only one known case in which there was an arrest for looting on the basis of a denunciation.

In the cases about which information is available, defendants accused of robbery were sentenced to one or one-and-a-half jail terms and 5,000-10,000 zloty [\$200-400] fines. The sentences were handed down in the second half of August. Those prisoners who had been listed as belonging to a group of particularly active "agitators" were also dealt with exclusively by the courts. These people, approximately 20 to 30 in number, were sentenced to three to ten years in prison. (One of these trials was reported in the Warsaw papers on July 20.)

The treatment of persons arrested for attacking or insulting policemen was more complicated. These defendants, arrested during June 25-28, were in most cases let go after 48 hours, only to be rearrested the next day or often several days later. Brought before an "Administrative Judicial Panel," they were sentenced to two to three months imprisonment, and in many cases an additional fine of 2,000-3,000 zlotys [\$80-120]. However, beginning in the middle of August the same persons were brought before the Radom Regional Court for the same accusations; this time they received sentences of two to four years' imprisonment, and often additional fines of up to 5,000 zlotys [\$200]....

All those imprisoned were brutally treated when arrested or during the course of interrogation by the militia. As a result of the tortures during the questioning, one of the workers died. At some point after June 25, Father Roman Kotlarz was beaten to death by unknown assailants; he was the hospital priest at the psychiatric hospital and head of the Pelgow priory near Radom. As the blood was flowing during the workers demonstration he had granted absolutions to those in danger of dying. For this he was later questioned on the accusation of having blessed the demonstrators. Some time thereafter, the cleaning woman found the door to his apartment broken in, the room demolished and the priest unconscious, with clear evidence that he had been beaten. Shortly after being admitted to the hospital he died without ever regaining consciousness.... ■

bypassing (instead of struggling to defeat) the traditional misleaders of the working class. While the LCE refused, almost as a matter of principle, to undertake labor activity outside the framework of the CC.OO., the LCR for a long time sought to simply go around the workers commissions wherever they were dominated by the Stalinists.

Currently the LCR calls abstractly for a "constituent trade-union congress," then adds significantly, "where one could join with revolutionary Marxists, members of MC [Movimiento Comunista, Maoist syndicalists], Bandera Roja [remnants of a 1960's PSUC split toward militant syndicalism] and other currents" (*Rouge*, 24 October 1976). In other words, what the LCR wants is a Spanish equivalent of the Portuguese Revolutionary United Front (FUR), which enabled the Mandelite LCI to "unite" with similar currents... around a program of support to the popular front!

As for the megalomaniacal Partido Obrero Revolucionario de España (PORE—Revolutionary Workers Party of Spain), which is linked international-



jsch/Cambio 16

Social-democratic labor federation (USO).

ly to the Vargaite LIRQI and claims to be second only to the Communist Party in influence among the Spanish workers (!), they are now seeking salvation in the CNT—the decrepit vestige of the Anarchist trade union: "... the problem of independent class trade unions as well as that of trade-union unity will be resolved by clearly putting forward the perspective of a constituent congress of the CNT, whose immediate task can be nothing other than demolishing fascism

SL/MEC Exchange...

(continued from page 2)

the party, nor do we consider work among women to be simply "women's work." You must have realized when you addressed your letter to us that the men and women who make up this special body of the SL could only be repelled by the politics of an exclusivist defense of women-only victims of political repression, and by your "dear sisters" letter's references to "all of us," and "our united self-defense" when what is meant is only the women, while our class brothers as well as sisters are being hounded, imprisoned, maimed and murdered. We must say frankly that our sympathies are not with your "event" but with all of those working-class militants who face the truncheon and the electrode, who sit in filthy prison cells listening for the approach of the sadistic torturers who beat and rape, "interrogate" and kill. It is symptomatic of the pitiful weakness of the U.S. left in general, and the self-indulgent parochialism of U.S. feminism in particular, that a suicidal strategy such as yours can deflect the urgent need for a united defense of all victims of right-wing terror.

Fraternally,
SL Central Committee Commission for Work Among Women

and its CNS" (*Quatrième Internationale* [LIRQI], 8 July 1976). The CNT, however, largely liquidated into the corporatist CNS some years ago, so that all the PORE can appeal to are the magic initials and the treacherous role played by the CNT leadership in the Civil War.

Which Way Forward?

The destruction of the *verticalista* CNS, as the result of powerful independent struggles waged by the Spanish workers, is an important step toward proletarian independence and unity. But today the Spanish working class is increasingly divided into numerous competing union formations, each dominated by a particular political tendency. Trotskyists seek to overcome this division by posing the formation of a unitary organization of the working class, whose leadership is recallable at any time and which is governed by the fullest workers democracy, including the right to form tendencies. Thus rather than calling for a negotiated arrangement between the bureaucratic misleaders of the existing trade-union formations, Trotskyists pose the need for a democratic congress based on elections at the base and in delegated bodies, such as the elected strike committees which have sprung up during several struggles.

Trotskyists are supporters of trade-union unity, but in the current turbulent pre-revolutionary conditions of Spain to focus agitation on forming a labor federation—a body which, like unions generally, limits itself to "guerrilla warfare against the effects of the existing system" (Marx)—is to accept the reformists' perspective of a peaceful transition from Francoist dictatorship to bourgeois democracy. Rather what is needed is the unification of the existing clandestine workers organizations (and new forms—strike committees, factory councils) into a framework that can become an organ of dual power, i.e., a workers soviet, and vehicle for revolutionary struggle.

In pre-revolutionary periods in countries where bourgeois-democratic conditions have been prevalent, soviets will rarely arise on the organizational foundations of the existing trade unions, which are dominated by an entrenched trade-union bureaucracy firmly committed to maintaining capitalist rule. But under conditions of decades-long corporatist dictatorship in Spain the clandestine "unions" have been unable to consolidate a powerful bureaucracy, much as the Stalinists would have liked to do so. Even though the PCE dominates the leadership of the workers commissions, these bodies are so fluid that it would not be impossible for the CC.OO. to become transformed into soviets under the impact of a revolutionary mass upsurge. But for revolutionaries to call for the CC.OO. to transform themselves instead into a full-fledged trade union is to stand in the way of this historical possibility.

— No to the popular front—For working-class unity through soviets!

— For a Spanish Trotskyist party, section of the reborn Fourth International!

— For a workers republic in Spain—For a soviet federation of the Iberian peninsula in a socialist united states of Europe!

Quebec: Which Way Forward for the Working Class?

Speaker: John Masters,
Central Committee
Trotskyist League of Canada,
Editor of *Spartacist Canada*

December 11 7:30 PM
Lehman Auditorium, Altschul Hall,
Barnard College (116th and Broadway)
For more information call: (212) 925-5665

NEW YORK

WORKERS VANGUARD

Jail the Killer Cop!

Point-Blank Racist Murder in NYC

The brutal point-blank killing of a 15-year-old black youth by a cop Thanksgiving evening sparked a series of protest demonstrations in New York City. The youth, Randolph Evans, was standing outside his Brooklyn apartment building talking with neighbors when five policemen who had been investigating a family dispute passed him on their way out of the housing project. When Evans asked one of them, Robert Torsney, if he had come from the apartment on the second floor, Torsney reportedly replied, "That's right," and then pulled his revolver and shot the boy in the head. The *New York Post* reported November 26 that sources heard Torsney say, "I just shot him...I don't know why."

Witnesses say that Evans' mother, Annie Brannon, was thrown out of the front seat of the patrol car by one policeman when she tried to accompany her son to the hospital. Glen Brannon, Evans' stepfather, was kicked in the groin, forced out of the patrol car and told to follow along in his own car.

Had it been the other way around, the youth would be in jail now with an impossible bail, facing "murder one" charges and a probable death sentence. But the cop was back on the streets the next day on \$20,000 bail and charged only with second-degree murder. Chief Patrolmen's Benevolent Association counsel Edward Rappaport argued at the bail hearing that Torsney "used proper police procedure" in the shooting incident (*New York Times*, November 27).

Assistant District Attorney Farkas declared: "This is the most tragic and senseless killing I've seen in almost five years that I've been handling homicides." But it is not so senseless from the point of view of the cops. Torsney is a fatigued member in the front lines of the cops' race war on New York's black population. That he, upon seeing a young black face, found himself apparently compelled to shoot it is the result of long conditioning of capitalism's hired thugs—racism transformed into reflex. The authorities are simply embarrassed that Torsney deviated from the standard practice of shooting down blacks while they are "attempting to escape," and murdered Evans head on and in front of witnesses.

The Spartacist League protests this outrage—a typical example of the murderous cop "justice" being dispensed in cities throughout the U.S. Killer cop Robert Torsney must be jailed immediately and prosecuted for this wanton murder! The trigger-happy police must be disarmed before their racist disregard for the lives of black people leads to still more vile killings.

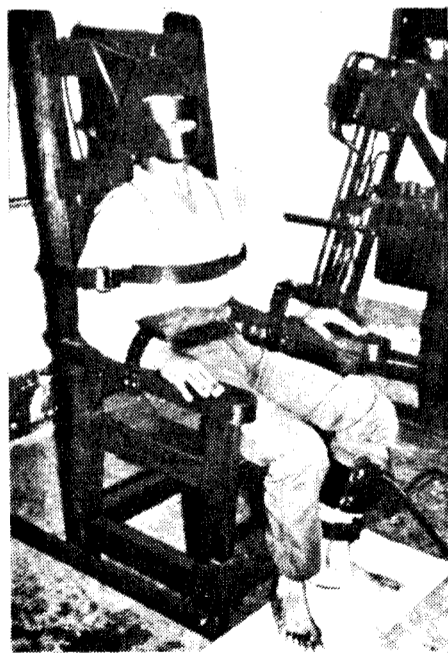
Bread, Circuses and the Death Penalty

Stop the Legal Murder of Gary Gilmore!

"Death Wish" blares the cover of *Newsweek*. And staring up from nearly every newsstand in America is a picture of Gary Mark Gilmore, a convicted murderer who claims that he wants to die. His pitch is painfully simple: "I've been sentenced to die, I accept that. Let's do it."

The mass media have titillated the public for weeks with detailed accounts of the case: Gilmore's proposed death-house marriage to Nicole Barrett; their apparent attempt at simultaneous suicide; his poetry anticipating his death with artless morbidity and Platonic delight: his "soul," he writes, "is screaming to vacate this ugly house." The sensationalism of the Gilmore case obscures what is actually at stake in the controversy over capital punishment: punitive legal *murder* by the bourgeois state.

On July 2 the United States Supreme Court ruled that capital punishment does not violate the Constitution's prohibition of "cruel and unusual punishment." This decision unblocks the execution of the nearly 600 prisoners, most of them black and poor, confined to death rows across the



Execution in Mississippi, 1940

country. For these and untold numbers of others not yet sentenced, Gilmore's execution would be a fatal precedent in the application of the death penalty.

The problem for the proponents of capital punishment is that somebody has to be first. Between the judges' legal arguments, the criminologists' specious statistics, the philosophers' moralizing, somebody has to get it first. And when the state actually straps its first victim into the chair, places the electrodes on the head and left leg and shoots 18,000 volts into a spasmodic body, a large portion of the American public is likely to be nauseated. Those who are anxious to get the gas chambers, hangings and firing squads going again must welcome



such a willing victim as Gary Gilmore and the media's fascination with what it calls his "rage to die." But the executioners, governors and wardens are still haunted by the ghost of Caryl Chessman, and they do not want to see the protesting abolitionists at their doorstep. (Nowhere to be found among those protestors are the hypocritical "right-to-life" reactionaries who scream so loudly for the unborn fetus' "right" to live, at the expense of pregnant women, but seemingly have no qualms about the state's "right" to kill.)

Capital Punishment Is Not Euthanasia

From the time of his conviction, Gilmore has demanded the death penalty. When his lawyers managed to get a stay of execution for him, he fired them and replaced them with Dennis Boaz, an unpublished writer, who agrees with Gilmore that to *delay* his execution is a "cruel and unusual punishment."

Despite Boaz's best efforts to get his client killed, however, the execution was postponed pending a decision by the State Board of Pardons, headed by George W. Latimer, the organizer of the campaign to save the life of mass murderer Lt. Calley.

Gilmore's demands have led to a rush to judgment by much of the liberal press: Gilmore wants to die; he is better off dead; let him die. The media's cynical sensationalism helps to confuse Gilmore's wish for suicide at the government's hands with the question of *capital punishment*; to view his execution as a kind of euthanasia administered by a benign force. Thus, Cold War liberals Max Lerner and James Wechsler have written pages of drivel defending Gilmore's right to "die like a man." Notorious red-baiter Lerner (*New York Post*, 15 November) notes that Gilmore believes in the Mormon doctrine of "blood atonement" and reincarnation. With a "logic" that Lewis Carroll's Red Queen would understand, Lerner argues that "I see no reason why we shouldn't respect his plea for carrying out the processes of justice when we accede to so

many pleas to postpone them." Finally, Lerner waxes philosophical: "A feeling for the creativeness and affirmation of life can go along with a feeling that death is inevitably part of it. If we come to terms with death we have a better chance for celebrating life." In other words, Gilmore should be executed so that Lerner can "celebrate" life.

But legal murder at the hands of the capitalist state has nothing to do with euthanasia or suicide or whether or not Gary Gilmore really wants to die. Unleashing the death apparatus of the bourgeois state on Gilmore and untold others is the issue.

The argument that it would be "more humane" to kill Gilmore than to keep him in jail also misses the point. It is certainly true that life in prison is agonizing (Gilmore has spent 18 years in jail) and also that once the death sentence seems assured many condemned prisoners beg to get it over with. The last convict executed in the U.S., Luis Jose Monge, told a judge in 1963, "I want to get it over with as soon as I can." He died in a Colorado gas chamber four years later. But far from being an argument for the "humanness" of the death penalty, this is a comment on the cruelty and barbarity of U.S. prison "justice."

In the fifteenth century, English penal codes were reformed to permit the substitution of "pressing" for starvation as the punishment for those who refused to plead either guilty or not guilty. Pressing consisted of heaping weights upon the prisoner until he was crushed to death. In the middle of the seventeenth century a further reform allowed a man who was pressed to death to have his friends jump up and down on him, adding their weight to the iron and stones bearing down on him and thus hastening his death. Within that context, this was undoubtedly a humane act of sorts.

Whether or not Gary Gilmore kills *himself* is not a problem for socialists. But whether or not the capitalist state kills a prisoner is. The fact that Gilmore would apparently rather die than go on living in prison under the threat of death is not an argument for the relative kindness of the death penalty. It is a powerful argument against this barbaric form of torture.

Mad Killers Not All on Death Row

Gary Gilmore's warden describes him as "a sick chicken," and much of the media coverage has been directed at Gilmore the "sociopath." His poetry and drawings are analyzed for hidden and not-so-hidden symbols of death and destruction. In general, the impact of all the speculation is that Gilmore has

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