

# 4 SPARTACIST

CANADA SEPTEMBER 1978 No.29 25¢

## For a Joint CUPW/LCUC Strike

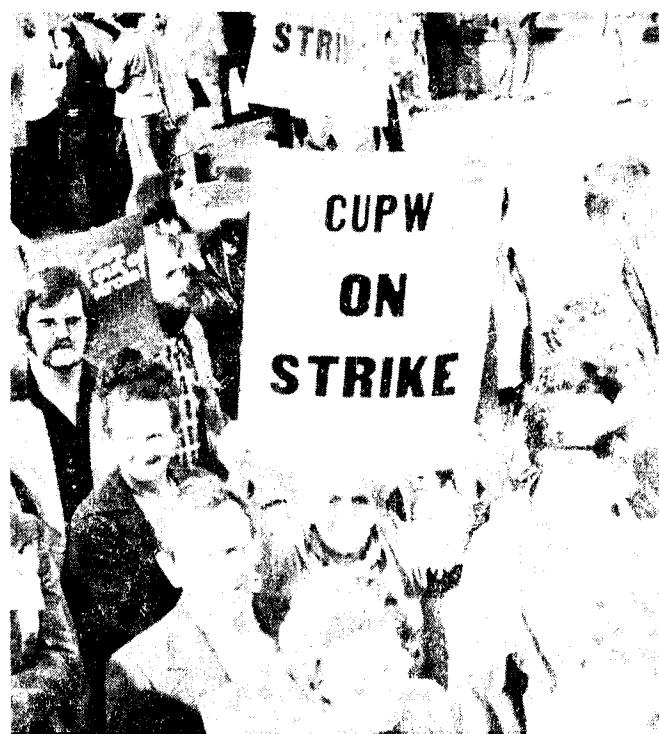
# SHUT DOWN THE POST OFFICE!

After a record-breaking four months of conciliation talks, Jean-Claude Parrot, the national president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), announced on August 17 that he had no choice but to seek "recourse" to "legal" strike action. Parrot, the "enfant terrible" of the bourgeois media, is a left-talking, do-nothing demagogue who has left his membership stranded for 14 months without a contract. Strike rumblings have also emanated from Parrot's more "moderate" counterparts in the Letter Carriers Union of Canada (LCUC) which is also without a contract and has just ended its own round of closeted negotiations with the government with no settlement in sight. Faced with the real possibility of strikes by Canada's two largest postal unions, Postmaster General Gilles Lamontagne immediately announced his readiness to seek legislation to outlaw a strike and to order postal workers back to work.

The government is at present gearing up for a major anti-labor offensive aimed at public service workers and particularly the postal unions. The postal union tops have little appetite for launching a nationwide strike--for they know that such a strike would necessarily turn into a major showdown with the Trudeau government. But the government isn't even giving the bureaucrats enough room for a sell-out that they could sell to the postal ranks. Among postal workers discontent is widespread and mounting. Over the past year they have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to take on the postal bosses in local job actions.

### LCUC TOPS SABOTAGE TORONTO DRIVERS STRIKE

Management has warmed up for the coming showdown in the Post Office by constant violations of the contract and work rules. In the absence of a nationwide mobilization of postal workers, the more militant and combative sections of the work-



CUPW STRIKE NOVEMBER 1975

SC Photo

force have been forced to go it alone in isolated local job actions. In the past several months in almost every major Canadian city there have been postal worker walkouts. Literally scores of shop stewards and other local union officials have been fired or suspended in a systematic attempt by the government to demoralize the unions as contract negotiations drag on.

In July, the postal drivers of Toronto LCUC Local 1 hit the bricks over the suspension of LCUC members who refused to drive unsafe trucks and work under hazardous conditions. For the first

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Inside: Dimitrov to Hoxha: Stalinist Ideologues of Social Chauvinism Part 1/page 8

# What is Charles Gagnon Afraid Of?

In Struggle!  
Montreal  
26 April

Attention: Central Committee

Dear Comrades:

At your "public" meeting on the "Quebec national question" held April 16 in Toronto, In Struggle! Secretary-General Charles Gagnon stated that your organization would consider a proposal for a debate between In Struggle! and the Trotskyist League. In all likelihood, this was little more than a demagogic and disingenuous ploy to cover for his silencing a Trotskyist League supporter during the discussion period, and for the earlier exclusion of known members and supporters of the Trotskyist League from attending the meeting. Nonetheless, since your Secretary-General has implicitly reaffirmed your formal position--unique among Maoist organizations in Canada--that there is nothing "in principle" wrong with debating Trotskyists, the Trotskyist League takes the opportunity to challenge In Struggle! to a debate. This would provide a unique opportunity for an open political confrontation between Trotskyism and those who claim the legacy of Stalin and Mao.

We note that your new practice of excluding Trotskyists from your meetings coincides with your discovery that the Trotskyist League's politics provide a qualitatively greater challenge to your orthodox Leninist pretensions than do those of the inveterate opportunists of the fake-Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League and the Socialist Workers Group of Quebec. Given your stated conviction that Trotskyism can be "ideologically defeated" by your eclectic and heterodox brand of Mao/Stalinism, you should welcome this challenge to do battle with the Trotskyism of the Canadian sympathizing section of the international Spartacist tendency, the only contemporary expression of authentic Marxism-Leninism. A debate on China would be most illuminating, given your lack of clarity on the topic, but we are of course prepared to debate In Struggle! on any question of interest to the left and labor movement.

We hope you will consider and accept our proposal and that we will receive a speedy reply so that the necessary preparations can be made.

For political clarity,  
Murray Smith  
for the Political Bureau  
Trotskyist League of Canada

Trotskyist League  
Attn.: Murray Smith, P. B.  
Toronto  
23 June

Re: Public debate

Sir,

In response to your letter of April 26, 1978, we want to inform you that we are not interested to participate in a public debate with your organization called the Trotskyist League of Canada because we do not want to give--even if indirectly--any credibility to a groupuscule which, to our knowledge has not won any on the basis of its own work, and which, in our opinion, does not deserve any to say the least.

You are, by the way, the fifth so-called left organization to try this trick in the last few years that is to try to get some credit through some kind of public association with IN STRUGGLE! You come after the C. P. C. (m.-l.) which asked for electoral support in 1975, after the Bolchevik Union which stucked to us for many months pretending to have a right to speak everywhere we were, after the C. C. L. (m.-l.) which wanted to debate publicly with IN STRUGGLE! and nobody else, after the Revolutionary Workers League which, in Quebec at least, would like--as yourselves--to debate publicly with us.

We rejected all those past invitations as we reject yours for the same reason: it is not our task to encourage the dissemination of reactionary and counter-revolutionary positions. However, our position does not mean that we will refuse to struggle if we have to face Trotskyists in particular occasions as we did on a few occasions in Quebec when unions invited IN STRUGGLE! and Trotskyists to present their views in public meetings. We then considered that if these unions thought that trotskyist positions had to be taken into consideration it was our duty to accept their invitation and debate publicly to convince them that they should not compose [sic] with consolidated

## SPARTACIST CANADA

Published by the SPARTACIST CANADA PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION, Box 6867 Station A, Toronto, Ontario

Editor: Tom Riley                      Circulation Manager: C. Ames  
Production Manager: R. Kirk        Business Manager: M. Smith

Signed articles do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.  
Printed in a union shop by union labor.

opportunism, with genuine scissionism.

This is not the case with your invitation; therefore, we reject your proposal.

Charles Gagnon  
Secretary General of IN STRUGGLE!

In Struggle!  
Montreal  
24 July

Attention: Charles Gagnon, Secretary General

Comrade:

Your cowardly refusal to accept our challenge to a public debate on China or "any question of interest to the left and labor movement," while hardly surprising in light of IS!'s record of political exclusionism, clearly exposes the hollowness of your invitation to propose such a debate, issued at a Toronto forum on April 16. This suggestion is now revealed as a simple maneuver to excuse your unjustifiable anti-democratic suppression of debate.

The flimsy, evasive and transparently self-serving "reasons" which you advance in your letter of 23 June for avoiding this debate only demonstrate In Struggle!'s indifference to anything which does not impinge directly upon its economist "Struggles" in splendid isolation on the northern fringe of the U. S. in the 1970's. In your letter you claim "we are not interested to participate in a public debate with your organization called the Trotskyist League of Canada because we do not want to give--even if indirectly--any credibility to a groupuscule which, to our knowledge has not won any on the basis of its own work, and which, in our opinion, does not deserve any to say the least."

While the Trotskyist League of Canada is today only a small propaganda group, it is part of an international tendency fighting to reestablish in the workers movement of all countries the ideals, traditions and program of the early Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky which were corrupted and destroyed under Stalin. Your empty, ritualistic mutterings about the "unity of Marxist-Leninists" aside, it is the manifest national parochialism of IS! which permits it to ignore the international Spartacist tendency. Parenthetically, it is laughable to be accused of "scissionism" when the so-called Marxist-Leninists to whom you appeal--from the feuding bureaucratic cliques in China and Albania to the kaleidoscopic collection of hundreds of tiny Maoist sects scattered around the globe--are locked in fierce combat.

You admit of one exception to your policy: "when unions invited IN STRUGGLE! and Trotskyists to present their views in public meetings." This appeal to the "masses" to decide what are the important questions and viewpoints to be debated

is mere demagogy. Nonetheless we can assure you that if you succeed in holding together an organization on the basis of such ill-defined and contradictory politics, you will be forced to confront our revolutionary policies in the trade unions. In several unions in the U. S., supporters of the Spartacist League (SL) have for years provided the only real opposition, however small their forces, to the treacherous class-collaborationist policies of the hidebound labor bureaucracy. To give but one example, last May candidates of the Militant-Solidarity Caucus in the National Maritime Union, a class-struggle opposition politically supported by the SL, placed second in elections for national office with ten percent of the vote among active seamen.

Free and open discussion of the competing views in the workers movement is imperative if the working class is to choose the program and leader-

(continued on page 7)

## Levesque's Labor Lieutenants?

Montreal  
16 July

Comrades:

... Even though I agree with the contents of the article, I find the title "Lévesque's Labor Lieutenants Push 'Socialist' Nationalism" in Spartacist Canada, June 1978, is misleading. The Quebec union bureaucracy is not homogeneous. It is only a weak part of the bureaucracy which actually pushes in that direction. It seems to me that with the approach of the referendum, the dominant tendency within the bureaucracy is to "put the leftist rhetoric back into cold storage."

I do not consider myself competent to analyze the cleavages in the Quebec union bureaucracy, but this analysis is necessary: (1) to understand the fundamental tendency of the bureaucracy; (2) to understand the reasons which lead certain bureaucrats (such as the Montreal Central Council of the CSN and the losing fraction of the last CEQ congress) to take the left rhetoric "out of cold storage;" and (3) to lead the militants to understand that the left bureaucrats must be struggled against even when they are out of office. The opportunists of the Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire strengthen the grip of the reformist labor bureaucracies on the working class by consistently supporting bureaucratic oppositionists, from CUPW president Jean-Claude Parrot (whose "Action Program" for the April CLC convention was a cover for his own inaction against the Post Office) to the "socialist-nationalists" in the Quebec labor bureaucracy.

In solidarity,  
B.

# Strike Settled:

## No Victory for Fleck Workers

AUGUST 15--In a procession of honking cars, striking workers from Fleck Manufacturing Co. drove to Centralia's Community Hall today where they voted to accept a settlement which ended their bitter five-month battle with the Fleck bosses, the cops and busloads of scabs. The 80 strikers, most of whom are women, marched into the hall singing "Solidarity Forever" and flashing "V for Victory" signs in celebration of their first union contract which provides for a compulsory dues check-off.

The dues check-off was the main demand of the union leadership throughout the strike--a demand which the "open shop" Fleck bosses vowed they would never knuckle under to. Following the certification of the Fleck workers as a local of the United Auto Workers (UAW) last October, company president Fred Berlet posted a notice warning: "This is a non-union organization. It always has been and it is our desire that it always will be" (Toronto Star, 16 August). To keep their viciously anti-labor operation free from "union interference" the Fleck bosses ran the plant throughout the strike with scabs who were daily herded across the picket lines by squadrons of up to 200 riot-equipped cops.

The Fleck workers won a compulsory dues check-off but the settlement was no "victory." Much has been made of the strikers' success in wresting "union security" from this strikebreaking firm, but the only guarantee of any security goes to the 40-odd scabs. These pro-company scum will keep their jobs while the strikers are to be called back to work as "needed." Bob White, Canadian Director of the UAW expressed the pious hope that "nearly all" the strikers will be back at work within four weeks(!), but management isn't making any promises.

Moreover the scabs, who worked with the company to bust the strike and the union were extended the "right" to vote on the settlement. The ratification procedure was conducted by the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB). The strikebreakers arrived at their polling place (the OLRB separated them from the strikers for their own protection) in a company bus which had the slogan "Strikers are Pigs" written in the dust on the side. These strikebreaking lackeys of the bosses have no "rights." It is a shameful violation of the most elementary trade union principles that the scabs were allowed to vote on the contract.

The strikers are justifiably bitter about having to return to work alongside these strikebreakers. One striker told reporters that "It will be a matter of self-control for us to work beside these people--these scabs, because they are scabs to me and always will be" (Toronto Star, 16 August). For their part the scabs are whining that the company reneged on its promise that they would never have to pay union dues. The only guarantee of union security is a closed shop--and that means no scabs!

Besides the dues check-off the strikers "won" a miserable wage increase of 44 cents over two years! Tacked on to the current base rate of \$2.85 an hour, the new pay "boost" leaves Fleck workers with a starvation wage which is less than half the rate that their fellow UAW members make at Ford, GM and Chrysler. UAW top White smugly promised that the union "will come back next time to fight the economic issues." It is a telling indictment of White and Co. that the strikers will go back to work (those who are fortunate enough to get their jobs back) in the company of scabs and saddled with a lousy two-year contract.

At the start of the strike the UAW brass talked plenty about their plans to bring the power of the union to bear in winning the Fleck strike. UAW members from locals across southern Ontario, as well as hundreds of other trade unionists proved themselves more than willing to throw their weight behind the strike and boost the picket lines. In the early months of the strike mass pickets kept out the scabs and shut the plant on several occasions. But it soon became clear that the union tops were eager to move the focus of the strike from the picket lines to the office of Labour Minister Bette Stephenson. In June they declared a ceasefire and called a halt to the mass pickets. Abandoned and isolated, it is small wonder that many of the Fleck strikers felt they could win no more than the pittance offered them in the contract.

The lesson of the Fleck strike is the urgent need to build a class-struggle opposition to the fat cats who run the UAW today. Under a militant leadership which relied not on the good graces of capitalist politicians but on the powerful economic muscle of the UAW, the Fleck strike could have been a real victory and the spearhead for bringing the thousands of other workers in unorganized auto-parts sweatshops into the UAW at full Big Three rates.■

## Vancouver General Hospital:

# IS!, RWL, Feminists Push "Progressive" Trustees

One of the many "unresolved" disputes when the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) and the League for Socialist Action (LSA) fused to form the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) was the question of abortion campaigns. Ex-RMGers favored the call for "Free Abortion on Demand" while ex-LSAers stuck to their parliamentarist demand to "Repeal the Abortion Laws." Today, with the political paralysis which has beset the RWL, its Toronto branch has attempted to overcome these differences through liquidating its work in all of the various women's front groups and propaganda blocs in which it had been active. The Vancouver RWL solved the same problem by coming up with a new slogan for abortion campaigns which was to the right of the old LSA line.

Together with an assortment of feminists and social democrats, the RWL formed the "Concerned Citizens for Choice in Abortion" (CCCA). The single issue for Vancouver's "concerned citizens" was neither "free abortion on demand" nor "repeal the abortion laws" but a campaign to have "progressive" administrators elected to the board of trustees of the Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) --to ensure the continuing liberal application of the existing restrictive abortion laws! For the past several months CCCA members have been scouring Vancouver's streets and beaches signing up hospital members to counter attempts by the reactionary "pro-lifers" to take over the hospital's board.

According to the present federal abortion laws any hospital which wishes to perform therapeutic abortions must set up a committee of three doctors whose job it is to determine that women wanting abortions meet the established criteria (i. e., that their health would be endangered by pregnancy). Had the CCCA's "progressive" trustees been elected, women wanting abortions would still be forced to sit through an interrogation by the hospital's committee and would have been required to pay whatever fee is set by the hospital for the operation.

In any case, the whole electoral fracas was squelched by the provincial Social Credit government which, on August 11 sacked the entire board of trustees and replaced them with its own appointed administrator, the former head of the B. C. RCMP. But the aborted campaign demonstrates the lower depths of opportunism to which the RWL has fallen. Joining the "consistent feminists" of the RWL were the self-proclaimed anti-feminist "Marxist-Leninists" of In Struggle!, whose slogan for the occasion was "We must win at the VGH elections in September!" Revolutionaries strive not to win administrative posts but to

abolish the administration and their boards of big shot trustees.

The board of trustees was responsible for all hospital operations. It not only set abortion policy but hired and fired and enforced the dictates of the Hospital Labour Relations Board during hospital strikes. As a member of the recently dismissed body told SC, during a strike the board's "job naturally would be to keep the hospital open which they did in the last strike in a limited way"--by using supervisory personnel! The working class has no interest in the election of strikebreakers and administrators. It is only a short step from calling for a vote to administrators with a more "liberal" position on abortion to voting for candi-



TROTSKYIST LEAGUE CONTINGENT IN PRO-ABORTION DEMONSTRATION, VANCOUVER JULY 28 SC Photo

dates of bourgeois parties because of their more "progressive" stand on women's rights.

By focusing solely on the single issue of abortion the RWL/CCCA obscured the fact that the deterioration of hospital care at VGH has become a public scandal and has resulted in the wholesale resignations of medical staff. Private hospitals should be nationalized and all hospitals should be publicly owned and run. All restrictions on abortion should be abolished and medical care (including abortions) should be free, of the highest quality and available on demand. But the allocation of the necessary resources to make high quality medical care free and available to everyone will occur only when the working class has its own government based on the expropriation of the capitalist class. ■

## LCUC/CUPW...

(continued from page 1)

time in years CUPW and General Labour and Trades (GLT--a division of the Public Service Alliance of Canada) mechanics' union leaders called on their members to respect the LCUC lines. What should be a gut reaction for every trade unionist, respect for picket lines, was established through the solidarity of the drivers with earlier CUPW and GLT strikes.

But thanks above all to the treachery of the LCUC national bureaucracy this solidarity was not matched within the ranks of the Toronto local. At a mass meeting of the Toronto local on July 30, called to vote on launching a full-scale local strike, national president Robert McGarry counseled LCUC members to go back to work and conserve their energy for "future battles," a hypocritical exhortation from the man who keeps his membership working without a contract and continually postpones to the "future" any real battle with management.

McGarry's attempt to exploit the craft divisions between the drivers and the less militant letter carriers was furthered by the local leadership. The Local 1 executive board authorized the walkout only when confronted with a virtual revolt from the militant drivers and then waited four days, during which time the letter carriers were locked out, before convening the mass meeting of the local. In the meantime the local leadership did nothing to mobilize the entire membership behind the strike and left the organization of picketing to the driver stewards. At the meeting the executive's strike motion was voted down 536 to 391, with most of the opposition coming from the letter carriers. Stabbed in the back by their national leadership the drivers returned to work with the threat of management reprisals hanging over their heads.

Once the battle lines were drawn, the refusal of the bulk of LCUC to vote for a strike was a blow against the entire union. But the ultimate responsibility for the defeat lies with the trade union tops. Neither the national bureaucracy nor the Local 1 leaders have made any effort to mobilize the LCUC ranks against the pay cuts and job-slashing that confront all postal workers. Particularly among the letter carriers, who are more conservative because they have thus far not borne the brunt of the government's attack, the bureaucrats have perpetuated the illusion that even their present working conditions and wages can be preserved without a militant fight.

The repercussions of the drivers defeat were immediate and will effect all postal workers. No sooner had the Toronto pickets been pulled down than Prime Minister Trudeau announced in a nationwide television broadcast that he was "fed up" with continual "disruptions" of Canada's mail services. In his August 1 address Trudeau confirmed the determination of his government to slash wages and jobs for public sector workers. In order to effec-

tively implement its latest "anti-inflation" program the government must first defeat the large and traditionally more combative postal unions. Thanks to the do-nothing postal union hacks, the government has already won the first round by further restricting the postal workers' already limited right to strike with the passage of Bill C-45 banning postal strikes during federal elections.

As part of his package deal of budget cuts and job slashing to revive the sagging Canadian economy Trudeau promised to turn the Post Office into a Crown Corporation. Parrot, who has staked his career on the campaign for a Crown Corporation, hailed Trudeau's announcement as a "victory" for postal workers. For the past year the CUPW national office has been distributing buttons with the slogan "A Crown Corporation Will Deliver." Given Lamontagne's and Trudeau's threats, you can bet it will--but Parrot and especially his membership will not appreciate being on the receiving end.

The conversion of the U. S. post office into a similar semi-autonomous government operation has resulted in the slashing of 100,000 jobs in less than a decade. By making the Post Office into a Crown Corporation the government can escape responsibility for the cuts in jobs and services as well as the wholesale speed-up which will be part and parcel of a "rationalized" postal service. For years the CUPW and LCUC bureaucrats have been begging the government to convert the Post Office into a Crown Corporation in order to bring postal workers under the Canada Labour Code rather than the Public Service Staff Relations Act (PSSRA). But the exchange of one piece of anti-labor legislation for another is no "victory" for postal workers. The Canada Labour Code contains the same restrictions on the right to strike as the PSSRA and Bill C-45.

Postal workers have never won anything by appealing to the good graces of capitalist politicians or the largesse of "neutral" arbitrators. Postal management and the government are hell-bent on hardlining on the contract--offering postal workers nothing while pushing to take away past union gains. The government has "rewarded" the LCUC tops for their "moderation" and class-collaboration with an insulting two cents an hour coupled with raises due from the last contract. The postal bosses are also "offering" a reduced cost-of-living allowance, speed-up and job loss. Last year in Vancouver, the Post Office leaked a report proposing to slash letter carriers jobs by 27 percent. The government's stinking contract offer and its plans to rationalize letter delivery should be enough to break any illusions among letter carriers of "immunity." But, rather than seeking to unite the ranks of postal workers in a determined counteroffensive, McGarry extended the LCUC contract, hoping to beg a few more crumbs from the government.

The cringing subservience of the LCUC bureaucracy has been matched by the sometime militant-talking leadership of the CUPW. For all Parrot's "even-handed" dealings with the Treasury Board,

(continued on page 12)

# Trotskyist League Protests Murder of Spanish Militant

TORONTO--Chanting "Free all victims of right-wing repression," "Protest the murder of German Rodrigues," "For the right of self-determination of the Basques," and "No to 'reformed' Francoism! For a workers republic in Spain!" twenty people demonstrated in front of the Spanish Consulate here on July 11. The demonstration was initiated by the Trotskyist League to protest the police murder of German Rodrigues, a member of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR), in the Basque city of Pamplona July 9. Rodrigues was shot through the head and 135 people were injured at the annual running of the bulls in Pamplona when police opened fire on Basque nationalists who had jumped into the ring with a banner reading "Amnesty, Freedom." Thousands joined the funeral march the next day in Pamplona. Solidarity strikes and demonstrations protesting the brutal police

attack occurred in several other centers in Spain (see "Fascist Corrida of Death in Pamplona," Workers Vanguard, 14 July).

Conspicuously absent from the Toronto demonstration were Rodrigues' "comrades" in Canada: the fake-Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League (RWL--Canadian section of the United Secretariat to which the LCR is also affiliated). The lone RWL member who did turn up at the demonstration reported that the RWL leadership had informed a few individuals of the protest but made no attempt to build for it.

Even when it came to demonstrating against the brutal murder of one of their own Spanish supporters, the sectarians of the RWL abstained. The elementary duties of international solidarity fell instead to the supporters of the international Spartacist tendency.

## Gagnon...

(continued from page 3)

ship that will carry it forward to victory. Hiding behind a supposed refusal to aid in the dissemination of "reactionary and counter-revolutionary positions," you proudly admit to having refused public debates with at least five opponent organizations, including your largest rival in Quebec. For an organization which upholds Mao's China as a model of socialist democracy while studiously ignoring the reactionary and counterrevolutionary Chinese policy of allying with reactionary and counterrevolutionary rulers like the Shah of Iran, the butcher Mobutu, Vorster and the Supreme

Commander of American imperialism, Jimmy Carter, this is sheer hypocrisy. It is because you are unable to defend your politics even in debate with the most despicable toadies for Peking and Tirana, let alone revolutionary Marxists, that you must resort to the undemocratic, anti-working-class tactics of censorship, slander, intimidation and violence--the methods of Scheidemann and Noske, which were only crudely amplified by Stalin and Mao.

We regret that you shrink from debate only because it would have provided us with an opportunity to publicly expose the contradictions and errors of your politics. For any serious revolutionary militant, however, your refusal speaks volumes about your cowardice, political bankruptcy and total unfitness as would-be leaders of the working class.

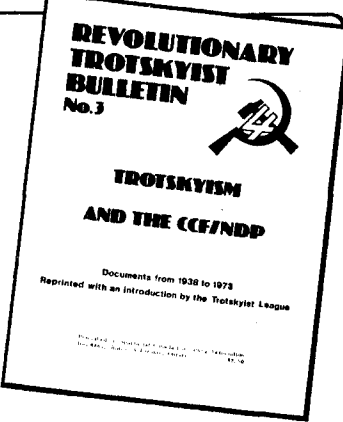
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Murray Smith  
for the Trotskyist League

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[Editor's postscript: After this letter was posted we received a copy of In Struggle! (dated 3 July) containing articles which openly questioned the revolutionary credentials of the Chinese leadership, and particularly China's support to Mobutu. In the 15 August issue IS! announced that Hua Kuo-feng & Co. had "descended onto the path blazed by Tito and Khrushchev." See article on page 8.]



## IS! "Investigates" WWII - Breaks with China



PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AT POTSDAM JULY 1945: CHURCHILL, TRUMAN AND STALIN SHAKE ON REDIVISION OF THE WORLD

# Dimitrov to Hoxha: Stalinist Ideologues of Social Chauvinism

After more than a year of shadowboxing and oblique polemics the sometimes heterodox New Left Stalinists of In Struggle! (IS!) have finally openly denounced the leadership of the Chinese

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### PART 1 of 2

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Communist Party as "betray[ers] of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism." The editorial in the 15 August *In Struggle!* is headlined "The Chinese leaders descend onto the path blazed by Tito and Khrushchev." Ostensibly IS! broke with China over the decision by Peking in July to cut off economic and military aid to Albania. IS!

also uncovered several additional examples of China's notoriously reactionary foreign policy to justify its turn: Peking's alliance with western imperialism against "Russian hegemonism"; its support to CIA-stooge Mobutu in Zaire; its support to Menahem Begin's erstwhile "friend" in Cairo, Anwar Sadat; its reconciliation with Yugoslavia "and its revisionist party"; and China's recent bureaucratic wrangling with the Vietnamese Stalinist regime.

IS!'s peculiar strain of Mao-Stalinism has always been characterized by its narrow national parochialism. Against the servile Peking loyalists of the Canadian Communist League (Marxist-Leninist) [CCL(M-L)], IS! has consistently argued for the



"independence" of the "Canadian Marxist-Leninist movement." Thus, despite the internationalist cover advanced by IS! for its denunciation of the ruling clique in Peking, the real reasons for its break must be sought on its own national terrain.

While IS! was previously willing to pass over in silence the numerous betrayals of the Chinese bureaucracy internationally (e. g., the closing of the Chinese embassy to Chilean leftists in the aftermath of the coup in 1973 or China's de facto bloc with the CIA and the South African army in the invasion of Angola) it balked at implementing Peking's line of anti-Soviet unity with its own bourgeoisie on its own turf. Every criminal betrayal of the Chinese bureaucrats is permissible as long as it is the oppressed of Iran, Zaire, Pakistan, Chile, etc., who are sacrificed. IS! only protested when the wisdom of Peking Review and the latest divinations of the "Thoughts" of Mao dictated gross betrayal in IS!'s "fatherland." Even in its "anti-revisionism," IS! exhibits the narrow nationalism that it so often condemns in others. When CCL(M-L) took up Peking's call for strengthening the Canadian armed forces against "superpower aggression," IS! seized the opportunity to attack its rivals as social-patriotic lackeys of the Canadian capitalist class. However, the Chinese Stalinists have no use for foreign satellites which are unwilling to carry out the line laid down by the foreign affairs department of the "socialist fatherland." Hence the Canadian franchise was awarded to CCL(M-L).

For the past year the main charge levelled by IS! against the Chinese leadership (and their Canadian sycophants) has been that of "splitism," i. e., writing IS! out of the "international Marxist-Leninist movement" headquartered in Peking. After Hua Kuo-feng opted for CCL(M-L) it no doubt became clear to Charles Gagnon and the rest of the leadership of IS! that their group had no future as "critical," but loyal Sinophiles. Thus as the polemics heated up between Albania and China, IS! began to echo the criticisms of China's "three worlds theory" made by Enver Hoxha's Albanian Party of Labor (PPS).

Hoxha, an old-time Stalinist bureaucrat is in no sense to the left of the Hua Kuo-feng/Teng Hsiao-ping leadership in Peking. The PPS attacks the "three worlds theory" not out of a desire to combat revisionism but because the Chinese campaign to unite the so-called non-aligned nations against the Soviet Union included an opening toward Yugoslavia. For the Albanian bureaucrats there is only one "superpower"--Yugoslavia. Hoxha's PPS was formed in 1941 under the aegis of Tito's Yugoslav Communist Party, and seized power in 1944 as an adjunct of the Yugoslav partisans successful routing of the Nazi occupation forces. When Stalin broke with Tito in 1948, Hoxha, smarting under Yugoslavia's "great power pretensions" and fearing that his own little bailiwick would soon become just one more Yugoslav republic, quickly followed suit. Therefore, Peking's recent rapprochement

with Yugoslavia signaled the end of its 18-year-old Albanian connection.

#### WORLD WAR II: IMPERIALIST OR "ANTI-FASCIST" WAR?

IS! attempted to politically differentiate itself from CCL(M-L) through regurgitating Albania's criticisms of China's "three worlds theory" and its application in Canada. But China's "three worlds" line has its historic precedent in Stalin's policy before and during World War II--in the popular fronts of the 1930's and the policy of open political support to the Allied imperialist governments during the war.

In search of an historical pretext for distancing itself from the outright social patriotism mandated by the "three worlds theory" IS! excavated the Stalinist shibboleths about the opportunism of the American and Canadian Stalinists under the leaderships of Earl Browder and Tim Buck during World War II. To ensure that the point of its historical investigation is not lost on those for whom it is intended, IS! spells out its reasons for "summing up" the lessons of World War II:

"certain groups which claim to be Marxist-Leninist are using the pretext of the danger of a new imperialist world war to merrily engage in a repetition of the opportunist errors of the CP..."  
"This tendency... uses the opportunist three worlds theory in the tradition of Bernstein and Kautsky, Tim Buck and Togliatti"  
--Proletarian Unity [PU], April-May 1978

In its initial assessment of the line of the Stalinist parties internationally in the war IS! simply projected its ostensibly leftist critique of China's "three worlds theory" back into time and announced that:

"in both world wars, certain proletarian parties [i. e., the social democratic and Stalinist parties] united with their 'own' bourgeoisies in 'defense of the fatherland.' These opportunist parties betrayed the class interest of the proletariat, placed themselves under the direction of the bourgeoisies and sank hopelessly and rapidly into revisionism."

--IS! speech to the "Conference on the International Situation," October 21-22 1977

Striking a pose as orthodox Leninists, IS! characterized World War II as an "imperialist war" for the "redivision of the world" (PU, February 1978). Unfortunately for the muddleheads of IS! this essentially correct characterization of World War II is counterposed to that put forward by their revered teacher "comrade" Stalin. In his opinion:

"Unlike the First World War, the Second World War against the Axis states from the very outset assumed the character of an anti-fascist war, a war of liberation, one the aim of which was

(continued on page 10)

## Dimitrov/Hoxha...

also the restoration of democratic liberties..." "It was on this basis that the anti-fascist coalition of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, Great Britain and other freedom-loving states came into being..." --Stalin, 9 February 1946--quoted in A Documentary History of Communism, Volume 2, edited by Robert V. Daniels

The IS! leadership has apparently and belatedly realized that its pretensions to uphold a principled Leninist position on the character of World War II put it at odds with the Stalinist heritage to which it lays claim. Recoiling from the political implications of their initial position on the war, IS!'s theoreticians have made an attempt to square their left criticisms of the CP with the historical record of Stalinism. In its most recent article on the subject (PU, April-May 1978) IS! approvingly quotes the Albanian Party of Labor to the effect that the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941:

"opened a new stage in the Second World War, strengthening the liberation, anti-fascist character of the struggle of peoples against the fascist bloc, and laid the foundations for the unification of all the anti-fascist forces of the world into a single front."

In a model of Stalinist confusionism IS! proceeds to denounce Tim Buck and Earl Browder for "abandoning the proletarian class viewpoint and collaborating with the bourgeoisie"--i.e., for implementing the perspective of "anti-fascist unity." It is certainly true that the behavior of the CP in Canada during the war (openly supporting the government and enforcing the infamous "no-strike" pledge in the unions) was on a par with the treachery of the yellow

socialists of the Second International during World War I. But what the IS! leadership must necessarily obscure is the fact that this policy originated in Moscow--just as CCL(M-L)'s present enthusiasm for NATO originates in Peking.

In an earlier article (PU, October 1977) IS! dealt briefly with the history of the Canadian CP and announced that "it was at the August 1943 Congress that revisionism became the dominant aspect of the line of the Canadian Communist Party." The CP is

charged with abandoning the banner of communism and adopting the name Labour Progressive Party (LPP) and a new political line "of legalism and bourgeois parliamentarism." What IS! neglects to mention is the fact that the CP changed its name and formal program in keeping with the dissolution of the Comintern which had occurred some three months earlier. The resolution of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International of May 22, 1943 announced that "The Communist International, as the directing centre of the international working-class movement, is to be dissolved." It declared that "In countries of the anti-Hitlerite coalition the sacred duty of the widest masses of the people, and in the first place of foremost workers, consists in aiding by every means the military efforts of the



Poster by V. Karetzky  
"EUROPE WILL BE FREE!"--SOVIET WORLD WAR II POSTER

governments of these countries aimed at the speediest defeat of [the] Hitlerite bloc" (our emphasis). The dissolution of the Comintern was a declaration by Stalin of his desire for "peaceful coexistence" with the "freedom-loving, anti-Hitlerite" imperialist Allies. The formal dissolution of the Canadian CP and the founding of the LPP (and the similar dissolution of the CPUSA to form the Communist Political Association in the U. S.), like its support to its own bourgeoisie in the war, was

only the North American application of Moscow's counterrevolutionary line.

#### FROM POPULAR FRONT TO "THREE WORLDS THEORY"

In the course of its "investigation" into the history of the CPC, IS! came across a book entitled Communism Versus Opportunism by Fergus McKean, onetime provincial secretary of the CP in British Columbia. McKean, who was expelled from the LPP in 1945, waged a brief fight against the Buck leadership. IS! attaches so much significance to McKean's fight and to his subsequent (stillborn) attempt to launch a new Stalinist party in Canada that it has recently republished his book, written shortly after his expulsion. In the book McKean strikes a left-Stalinist posture and argues that unlike the American party the LPP had not corrected its line even after the publication of the famous letter of French CP leader Jacques Duclos denouncing "Browderite revisionism" in 1945.

In his book McKean makes it clear that he supported the popular front line of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. McKean also supported the CP's wartime strategy of an anti-fascist alliance with the "democratic" Canadian bourgeoisie. The main part of McKean's book is devoted to trying to prove that the CPC wrongly applied the Comintern's line of popular frontism to its work in Canada. The CPC's practice in the 1930's and 1940's was a truly abominable example of class-collaboration. From 1936 to 1938 it was tailing the CCF. In 1938 it supported the neo-Tory New Democratic Movement of I. W. Herridge and even gave support to Aberhart's right-wing Social Credit government in Alberta. During the war the CP supported MacKenzie King's Liberal government.

Like McKean, IS! must falsify history to account for the Comintern's "Popular Front" strategy. In its presentation to an October, 1977 Maoist conference in Vancouver, IS! claimed that "when the Comintern called upon the peoples of the world to unite against fascism, the imperialist bourgeoisies were explicitly excluded." But a careful reading of the speeches at the 1935 Seventh Congress of the Comintern, where the popular front was enshrined, demonstrates that the imperialist bourgeoisies were explicitly included in the popular front. In his closing speech at the Congress, Dimitrov stated "Even some of the big capitalist states, afraid of losing in a new redivision of the world, are at the present stage, interested in avoiding war." Thus, the popular front was a bloc with those imperialist powers which had emerged victorious from World War I and only wished to enjoy "in peace" the spoils of the Versailles Peace (or "robbers peace" as Lenin called it) as opposed to the "aggressive" imperialist powers like Germany which wanted to reconquer what was lost in World War I and at Versailles.

The strategy of the popular front was codified but did not begin at the Seventh Congress. After the disastrous failure of "Third Period" sectarianism to stop the rise of Hitler in Germany, the

Stalinists went from denouncing the social democrats as "social fascists" to an opportunist policy of unity with anyone against "fascism and war" for "peace and democracy." Diplomatically, this turn was signaled in 1933 by the Soviet Union's entry into that reactionary monument to Versailles, the League of Nations, which Lenin termed "the thieves kitchen."

This was followed by the infamous "Laval Pact" named after the French foreign minister and future Nazi collaborator Pierre Laval. A joint Stalin-Laval communiqué issued in conjunction with the pact stated, "Mr. Stalin understands and fully approves the policy of national defense made by France in order to keep its armed strength at the level of security." "Mr. Stalin's "understanding" was forcefully communicated to the leaders of the French Communist Party (PCF) who, following the Seventh Comintern Congress, formed a Popular Front government with the Socialist Party and the bourgeois Radicals. The victory of the Popular Front government reflected the growing discontent and combativity of the French working class which exploded into a general strike in June 1936. Rather than resolving this revolutionary crisis through the proletarian conquest of power, the PCF broke the strike to save the Laval Pact and French capitalism. The real meaning of the Popular Front was succinctly summed up by the Soviet foreign minister Litvinov, "What is essential is that France should not allow her military strength to be weakened. We hope no internal troubles will favor German designs" (quoted in Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement).

The Popular Front meant precisely that in the "Allied" imperialist countries, the victors of Versailles, the "proletarian parties," first and foremost the Communist Parties, were supposed to "unite with their 'own' bourgeoisies in 'defense of the fatherland.'" Tim Buck's policies and "Browderite revisionism" were only the faithful application of the popular front and Seventh Congress formulas to the conditions of North America. Without a sufficient mass base to secure a few cabinet posts (as in France) the Canadian and U.S. Stalinists were relegated to the status of mere pressure groups on the bourgeoisie. This was expressed by their electoral support to MacKenzie King and Franklin Roosevelt. Any honest historical examination cannot avoid finding antecedents for China's "three worlds theory" not merely in Buck/Browderite revisionism but in the Stalin/Dimitrov popular front class-collaborationist revisionism in the 1930's.

TO BE CONTINUED

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## LCUC/CUPW...

(continued from page 6)

the government's negotiators are sticking to their measly wage offer of 45 cents over 18 months coupled with a reduction in the union's cost-of-living allowance and the unlimited use of casual (non-union) labor.

The postal bosses and the government will not be beaten back in the offices of the Treasury Board or a conciliator. As was proven during the "illegal" postal wildcats of the mid-sixties the fight against the strikebreaking, union-busting government can only be won on the picket lines. The postal union bureaucrats would like to bury the militant traditions which founded the postal unions but they must not be forgotten by postal worker militants. The letter carriers took the lead in the 1965 strike that broke the government's no-strike legislation. The CUPW and the LCUC must strike together as they did in the sixties and turn the tide on the government's offensive.

### FOR A NATIONWIDE POSTAL STRIKE!

In a leaflet distributed at an LCUC Local 1 meeting, August 17, militant shop steward Bob McBurney drew the lessons of the driver walkout for the upcoming contract fight:

"An effective strike leadership must be established at all levels. A key lesson from the last walkout is the necessity for broad based strike committees representative of the membership, for example, a local strike committee would consist of the stewards body and the executive. The solidarity of the CUPW and the LCUC in the recent Toronto strike which effectively closed the post office for 6 days demonstrated the real desire of the respective memberships for joint action."

Postal workers must demand the immediate convening of local, district and national meetings of the CUPW, LCUC and the GLT postal mechanics to elect joint strike committees to implement a nationwide strike to win a contract that meets the needs of all postal workers. The fight for a common contract would pave the way for the long overdue merger of all postal unions into one industrial union.

A special negotiating convention must be elected now! The elected delegates to such a convention must formulate clear, powerful strike demands: a big pay boost with a full cost-of-living allowance; a closed shop through the unionization of all postal employees; an end to speed-up and job loss through a shorter work week at no loss in pay; the unconditional right to strike; union control over health and safety with the right to shut down unsafe operations; the withdrawal of Bill C-45; and no reprisals against postal workers involved in local strikes and wildcats.

There is every possibility that Lamontagne will make good on his threats to enforce back-to-work legislation in the event of a postal strike. In the

U.S. the government also wants to make an "example" of the postal unions which recently voted down rotten contract settlements. U.S. President Carter is threatening to send in the troops as strikebreakers should the postal workers hit the streets. Canadian postal workers must stand ready to block scab mail to and from the U.S. should Carter deploy his troops against the U.S. postal unions.

U.S. postal workers, who do not have the right to strike, face jail sentences, a \$1,000 fine and firing for striking against the government. The Trudeau government is only too eager to mimic the strikebreaking mandate of its senior imperialist partner in the White House and turn back the clock to the pre-1965 days when postal workers did not have the right to strike. The government's hardlining on the contract negotiations should be a clear warning to Canadian postal workers.

Trudeau wants to enforce the dictum of every capitalist government that you can't strike against the government. The 1965 postal wildcats in Canada and the 1970 "illegal" postal strike in the U.S. proved that you can strike against the government and win. A joint strike of all the postal unions could turn any back-to-work legislation into a mere scrap of paper and give postal workers the power they need to fight the government's job-slashing, union-busting offensive. The U.S. coal miners defied the strikebreaking Taft-Hartley injunction. It was only the lack of a class-struggle leadership, not the bosses' no-strike laws, that sent the coal miners back to work with a rotten contract.

The government's attack on the postal unions and its threats to use its armed might against a postal strike poses the need for the working class as a whole to have its own government. Such a government will not be won by the pro-capitalist McGarrys and Parrots or the right-wing strikebreakers of the NDP. A real workers party that will fight for a workers government will only be forged under a new class-struggle leadership of the labor movement.

By confronting the government through a nationwide postal strike, postal workers would be launching a fight on behalf of all workers and must be backed by the entire labor movement. Any attempts to use the cops, the army or the courts must be met by a solid response from all of labor.

SHUT DOWN THE POST OFFICE!  
VICTORY TO THE POSTAL WORKERS!

### Correction

An article in the last issue of SC, "For a Nationwide Postal Strike," erroneously reported that "LCUC militants in Toronto ignored their national leadership's instructions" when they "honored the picket lines thrown up during a 3-day CUPW strike" last December. In fact the national office of the LCUC instructed all members to uphold the union's constitutional mandate to honor picket lines. Also the CUPW strike lasted six days, not three.

# Parrot "Misunderstood"

On the eve of its first anniversary, the leadership of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) candidly admitted to readers of its internal bulletins that the new organization is "not really part of the workers movement. We're rather peripheral to the unions..." However the RWL ranks are not to despair, for the leadership hopes to hitch a ride to the "big time" on the coattails of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) president Jean-Claude Parrot. Parrot's latest display of "militancy" was his enthusiastic applause for Pierre Trudeau's decision to make the Post Office into a Crown Corporation as part of the government's latest austerity drive.

From its vantage point on the sidelines of the labor movement the RWL drools that "Parrot is really the first left bureaucrat we have seen in English Canada." At least these so-called "revolutionaries" know what they're in the market for. Just in case "Crown Corporation" Parrot's "militancy" is not sufficiently appreciated by the masses of trade unionists the RWL has launched a publicity campaign for him in its newspaper, Socialist Voice.

In its anxiety to ingratiate itself with the cynical "left" bureaucrats of CUPW the RWL leadership bemoans the "sectarian tone" of a few pro-forma criticisms of Parrot which had appeared in earlier issues of Socialist Voice. In a recent internal bulletin Julie Samuels' "CLC [Canadian Labour Congress] Balance Sheet," puts in the organization's lengthy debit column an article in Socialist Voice which mildly criticized the CUPW's program for last April's CLC convention. The article, entitled "Whatever happened to CUPW's program?", noted that "the CUPW document completely avoids the two central issues facing the convention--self-determination for Quebec and tripartism." Besides regretting the "sectarian headline" Samuels self-critically comments in her balance sheet that "we analyzed the CUPW's failure to deal with tripartism in their program as a retreat." Heaven forbid that "militant" Parrot, who has left the ranks of his own union without a contract for over 14 months, should be accused of making a retreat! According to Samuels, Parrot had simply "misunderstood what the [CLC] bureaucracy was up to" and had, in turn, been "misunderstood" by his RWL boosters.

Two of Samuels' fellow Political Committee members refused to vote for her balance sheet and sought to use the opportunity to score a few factional points against "ultra-leftists" in the organization. In the opinion of these worthies "The proper course was to come behind CUPW from the beginning." In its reports on the CUPW bureaucracy's role at the convention the "sectarian tone" of the earlier articles had been exorcized from the pages of Socialist Voice. "CUPW leads the way" trumpeted a headline in the April 24 issue, but even this wasn't enough for Samuels' "consistently reformist"

critics who complained that "the positive comments on the role of the CUPW caucus contained in the April 24 issue were too perfunctory."

The RWL's supporters in the CUPW are also having some problems with their organization's position on the character of the union leadership. It seems that it is a bit difficult to peddle the RWL leadership's line of uncritical praise for Parrot as a leader of "mass action" inside the CUPW these days. In a recent internal report on the July sitdown staged by CUPWers in Vancouver, the RWL supporters in CUPW complain that while they were pressuring for "militant" action, "This has to be done in the context of the national union leadership not wanting to support local walkouts until we can strike over our contract demands." But any hints of the treachery of the do-nothing CUPW hacks are meant for internal consumption only. Mindful of the harm done by its past "sectarianism" the Socialist Voice editorial board recently rejected an article from Toronto because it contained a few friendly criticisms of Parrot's refusal to call a postal strike to defend his membership.

The RWL leadership's snow job for Parrot may revive the failing spirits of a few of the ranks with the prospect of a quick and easy road to "success" in the labor movement. But it's hardly likely that these unprincipled opportunists will get much of a hearing from postal workers who have plenty of first-hand experience with Parrot's kind of "militancy." ■

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## RWL...

(continued from page 16)

which comprises nearly half of the organization's membership:

"The Toronto branch of the RWL currently has 16 interventional fractions and almost as many internal committees. The branch has been described as a federation of interventions rather than a cohesive, effective unit... This political and organizational diffusion of our forces is a major problem faced by most of the other branches as well."

The root of the "diffusion" is indeed that the organization is a "federation of interventions" rather than a united, disciplined party. Unable to resolve the conflicting opportunist appetites of its reformist and centrist components through a hasty shotgun wedding, the cynical honchos of the Canadian USec simply buried the differences under a mountain of "unity" rhetoric. If the LSAers wanted to suck up to the bureaucrats of the social-democratic New Democratic Party (NDP) while the RMGers wanted to tail the Quebec separatists, no problem--the RWL would just do both. For every appetite, constitute an "interventional fraction." But alas for the RWL, wrangling at the base and cliquist jockeying at the top were the surrogate for the political battles over line and priorities which the leadership evaded in the interests of "unity."

On every question, from the youth organization to the NDP, counterposed perspectives have paralyzed the work of the RWL, if not liquidated it altogether. In the women's movement, for instance, an old traditional difference erupted on the question of abortion campaigns, with the ex-RMGers calling for "free abortion on demand" while the ex-LSAers stuck to their parliamentarist demand to "repeal all anti-abortion legislation." Finally, the differences were overcome through a recent decision to curtail participation in the various women's front

groups and propaganda blocs the organization has spent much of the past year building.

Another traditional difference between the two wings of Canadian Pabloism, which figured in the 1972-73 factional struggles, was the question of a youth movement. The LSA maintained a policy of building a fake-mass youth group, the Young Socialists (YS), which the RMG had traditionally opposed. Following the fusion, the youth leadership complained:

"The fusion compromise was not workable... The YS comrades found themselves in a completely untenable situation. They were forced to attempt to carry out their intervention, to build their organization, in virtual isolation from the RWL... Six months of isolation and overwhelming uncertainty are producing tremendous pressures and tension in the YS... comrades feel frustrated, isolated, abandoned, and--more and more as time goes on--demoralized... In Vancouver... several of the leading youth comrades have recently announced that they simply can't take it any longer.

"Was this situation unavoidable? Was the fusion compromise inherently unworkable?... The problem is rooted in the RWL--in its unclarity on the youth question."

And what was the "solution"? The YS will be dissolved while the question of setting up a new youth group remains "under discussion" (Socialist Voice, 19 June).

Policy toward the NDP--a major factional issue in 1972-73--is another question which the fusion diplomatically avoided in the hope it would just go away. Instead, the conflict of appetites between the social-democratic LSA/LSO and the petty-bourgeois radical nationalist RMG/GMR has touched off a factional outbreak in the fused organization.

The fusing groups had reached "unity" on a simple statement in the Declaration of Principles characterizing the NDP as a "reformist, social-

## RWL's Closet Rule for the NDP

One of the key differences between the two founding components of the RWL (the RMG and the LSA) was the question of the NDP. Today, however, the RWL, or at least its English-Canadian component, has reached unity on this previously hotly disputed issue through the simple expedient of adopting the LSA's position of permanent deep entry in the miserable right-wing Canadian social democracy. In an internal bulletin published in May the RWL's Toronto branch NDP Committee announced that it is assigning "About 15 comrades [to] intervene in [the upcoming] NDP Federal Election campaign... We will have a serious and active intervention in two ridings." And what are the

serious NDP activists of the RWL to do in the riding associations?

"The comrades in the NDP campaigns will not identify themselves as RWLers or as explicit RWL supporters. They will not sell the press except to close contacts who know their political affiliation. They will not invite people to RWL rallies or argue for a vote for the RWL..."

As the RWL moves to the right, stewing in its own chronic organizational crises, the tired Pabloites turned social democrats of the ex-RMG can at least look forward to a peaceful political senility with Ross Dowson and the rest of Canada's cretinous Fabians.■

democratic workers party. " But as the RWL Political Committee had to admit, "In the final analysis, the Declaration says very little" about whether to support the NDP ("Report on Federal Elections, " December 1977).

The "leftist" RMG had never decisively broken from the LSA's record of prostration before the NDP, and the final pre-fusion RMG convention had no great difficulty in adopting the LSA's call for an NDP government. But the sticky situation was Quebec, where the old LSO mimicked the LSA position while the old GMR shied away from supporting the minuscule Canadian chauvinist Quebec NDP. As the "Federal Elections" report noted, "These different tactical [?] approaches to the Quebec NDP were never resolved." And a compromise line of supporting the NDP in English Canada but not in Quebec and avoiding raising the slogan of an NDP government did not succeed in keeping the peace as the prospect of another federal election looms. A grouping centered in the LOR's Montreal branch (where it reportedly comprises the majority) has come out against support to NDP candidates in Quebec or English Canada:

"We want to put into question our traditional policy of support for the social-democracy in view of the key role of the national question involving Quebec and the central axis which must consequently structure our tactical orientation: the struggle for the right to self-determination."

Aside from its elevation of the Quebec national question to the sole criterion for support (of course, not "critical support") to NDP candidates, this grouping ("Tendency A") has little new to offer. Its major organizational proposal, the development of "an extremely serious security policy" (sloganized as "we are outlaws on parole"), bears the stamp of the USec majority's former vicarious guerrillaism, now dumped in favor of the popular-frontist turn which restored a measure of unity to the USec internationally.

The documents of this grouping are, however, illustrative of the demoralization rampant in the RWL/LOR as the promised mass influence failed to materialize for the fused organization:

"Since September a large number of comrades have thought about quitting the organization. That has to end... What we want to do is create a framework for democratically debating, and as much as possible, resolving the political and organizational questions which are the source of tension. We are forming a tendency, secondly, because we are afraid that the debate will be swept under the carpet....

"Let us be clear: if the majority of the organization believed that in the beginning it was necessary to avoid premature polarizations, that time is passed...."

Though politically amateurish in the extreme, Tendency A speaks for a broad section of the RWL ranks in its disgust at the fusion "discussion" process and its distrust of the RWL leadership.

Tendency A also evinces hostility toward the leadership's failing scheme for fusion with the Quebec Lambertiste organization (GSTQ), part of the SWP's game plan for drawing the Lambert current into the USec. Here the difference is evidently a matter of geography. The Montreal-centered oppositionists contemplate the degeneration of their already tension-ridden branch into an outright zoo, but the Toronto-based RWL leadership remains blithe in the face of what it admits are "substantial differences remain[ing] on a series of fundamental questions." Indeed, the RWL leadership did not shrink from explicit anti-internationalism in motivating its desire for a rapprochement with the GSTQ:

"For our part, we don't believe that such differences, as important as they are, justify the existence of two separate organizations.... The building of national revolutionary parties and the evolution of the different national components of international organizations are relatively autonomous. If a real convergence exists on the national level, international differences should not serve as a brake to discussion and common actions... and we don't make a precondition of building a common organization."

—RWL Information Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1 Jan. 1978

#### NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES

The RWL has apparently fused the LSA's reformist politics with the chronic New Leftist/Menshevik organizational incompetence of the RMG. At the Easter plenum it was admitted that despite promises of reinforcement of smaller branches through the fusion, the lack of "a clear set of priorities or political focus meant that the leadership was unable to develop and lead a planned transfers program." The pervasive dilettantism evidently extends to the leadership: "[We must] politically motivate transfers and find the cadre as well as being prepared to be part of the process itself [!].... [or] we risk losing not only branches but valuable cadre as a result of demoralization and exhaustion." "It has been virtually impossible to find comrades to act as full-time organizers for the Montreal branch leadership."

The RWL has already suffered a number of resignations of long-time cadres. Another morbid indication, fraught with sinister implications for the presently honeymooning USec bloc, is an apparent purge of long-time SWP loyalists in Canada. In June the two editors of the RWL/LOR press (John Riddell, an LSA leader for nearly two decades, and Colleen Levis of the former LSO) were suddenly ousted and replaced by former RMG/GMR leaders. And the two pre-eminent members of the old LSA Political Committee, Riddell and former right-hand man Dick Fidler, were dumped from the payroll, ostensible victims of the shrinkage of the RWL's dues base.

We do not envy their replacements the task of holding up Humpty Dumpty.■

(Reprinted from Workers Vanguard, 11 August.)



## Remember this model of USec Unity?

# RWL: Shotgun Marriage Backfires

A year ago this month the competing Canadian organizations of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) fused to form the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL). The fusion took place in the atmosphere of international fence-mending between the USec's centrist majority and its reformist minority led politically by the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). With appropriate bombast SWP honcho Jack Barnes hailed the Canadian fusion as "a turning point for Canada and the international."

The fusion was not simply the Canadian incarnation of the USec's drive to shelve its stalemated factional polarization and patch up the numerous public splits in its national sections. The political basis for this fusion had been laid by the dramatic rightward evolution of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) since its original left split from the League for Socialist Action (LSA) in 1973. While the LSA looked forward to numerical preponderance, the RMG was trying to escape the almost total paralysis which had beset its own organization. The fusion of the English-speaking groups was mirrored in French Canada by the amalgamation of the majorityite Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire (GMR) and the minorityite Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (LSO) to form the Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (LOR).

This presumed model of international reconciliation was also supposed to signal "a move toward the creation of a revolutionary organization which is able to actually influence the course of mass struggles" in Canada (RMG/LSA joint political committee document). The fusion was touted as the route to "mass" influence as well as a pole of attraction for unaffiliated leftists and smaller "Trotskyist" organizations and as a way to outflank the sizable Maoist organizations in Quebec.

But as the RWL/LOR celebrates its first anniversary, the product of this hasty marriage of convenience is not in good shape. Far from overcoming the weaknesses of its predecessor components, the fusion seems to have compounded them. The tasks reporter to the fused group's Easter plenum stated that "within each national component we remain



FUSED RWL LEADERS: CAN THEY GO ON MEETING LIKE THIS?

politically heterogeneous" and exhorted the leadership to "work out its priorities"!

### FUSION OR DIFFUSION?

The precipitous decline in the visibility of the fused organization has been noted both within and outside the organization. In fact, the RWL does less public work than either one of its pre-fusion components. The plenum reporter noted "a substantial weakening of our propaganda capacities":

"In many branches comrades don't have the time or the consciousness to sell the paper; public meetings of the organization are few and far between... comrades don't have time to talk to contacts... Comrades don't have time to come to the general membership meetings or the fraction discussion, don't have time to seriously think about their political relationship to the organization or their financial responsibility to it...."

Why is the fused organization manifestly less capable of political work than its predecessors? The answer is unwittingly provided by the "Resolution on Tasks of the RWL/LOR." Here the leadership describes the functioning of the Toronto branch,

(continued on page 14)