

EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

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AGAINST VIOLENCE WITHIN THE WORKERS MOVEMENT

April 1974

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Introductory Note on Violence Within the Movement

By Caroline Lund

This bulletin contains articles explaining the Marxist position of opposition to the use of violence to settle differences within the workers movement and how this position was applied in practice by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance in the radical movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

This question has been a vitally important one for the Trotskyist movement since its inception. Because of our revolutionary views and devotion to proletarian democracy, Trotskyists have been the targets of violence from both the Stalinists and the trade union bureaucracy. Our support for workers democracy is a reflection of confidence that the revolutionary-Marxist program represents the interests of the working class. Unlike Stalinist or trade-union bureaucrats, who fear that open and democratic decision-making will undermine their positions, we have everything to gain from the open counterposition of our views to those of the reformist and ultraleft currents in the working class movement.

In the current radicalization, the SWP and the YSA stand out as the only tendency that has consistently championed democracy within the movement. This has included rejection of redbaiting and unyielding opposition to the exclusion of any tendency or group from united front struggles.

A striking example of the correctness of this approach was the role played by Trotskyists in the movement against the Vietnam war. Redbaiting, exclusion, and violence were introduced into the movement by other tendencies as a method of avoiding democratic discussion of differences. The SWP and YSA convinced the overwhelming majority of antiwar activists to support the democratic right of all tendencies to participate in the movement, and to protect conferences and demonstrations against violent disruption from any quarter. This policy helped the antiwar movement achieve its mass impact.

In every instance of violence within the radical movement—whether by members of Students for a Democratic Society, the Progressive Labor Party, the Young Workers Liberation League, or the National Caucus of Labor Committees—the SWP and YSA responded by attempting to rally all tendencies in the movement to condemn such attacks. At the same time, Trotskyists took the lead in forming united marshalling teams to defend the right of the movement to carry on its activities without interference.

The correctness of this SWP and YSA policy received dramatic confirmation from the post-Watergate exposures of government attempts to disrupt and destroy the antiwar movement and the Black liberation movement. These developments have revealed that the ruling class attempts to inspire violence within the radical movement in order to disrupt and discredit it. FBI "COINTELPRO" (Counter-intelligence Program) documents, obtained as a result of the suit by Carl Stern of NBC News against the Justice Department, show that FBI, White House, and local police department spies fomented violent confrontations between radical leaders and groups and encouraged ultraleft youths to seize the platforms at antiwar demonstrations.

These revelations are evidence that, however "revolutionary" the motivations of participants in such activities, disruptive tactics such as these benefit only the ruling class. The FBI documents reveal that the government itself often provokes such acts to prevent united action against its policies. One FBI communique, for example, instructed its operatives to "prevent the *coalition* of militant black nationalist groups. In unity there is strength. . . ." The FBI documents motivate a policy of instigating violence by pointing out that this helps to discredit movements for social change in the eyes of the masses of people.

Another result of violence within the movement—one the FBI cannot admit to promoting—is that it frustrates the desire of activists to get at the truth through a democratic discussion of different ideas and proposals.

Recent events in the trade union movement have provided fresh evidence of the anti-working class role played by attempts to settle differences in the labor movement by violence. The goon attacks ordered by the Teamsters Union officialdom against striking farm workers in 1973 hurt the entire union movement, and aided the bosses. The ranks of the United Mine Workers Union—fed up with the murderous violence against dissidents by the corrupt Boyle regime in the union—finally succeeded last year in throwing out the corrupt leadership and in reinstating some democratic procedures in their union.

As new militant struggles by the working class unfold, we can expect that the question of workers democracy and violence within the workers movement will continue to be of crucial importance.

April 1974

On Workers Democracy

By Ernest Mandel

[The following article first appeared in the January 20, 1969 issue of *Intercontinental Press*, a revolutionary-Marxist newsweekly.]

[Roger Garaudy, one of the leading intellectuals of the Communist party of France, visited Belgium November 5 to give a lecture on "May 1968 in France," at the request of the Communist Student Union of Brussels University. It was not surprising that radical students considered a lecture on this topic by a representative of the French CP as a provocation.

[In any case, when the meeting started, a few dozen Maoists carrying portraits of Chairman Mao and anarchists carrying a black flag persistently tried—for the most part successfully—to prevent Garaudy from addressing the audience.

[A confused debate followed in which the question of whether Garaudy should be allowed to speak was mixed with the question of whether or not a revolutionary situation had existed in France in May.

[Finally, the Maoists and anarchists ended the debate by pushing Garaudy out of the meeting hall.

[This incident raised serious questions about the norms of democratic debate and behavior in the working class and socialist movement. In answer to some of the questions raised, Ernest Mandel, the well-known Marxist economist and editor of the Belgian socialist weekly *La Gauche*, wrote an article on the subject of workers democracy which appeared in two parts in the November 16 and November 23 issues of *La Gauche*. Because of the timeliness of the topic, we are reproducing the article below. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

The lamentable incidents which occurred at the ULB [Universitaire Libre de Bruxelles—Free University of Brussels] when Garaudy came to speak there have induced me to explain once again why we adhere to the principles of workers democracy.

Workers democracy has always been a basic tenet of the proletarian

movement. It was a tradition in the socialist and communist movement to firmly support this principle in the time of Marx and Engels as well as Lenin and Trotsky. It took the Stalinist dictatorship in the USSR to shake this tradition. The temporary victory of fascism in West and Central Europe also helped to undermine it. However, the origins of this challenge to workers democracy are deeper and older; they lie in the bureaucratization of the large workers organizations.

The Social Democratic and trade-union bureaucrats were the first to begin to undermine the principles of workers democracy. They started calling general membership meetings at infrequent intervals. Then they began to rig them, or often to do away with them altogether. They began likewise to restrict or abolish freedom of discussion and criticism within their organizations. They did not hesitate even to appeal to the police (including the secret police) for help in fighting revolutionary minorities. At the time of the first world war, the German Social Democracy set a dismal example of collusion with the state repressive forces. In subsequent years, the Social Democrats everywhere followed this example.

The Soviet bureaucracy first and then the bureaucrats in the Stalinist Communist parties (or in trade unions under Stalinist leadership) simply followed the pattern established by the Social Democrats, extending it further and further. They abolished freedom of discussion and of tendencies. Slander and lies replaced argument and debate with opponent tendencies. They made massive use of physical force to prevent their opponents from "causing any harm." Thus, the entire Bolshevik old guard which led the October Revolution and the majority of the members of Lenin's Central Committee were exterminated by Stalin during the dark years of the Great

Purge (1935-38).

The young generation of anti-imperialist and anticapitalist militants now developing a revolutionary consciousness are spontaneously returning to the traditions of workers democracy. This was apparent in France in May and June when freedom of speech for all tendencies was jealously safeguarded in the assemblies of students and revolutionary workers and students. But this new generation is not always conscious of all the principled and practical reasons for workers democracy.

This is why the youth can be vulnerable to a kind of Stalinist-derived demagoguery being spread by certain pro-Chinese sects, which seek to make people believe that workers democracy is contrary to "the interests of the revolution." Therefore, it is necessary to reaffirm these reasons strongly.

The workers movement fights for the emancipation of the proletariat. But this emancipation requires the abolition of *all* forms of exploitation to which the workers are subjected. Rejecting workers democracy means quite simply that you want to maintain a situation like the one today in which the masses of workers are unable to make their opinions heard.

The Marxist critique of bourgeois democracy starts from the idea that this democracy is only *formal* because the workers do not have the material means to exercise the rights which the bourgeois constitutions formally grant all citizens. Freedom of the press is just a formality when only the capitalists and their agents are able to get together the millions of dollars needed to establish a daily newspaper.

But the conclusion that follows from this critique of bourgeois democracy, obviously, is that means must be created enabling *all* the workers to have access to the media for disseminating ideas (printing presses, meeting halls, radio and television, posters, etc.).

If, on the contrary, you conclude from this that only a self-proclaimed "leading party of the proletariat"—or even a little sect which declares that it alone is "genuinely revolutionary"—has the right to speak, to use the press, or to propagate its ideas, then you risk increasing the political oppression of the workers rather than abolishing it.

The Stalinists often reply that abolition of the capitalist system equals emancipation of the workers. We agree that abolition of private ownership of the means of production, of the profit economy, and of the bourgeois state are essential conditions for the emancipation of the workers. But saying that these are "essential" conditions does not mean that they are "sufficient." Because as soon as the capitalist system is abolished, the question arises of who is going to run the factories, the economy, the municipalities, the state, the schools and universities.

If a single party claims the right to administer the state and the society; if it imposes a monopoly of power by terror; if it does not permit the mass of workers to express their opinions, their criticisms, their worries, and their demands; if it excludes the workers from administration—then it is inevitable that a widening gulf will develop between this omnipotent bureaucracy and the mass of workers.

Then, emancipation of the workers is only a deception. And without real workers democracy in all areas, including freedom of organization and press, real emancipation of the workers is impossible.

These principled reasons are reinforced by practical ones. Like all social classes in history, the working class is not homogeneous. It has common class interests, both immediate interests and historical interests. But this *community* of interests is interwoven with *differences* which have various origins—immediate special interests (professional, group, regional, craft interests, etc.) and different levels of consciousness. Many strata of the working class have not yet become conscious of their historical interests. Others have been influenced by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologies. Still others are weighed down by the burden of past defeats and failures, of skepticism, or of the degradation caused by capitalist society, etc.

However, the capitalist system can-

not be overthrown unless the entire working class is mobilized in action against it. And this unity in action can only be obtained if these various special interests and levels of consciousness can be expressed in, and little by little neutralized through, debate and persuasion. Denying this diversity can only result in a breakdown of unity in action and in driving successive groups of workers into passivity or into the camp of the enemy.

Anyone with experience in strikes has been able to see in practice that the most successful actions are prepared and conducted through numerous assemblies, first of the unionized workers and later of all the workers concerned. In these assemblies, all the reasons in favor of the strike can be developed, all opinions can be expressed, and all the class enemy's arguments can be exposed. If a strike is launched without the benefit of such democracy, there is much more risk that many workers will observe it halfheartedly, if at all.

If this is true for an isolated strike, it holds all the more for a general strike or for a revolution. All the great revolutionary mobilizations of the workers—from the Russian revolution to the revolutionary upsurge of May and June 1968 in France and including the German and Spanish revolutions, to cite only these examples—have been characterized by veritable explosions of workers democracy. In these instances, many working-class tendencies coexisted, expressed themselves freely in speeches and in the press, and debated before the entire class.

The word "soviet"—council of workers delegates—expresses this unity of opposites—the *unity* of the workers in the diversity of their tendencies. In the Second Congress of Russian Soviets, which took power in the October Revolution, there were a dozen different tendencies and parties. Every attempt to repress this workers democracy—by the Social Democracy in Germany, by the Stalinists in Spain—has presaged, if not expressed, a setback or defeat for the revolution.

The absence of workers democracy not only hampers unity in action, it also obstructs working out a correct political line.

It is true that the workers movement has an excellent theoretical in-

strument to guide it in the often extremely complicated twists and turns of economic, social, and political struggles—revolutionary Marxism. But this tool must still be used correctly. And no one person has a monopoly on its correct application.

Without any doubt, Marx and Lenin were geniuses. But life and history ceaselessly pose new problems which cannot be solved simply by turning to the scriptures. Stalin, who was considered by many honest Communists before his death to be "infallible," in reality committed many errors, to say nothing of crimes, some of which— as in agricultural policy—have had pernicious consequences for three decades for the entire Soviet people. Mao Tse-tung, whom other naive souls also consider "infallible," endorsed the policy of Aidit, the leader of the Indonesian CP, up until the eve of the military coup d'etat. This policy was at least partially responsible for the deaths of 500,000 Indonesian Communists and workers.

As for the myth that the Central Committee of a party is "always right," or that the majority of this committee is "always right," Mao himself rejected it in the famous resolution passed by the CC of the CCP [Chinese Communist party] on the "cultural revolution" in April 1967.

But if no person or group has a monopoly on truth and wisdom, then discussion is *indispensable* to determine a correct political line. Rejection of discussion under any pretext (and the pretext that a political opponent is "counterrevolutionary" or an "enemy agent" is as old as bureaucracy), or substituting epithets or physical violence for debate, means condemning oneself to remain the victim of false ideas, inadequate analyses, and errors with debilitating if not catastrophic consequences.

Marxism is a guide to action, they often say. That is true. But Marxism is distinguished from utopian socialism by its appeal to *scientific* analysis. It does not focus on action per se. It focuses on action which can influence historical reality, which can change it in a given direction—in the direction of socialist revolution, toward the emancipation of the workers and of all humanity.

Out of the clash of ideas and tendencies, the truth emerges which can serve as a guide to action. Action

inspired by "monolithic," bookish, and infantile thought—which is not subjected to the uninhibited criticism possible only in a climate of workers democracy—is condemned to certain failure. It can only result, in the case of small groups, in the disillusionment and demoralization of individuals; in the case of unions or larger parties, in defeats for the class; and where the mass of the workers is concerned, in defeats with a long train of humiliations, privations, and impoverishment, if not casualties.

Often these arguments in favor of the principles and practice of workers democracy are countered in Stalinist circles by the assertion that workers democracy cannot be extended to the "enemies of socialism" inside the workers movement. Curiously, certain groups which claim to be antibureaucratic and very left take a similar line to justify booing and hissing or resorting to physical violence as a substitute for debate with their political opponents.

Both the Stalinists and the ultra-leftists cry: "You don't argue with revisionists, capitalist forces, and the representatives of the enemy." In practice, the Stalinists try to replace debate by repression, if not murder and the use of tanks against the workers (from the Moscow Trials to the intervention in Hungary and Czechoslovakia). The ultra-leftists limit themselves more modestly to preventing Garaudy from speaking, doubtless until the dreamed-of day when they can use more "effective" means modeled on the Stalinist ones.

Of course, the working-class bureaucracies objectively act in the interests of capital, primarily by channeling the workers' periodic revolutionary explosions toward reformist outlets and thereby blocking opportunities to overthrow capitalism. They play the same role by influencing the workers on a day-to-day basis in favor of class collaboration, undermining their class consciousness with ideas taken from the bourgeois world.

But the objective function and role of these bureaucracies is not confined to maintaining class peace. In pursuing their routine reformist activities, they come in conflict with the everyday interests of capitalism. The wage increases and social welfare laws won by the reformists—in exchange for

their pledge to keep the workers' demands within limits that do not threaten the bases of the system—reduce the capitalists' profits somewhat. The trade-union organizations which they lead inject the collective power of labor into the daily relationships between the bosses and the workers. And as a result, these conflicts have an altogether different outcome from the past century, when the strength of the trade unions was slight or nonexistent.

When the capitalist economy is flourishing, the bourgeoisie is willing to pay the price represented by these concessions in return for "social peace." But when the capitalist economy is in a bad way, these same concessions rapidly become unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. Then, it is in the capitalists' interest to eliminate these organizations completely, even the most moderate and reformist ones. The very existence of the unions becomes incompatible with the survival of the system.

This shows the real nature of the reformist bureaucracy in the workers movement. This bureaucracy is not composed of owners of capital who buy labor power in order to appropriate surplus value. It is composed of salaried employees (of the workers organizations or the state) who vacillate and waver between the camp of capital and of the proletariat, sometimes leaning toward one, sometimes toward the other, depending on their particular interests and the pressures to which they are subjected. And, in facing the class enemy, the vanguard workers have every reason to do their utmost to force these bureaucrats to return to their camp. Otherwise, the common defense would be greatly weakened.

Overlooking these elementary truths leads to the worst of catastrophes. The workers movement learned this to its cost during the rise of fascism. At that time, the "genius" Stalin invented the theory of "Social Fascism." According to this theory there was no difference between the "revisionist" Social Democrats and fascists. It was even proclaimed that the Social Democracy had to be defeated *before* the struggle against the Nazis could be won.

While the Social Democratic and Communist workers were happily bashing each other's heads in—the

reformist leaders shared the responsibility this time equally with their Stalinist counterparts—Hitler came to power, massacred thousands of worker militants, and dissolved all the workers organizations. Thus, he made possible a temporary, if somewhat embittered, reconciliation between the Social Democrats and the Communists . . . in the concentration camps. Would it not have been better, while not making any concessions in the ideological struggle against revisionism, to fight together against the Nazis and prevent them from taking power?

On an infinitely smaller and less tragic scale, the situation in the university can lead to a dilemma of the same type overnight. All the left tendencies are fighting to gain recognition of their right to carry on "political activities" on the campus. But it is quite possible that the administration will take the incidents surrounding Garaudy's visit as a pretext for banning any more political lectures. What other course, then, is there but to fight together to win minimum political freedom in the university? Would it not be preferable to respect the rules of workers democracy from now on, since they conform to the common interests of the workers movement and the student confrontation movement?

In 1957, in response to the official revelation of Stalin's crimes made at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party (which he approved of at the time), Mao Tse-tung stressed the necessity of distinguishing carefully between how to settle differences among the people—by persuasion, debate, practical experience—and how to proceed in conflicts with the class enemy. Here he was only implicitly reaffirming the need to uphold workers democracy "among the people."

But this distinction has meaning only if it is based on *objective* criteria. The capitalists (and in less industrialized countries, the landlords) are the enemy. The people are the mass of producers, white-collar workers, and, in semicolonial countries, the poor peasants.

If subjective criteria ("Anybody who doesn't support every one of my tactical turns is a capitalist and a counterrevolutionary, even if he served as president of the People's Republic of

China and vice-chairman of the Chinese Communist party for twenty years") are substituted for these objective criteria, then you fall into complete arbitrariness. You end, of course, by wiping out the distinction between "contradictions among the people" and "conflicts with the class enemy," treating the former more and more like the latter.

Of course, it is impossible to make an absolute and total separation be-

tween the two. Marginal cases are possible. We advocate frank debate in meetings of strikers. We do not think that we need restrict ourselves to polite discussion with strike-breakers.

In every marginal case, however, we must distinguish acts (or crimes) from opinions and ideological tendencies. Acts must be proved and judged according to clearly estab-

lished, well-defined criteria of the workers' interest (or after the overthrow of capitalism, of socialist legality) so as to prevent arbitrariness. Failure to distinguish between acts and opinions can only result in extinguishing workers democracy, lowering the level of consciousness and mobilization of the workers, and progressively robbing the revolutionists themselves of their ability to orient themselves politically. . . . □

Section Two: Violent Factionalism in the "New" Left

[The June 1969 split in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) resulted in several incidents of violence between contending factions, the Revolutionary Youth Movement ("Weatherman") and the Worker-Student Alliance (led

by the Progressive Labor Party). During the same period, ultraleftist groups made attempts to seize the stages at antiwar demonstrations, because of their political disagreements with the speakers or sponsoring organizations.]

1. Weatherman Leader Defends Hooligan Tactics

From the August 8, 1969, issue of *The Militant*

By Harry Ring

One of the disturbing features of the Panther-initiated United Front Against Fascism conference held in Oakland July 18-20 was the use of strong-arm tactics. People identified as members of the Progressive Labor Party were forcibly ejected from the audience. PLers and other distributing leaflets outside the hall were beaten.

Concern has been expressed about this within the movement by militants, both black and white. The concern, unfortunately, has not been unanimous.

Writing in the July 24 *SDS New Left Notes*, National Secretary Mark Rudd—whose gall is apparently equalled only by his political obtuseness—actually tries to justify the disgraceful SDS role in this whole business.

Rudd writes:

"Before the start of the conference, the Panthers announced that no members of Progressive Labor Party or the Worker Student Alliance would be allowed into the conference. The first evening SDS members, acting with the approval of the three national secretaries, helped the Panthers identify PL-WSA members, who were ejected from the auditorium.

"The next day, in Bobby Hutton Memorial Park, both the Panthers and SDS members and officers forcibly circled PL members trying to leaflet against the conference and against the Black Panther Party . . . In all cases requests were made that the scabs leave; when they did not, the necessary force was then used.

"The struggle escalated the next morning (Sunday), when a number of PL members leafletting in the park before the morning session of the conference were asked to leave, did not, and then were dealt with in strong fashion. Ten PLers wound up in the hospital."

The enforcers

Apparently, however, there are some people remaining in SDS who have sufficient regard for elementary democratic rights to protest this. At an SDS caucus meeting that Sunday afternoon, Rudd reports, the Bay Area Radical Student Union group in SDS "severely criticized" the Rudd gang for their conduct. According to Rudd, RSU forces pointed out that PL had not been disruptive of the conference and the handling of them "was more like a gang-like vendetta than political." The RSU also noted the inconsistency of declaring the need for physical war on PL while accepting without political dissent the presence on the conference platform of the Communist Party "revisionists."

In response, Rudd explains that the decision to expel PL from SDS had been "made at the convention" of the SDS in Chicago and that "the decision had to be enforced." It's true, the decision to expel PL was made "at" the convention. But it wasn't made by the convention. The decision to expel PL was made by the Rudd faction and its allies after they walked out of the convention. In any event, Rudd doesn't attempt to explain how either a decision "of" or "at" an SDS convention

gives him the right to help organize goon attacks on people simply trying to attend an open conference to which all "anti-fascists" had been publicly invited.

Regarding the point that PL had not attempted to disrupt the proceedings, Rudd replied with a logic on a general par with his intellectual honesty:

"On the second question, that of PL's disruptiveness," says Rudd, "we pointed out that PL's line when propagated in the midst of the black community or in a mass meeting of elements intent on uniting against fascism, discredits all revolutionaries because of its racist, chauvinist line on the black struggle." The implication, of course, is that black people shouldn't be allowed to choose for themselves what literature they will read!

Regarding their adaption to the CP, the SDS national enforcer explains that this was really PL's fault! The leadership of Students for a Democratic (sic) Society were so busy fingering and helping stomp PLers that they simply didn't have time to deal with the reformist CP. That, Rudd assures, will come after PL is taken care of.

If it were not such an ominous business for the movement, it would be hard to take such comments seriously. Petty-bourgeois dilettantes like Rudd may be dismissed as Walter Mittys dreaming of being big, bad bureaucrats like Joe Stalin. But even a little scratch can lead to gangrene.

The use of violence within the labor and radical movements is, unfortunately,

not at all new. Long before the Mark Rudds came along, labor bureaucrats were using goons and finger-men to eliminate dissident elements. And it was the use of such violence against political opponents by the Stalinists in the 1930s that made it a feature of radical politics for several decades.

In the USSR, Stalin's nightmare blood purges wiped out literally millions, including an entire generation of revolutionary leaders. All, of course, in the name of fighting "counterrevolutionaries."

Throughout the world the Stalinist CPs smeared, slandered and physically attacked their opponents.

The Khrushchev revelations of 1956 confirmed that Stalin's Moscow Trials, which offered the "legal" justification for branding opponents as "fascists," were complete frame-ups. This brought a new wave of revulsion against gangster tactics within the movement and such practices largely subsided. (Within the USSR popular pressure forced some easing of Stalin's police-state methods.)

Ironically, it has been the present victim, the Progressive Labor Party, which, in the past several years, has sought to reintroduce such discredited hooligan methods into the movement.

Revolutionary Marxists are not pacifists. But they reject the use of violence as a means of resolving ideological struggles within the movement. This is not simply a moral stand. Power, the Maoists like to recall, grows out of the barrel of a gun. However, they forget, or have never learned, that this is only a partial truth. Power, ultimately lies with those who have ideas that correspond to the forward motion of history. If power indeed rested solely in the barrel of a gun, the Vietnamese, fighting almost with their bare hands against the best-armed power in history, would have been destroyed long ago.

Marxists have confidence that their ideas will prevail within the movement, and ultimately in society as a whole. That is why they favor reasoned, free debate

within the movement. They know they can only gain from such debate. And they know that the only way significant forces can be won to their positions is by genuine persuasion and that the best kind of persuasion comes as the result of the confrontation of conflicting ideas.

Those who resort to smear, slander and violence within the movement only testify to the impotence or bankruptcy of their ideas. This is so pathetically apparent in the case of the Rudd group, which is not even capable of ideologically confronting the patently false line of Progressive Labor.

Violence within the movement is of value only to the capitalist rulers who use it to discredit the movement and, equally important, to justify their violence against it.

It is the inescapable responsibility of every individual and organization within the movement to speak out against the shameful hooliganism that Rudd seeks to justify. Socialist principles and practical necessity demand it.

2. Democracy in the Movement

Editorial in the August 22, 1969, issue of *The Militant*

The use of force as a substitute for free, democratic discussion between opposing tendencies within the radical movement has sharply escalated in recent months.

Progressive Labor has attempted on at least two occasions to physically prevent the Revolutionary Youth Movement (RYM) faction of SDS from holding meetings.

The RYM faction physically attacked PLers for leafletting at the Black Panther Party conference in Oakland.

The Black Panther Party at that same conference attacked PLers, members of the Independent Socialist Club (ISC), and members of Spartacist for handing out their leaflets in public streets.

SDS (RYM) and Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF) have stormed the platform and tried to take over the microphone on at least two recent occasions at radical meetings — the Student Mobilization Committee national conference in Cleveland on July 6, and the Aug. 9 antiwar rally of the New York Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee.

The attempted use of force to settle differences within the radical movement entails a very serious danger to the movement as a whole. Such violence serves only the interests of the ruling class, which stands to gain the most by seeing its opponents devour each other in internecine warfare. Divide and rule is as old as oppression itself.

Second, it provides every agent and provocateur with the perfect climate in which to operate, sowing even greater dissension, creating conditions for ever more violent actions. When violence becomes the norm for dealing with political disagreement within the movement, it only helps to justify, in the eyes of the masses, the violent methods which the ruling class uses against us.

Third, the ruling class uses such violence to discredit the radical movement, to reinforce prejudices and lies about us.

Once physical attacks begin, their inevitable tendency is to escalate. The violence becomes more extreme and the damage to the movement grows qualitatively. Only a movement united and firm in its condemnation of the introduction of such methods borrowed from the ruling class can stop the plague from decimating the forces of the radical movement.

Every tendency, organization or group within the working-class, socialist or antiwar movement has the right to hold its own meetings free from disruption, to distribute leaflets, sell literature and spread ideas.

It is the elitist ideology of the ruling class that claims the right to prevent the masses from hearing or reading certain viewpoints, to prevent certain tendencies from holding meetings. The rulers depend on lies and distortions to maintain their privileged positions. The oppressed need to know and understand the full truth to end their oppression.

It is in their interests that ideas be freely expressed. It is only in the process of confrontation of conflicting views that revolutionary truths become defined, understood and accepted by the masses. It is only through this process that distortions and reformist illusions can be destroyed.

The use of force within the working-class movement has a long and instructive record, and it is crucial that the new generation of revolutionary youth not ignore the lessons of this history. Adherence to the principles of workers democracy has always been one of the fundamental principles of the socialist movement founded by Marx and Engels and built by Lenin and Trotsky. The use of force has always been one of the chief weapons of the trade-union bureaucracies and the bureaucracies of the workers states. The trade-union "leaders" resort to goon squads to prevent workers from hearing and discussing "dissident" points of view, while in countries like the USSR and China the bureaucracy suppresses revolutionary thought and revolutionaries in the guise of suppressing "counter-revolution."

It is not surprising that the groups which have begun to use force within the movement today — SDS (RYM), PL, BPP, YAWF, the Bay Area Revolutionary Union — are all admirers of Mao-Tsetung, and to one degree or another of Stalin himself.

Equally serious is the failure of movement publications like the *Guardian* and *Liberation News Service* to take note of the growing tendency toward the use of force and condemn it.

We call upon the entire radical and socialist movement to once again declare for upholding workers democracy and to condemn any and all political groups resorting to attacks on the basic rights of other tendencies within the radical movement.

Section Three: The Progressive Labor Party Attacks the Antiwar Movement

[The Progressive Labor Party, having failed in sectarian efforts to substitute itself for the broad movement against the Vietnam war, shifted in May 1970 toward attempts to physically disrupt some of the leading organizations

in the movement. Included in this section are articles about a May 24, 1970 attack on the Student Mobilization Committee, and an attempt to break up the July 2-4, 1971 convention of the National Peace Action Coalition.]

1. PL Attacks Meeting of SMC Steering Committee

From the June 12, 1970, issue of *The Militant*

Some 55 to 60 people from the Progressive Labor Party and SDS, organized in a body, attacked and attempted to storm into a national steering committee meeting of the Student Mobilization Committee in Boston on Sunday May 24 (see *The Militant*, June 5). This violent assault was repulsed and the SMC meeting continued with its business.

The following fact sheet detailing the events was compiled from individual eyewitness reports, a tape recording of the proceedings of the meeting, and from information on the registration forms that had been filled out by the participants in the meeting. It was released by the Student Mobilization Committee.

The expanded national steering committee meeting of the SMC on May 24 had been called to discuss the May student strike upsurge and to chart the plans of the SMC for the coming months.

The SMC national steering committee is composed of one representative from each SMC chapter and one representative from each national organization working with the SMC. The May 24 meeting was expanded to include invited representatives of student strike committees. Two hundred thirty-six people registered as delegated representatives and observers from local and regional SMC chapters, student strike committees and other antiwar organizations from every part of the country.

Nine of the people who registered identified themselves as members of SDS or Progressive Labor Party. All were admitted into the meeting, although none were delegated representatives from SMC chapters or strike committees. Although both SDS and PLP are politically hostile to the SMC and the two national organizations do not work with the SMC, one each from the two organizations was admitted

as a delegated representative. The others were admitted into the meeting as observers.

John Pennington, national secretary of SDS, complained about the registration procedure and the presence of SMC ushers, stating to the registrars that "this is the way that fights start."

At the meeting that was just getting underway Nat Goodman, who is a member of SDS and a candidate member of PLP, approached the door and attempted to enter. He was asked to fill out a registration form first, as everyone else had done. He refused and attempted to push his way into the meeting. He was pushed back by the ushers at the door, but was not hit.

At that point, those members of SDS and PLP who had already been admitted into the meeting room rushed out. They demanded that Goodman be admitted without registering although they were familiar with the registration process and knew he would be admitted if he registered. They began a scuffle with the SMC ushers in the hallway in an attempt to force their way in. They were quickly rebuffed and restrained.

When the scuffle was over, those who had left the meeting requested to be let back inside. A discussion took place inside the meeting. The incident in the hallway was described and a history of PL and SDS assaults on the antiwar movement was reviewed. Most recently this included assaults on an antiwar meeting at Columbia during the strike and two assaults in the Boston area: 1) At the April 15 antiwar rally in Boston, a large PLP and SDS group attacked the speakers platform; 2) On May 3, after threats had been made against him for days, eight members of PLP and SDS attacked and beat Bob Bresnahan, an SMC activist, who had been a marshal captain on April 15.

Despite the scuffle in the hallway, the meeting decided to let the two delegated representatives from SDS and PLP back in. This would enable them to express their point of view, but would guard against the now-apparent danger of disruption of the sessions. This offer was not accepted. The SDS and PLP group withdrew to the main hall, held a discussion, and threatened to return in force.

After the lunch recess, fearing a renewed attempt to disrupt or break up the meeting, many of the people in attendance joined together to set up a defense. Cooperating in this effort were individuals from SMC, Beacon Hill Support Group, Socialist Workers Party, Citizens for Participation Politics, Draft Information Center, Workers League, National Organization for Women, Female Liberation, Vietnam Referendum '70, Young Socialist Alliance, International Socialists, and others.

These precautions proved necessary when, after meeting at the PLP headquarters, a large SDS and PL group returned, to storm the meeting. About 55-60 were observed coming in an organized group. They were met in the hallway outside by the united defense and the two groups stood facing each other. John Pennington and Neil Goldstein of the SDS and PLP group were admitted to the meeting.

Pennington addressed the meeting. He gave his version of the earlier incident and demanded that all the people in the hallway be admitted. He finished his statement by saying that his group was coming in anyway, and that "if people attack us on the way in, we intend to defend ourselves." He passed out a leaflet to the meeting which referred to the earlier incident and which stated, "The SMC leaders are bootlickers of the ruling class who back the liberal politicians by using force against the rad-

icals and communists. Today's attack will not go unanswered."

Pennington left the meeting room, came out into the hallway and called out to his group to come in. The united defense would not let them through. The PLP and SDS group pushed forward, and started fighting in an attempt to force its way in. A pitched battle ensued. Several people were injured. John McCann, the Massachusetts statewide coordinator of Vietnam Referendum '70 and a member of the SMC defense team, was pulled into the other line and severely beaten by six to eight people. His head and hands were badly bruised, his nose was broken, and an eye injured seriously.

Nevertheless, the defenders were determined not to let their meeting be broken up, and they successfully kept the attackers from accomplishing their purpose. When it became quite clear that they would be unable to force

their way through, the PL and SDS group retreated. The SMC meeting then continued with its business. Despite the disruption, discussion of the student strike upsurge continued and plans were laid to build antiwar demonstrations on May 30 and the national antiwar conference in Cleveland on June 19-20.

The first order of business when the steering committee reconvened was a discussion of the attack and the response to it. Two motions were passed:

1) The national steering committee calls for a nationwide campaign against the use of violence within the movement and for the right of all groups to hold meetings without disruption. This motion passed unanimously.

2) The SMC also calls upon members of SDS and PLP to repudiate the attack made upon the SMC national steering committee by SDS and

PLP. This motion passed with one dissenting vote.

We, the undersigned, were present at the SMC steering committee in Cambridge, Mass., on May 24, 1970. Although each individual did not witness every event described in the account, our observations coincide with this report, and collectively, we witnessed everything which took place. Signed by: Frank H. Adams, Draft Information Center; Pat Connolly, Workers League; Gus Horowitz, Socialist Workers Party; Mike Kelly, Boston SMC; Jean Lafferty, Boston Female Liberation; Carol Lipman, SMC; Caroline Lund, Young Socialist Alliance; John McCann, Vietnam Referendum '70; Katherine Page, Beacon Hill Support Group; Susan Steward, National Organization for Women; David Tedesco, Citizens for Participation Politics; Mike Urquhart, International Socialists; Tommye Weise, SMC.

2. YSA Condemns Violence in the Movement

From the June 12, 1970, issue of *The Militant*

In a statement released May 29 the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialist Alliance extended its "complete solidarity to the campaign initiated by the SMC to eliminate the use of violence within the movement."

The statement cited four principal reasons for concern about the use of violence inside the movement: the need for the entire movement to focus attention on the real enemy, the capitalist system and its ruling class; the need to

reach masses of people, who are turned away from the radical movement by self-defeating internecine fighting; the need for free democratic discussion as the only effective way of settling differences within the movement; and the importance of the basic democratic right of all organizations to meet, organize their activities and, in the last analysis, to exist.

"Only a politically sterile organization needs to resort to force to convince

others of its ideas, or can believe that it can eliminate ideas with which it disagrees through violence," the statement said. "Any group of people within the movement must have the right to hold its own meetings and to decide how they will be conducted — who will be invited, of what the agenda will consist and any other matters on which it chooses to decide. . . . All differences within the movement should be settled politically — in debate and practice — not physically."

3. Wide Array of Groups Back SMC Against PL Attacks

From the June 12, 1970, issue of *The Militant*

By MIKE KELLY

Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Massachusetts

BOSTON, June 1 — More than 120 activists representing 24 organizations tonight endorsed the national Student Mobilization Committee statement condemning the May 24 attack on an SMC

meeting by Progressive Labor Party members and their supporters in SDS, and the use of violence to settle political differences within the movement. They vowed to defend each others' meetings.

The resolution was passed unanimously at the meeting, hosted by the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butch-

er Workmen of North America, Packinghouse Workers Division, Local P11, P575, P616 in Dorchester, Mass.

John Craig, president of Local P575 and vice-president of the state AFL-CIO Labor Board, opened the meeting, chaired by Marilyn Levin of the SMC, by reading a statement from John

McCann, state coordinator of Vietnam Referendum '70, who is recuperating from injuries inflicted on him during the May 24 attack.

McCann deplored the use of violence within the movement and called for a united defense committee to be set up. Craig also volunteered to be the treasurer for the John McCann Fund. (Contributions to this fund, which will help defray the high cost of hospitalization for John McCann, should be sent to the John McCann Fund, c/o Vietnam Referendum '70, 19 Brookline St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139.)

George Kontanis presented the national statement to the meeting, giving a history of earlier attacks by PLP and SDS.

The Revolutionary Marxist Caucus of SDS made a statement at the meeting repudiating the attack, and asked for an amendment noting that not all caucuses or members of SDS supported such attacks. The amendment which was accepted by the meeting said: "The Revolutionary Marxist Caucus of SDS

repudiates gangster tactics within the movement and will support all defense efforts against violent attacks."

During the discussion, John Craig emphasized how important united defense efforts were, describing how he and other union members recently helped protect a United Farm Workers organizer in the area at many meetings. All groups present agreed that the most effective way to stop such attacks was by involving other groups in the defense effort.

The groups in attendance at the meeting were: the Bread and Roses Collective at Boston University; the Beacon Hill Support Group; the Belmont Peace Action Council; Boston Women United; Charles St. Meeting House; Citizens for Participation Politics; Computer Professionals for Peace; Draft Information Center; Female Liberation; Gay Liberation Front; Local P575 Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America; Packinghouse Workers Division, AFL-CIO; Mass. Strike; Mass. Lawyers Guild; North Shore

Committee to End the War in Vietnam Now; Revolutionary Marxist Caucus of SDS; Revolutionary Youth Center; Student Mobilization Committee; Socialist Workers Party; Spartacist League; Vets for Peace; Vietnam Referendum '70; Workers Committee for a National Strike Against the War; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Young Socialist Alliance. Also endorsing the statement was the Cambridge *Phoenix*, a local underground paper.

BOSTON—During a press conference held here May 28 at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary where John McCann was hospitalized, Nobel Prize-winning Harvard biology professor George Wald condemned the May 24 attack on the SMC meeting. Others who participated in the press conference included John Craig, David Tedesco of Citizens for Participation Politics, and John Businger, an aide of the late Representative H. James Shea, Jr.

4. PL-SDS Fail in Attempt to Break Up Antiwar Convention

From the July 16, 1971, issue of *The Militant*

By HARRY RING

NEW YORK—A significant feature of the recently concluded NPAC convention was the decisive way it repulsed the efforts of the Progressive Labor Party to physically disrupt the gathering and prevent it from carrying through its business.

NPAC was able to prepare for the attack that occurred because PLP and its "SDS" brazenly made public in advance their intention to carry through an organized hooligan effort to disrupt the convention.

Several public meetings were held by PLP-SDS in Boston, where the group has its main base. There, efforts were made to recruit a contingent to come to New York for the express purpose of preventing certain invited speakers at the slated NPAC conference from being heard.

Initially, the two speakers selected as PL targets were Senator Vance Hartke (D-Ind.), a leading senatorial critic of the war, and Victor Reuther, international affairs director of the United Auto Workers. Then, David Livingston, president of District 65

of the United Distributive Workers, was added to PL's "verboden" list.

Leaflets were distributed by PL-SDS in New York urging people to attend the convention to prevent these people from speaking.

One leaflet, asserting that Hartke did not have the right to speak because he is a liberal capitalist politician, urged people to attend the convention and "SHOUT HIM DOWN!"

Another leaflet declared in part: "Hartke and Reuther shouldn't be allowed to speak at all. These guys will scream freedom of speech: but there should be no freedom to speak for people who ride the coattail of the antiwar movement for their own personal gain."

A leaflet passed out at the convention the night of the opening rally included a proposed list of chants to be used while the speakers deemed objectionable by PL were on the platform. The concluding suggested chant was:

"OFF HARTKE, OFF REUTHER, ETC."

This ominous rhetoric was escalated

in still another Progressive Labor Party leaflet, which declared:

"Working people in this country will fight until every creep that NPAC builds, and the NPAC leaders themselves, are either behind bars or buried."

Long record

Such rhetoric cannot be dismissed as simply the mouthings of mindless fools. The Progressive Labor Party has too long a record of hooligan violence against political opponents within the movement. Those who were in SDS during the faction struggle that saw the demise of that organization know well PL's penchant for physical solutions to political problems.

There was the case in 1969 of Dave Kemnitzer, a San Francisco anti-PL SDSer who charged he was beaten in his home by PL goons. The PL paper *Challenge* carried a sardonic semiacknowledgement.

In 1967 in San Francisco, *Militant* salespeople were attacked by goons at a PL-run open-air rally.

In New York in 1967, when PL initiated a factionally competitive petition to a Peace Parade Committee antiwar referendum petition, PLers set upon a group of Parade Committee petitioners and threatened others.

Last spring, in Boston, they attempted to disrupt an SMC steering committee meeting, were ejected from the hall and returned in force for a two-hour pitched battle, which resulted in one antiwar activist partially losing sight in one eye.

When the auditorium doors were opened for the NPAC rally, about a hundred PL partisans were among the first to march in. They immediately attempted to seize the stage but were moved off it by a contingent of marshals. The marshals included members of District 65, other unionists, and volunteers from the NPAC conference.

Despite continuous unruliness and disruption, the PLers were permitted to remain in the hall as the rally progressed. At one point in the proceedings, in an extreme effort to placate the group, they were given a speaker on the platform.

When it came Hartke's turn to address the rally, the PLers seemed near berserk in their efforts to prevent him from being heard. Led by two people with electronically amplified bullhorns, they chanted, screamed and cursed. Despite the tumult, Hartke completed his address as the rest of the audience sat quietly and tried to hear him above the din.

Then, later, when Victor Reuther was introduced, the PLers apparently decided to make a last-ditch effort to prevent him from speaking and their frenzy reached a new pitch.

Disrupters removed

It was then that the NPAC coordinators decided that it would be impossible to continue the rally if the disruption was permitted to continue. The marshals were instructed to remove the offenders from the hall.

In a remarkable display of disciplined restraint, the marshals, several hundred strong, proceeded to take the screaming, biting, kicking disrupters out. The remainder of the audience displayed equally impressive discipline, mostly remaining seated as the hooligans were being removed. It is really quite unusual to see a hundred determined disrupters removed from

a meeting without serious injury to anyone, and with the entire process carried through in such a way that the meeting is able to continue. The atmosphere of discipline was such that the city police had no pretext to enter the building.

This was possible for several reasons. The marshals had been carefully briefed in advance, with a strong emphasis on the need to use only the absolute minimal force necessary to deal with disrupters. They largely succeeded in doing this despite the extreme provocation of the PLers. The marshals even restrained themselves when, as they reached the doors, a number of the evicted PLers sprayed them with cans of mace.

The eviction of the disrupters without bringing the meeting to an end was also possible because by the time marshals did act, it was entirely plain to the audience where the responsibility lay and why the action was necessary.

After the rally, a meeting of the NPAC Steering Committee voted unanimously that those who had disrupted the meeting not be permitted to return for the next day's session.

In adopting the motion, the committee emphasized that the issue of political exclusion was in no way involved and that people were to be kept out only on the basis of their disruptive activity and no one was to be excluded on the basis of their political views and association. In fact, a number of PL-SDSers were permitted in the next day and freely distributed their literature. They participated in the convention discussion, where they sought to defend PL's conduct and persuade the convention to reverse the decision to keep the disrupters out. However, a motion to endorse the Steering Committee decision was approved by the overwhelming majority.

That afternoon, the PLers massed outside the convention door and sought to storm their way in, hurling rocks and bottles at the marshals assembled at the entrance. Two marshals were hit, requiring stitches for facial cuts, but none were seriously injured. The attack was successfully repulsed and the doors closed. Police then appeared and forcibly dispersed the PLers from the street.

On Sunday morning, the PLers re-

portedly held a caucus meeting and after a debate decided it was futile to again storm the meeting, and they limited themselves to picketing in front. A few gained admission, but there were only minor incidents during the final day's session.

Marshals commended

Most of the convention participants were elated that so difficult a provocation had been so well handled and were somewhat astonished when a resolution was introduced at the opening of the Sunday session proposing to criticize PL for its behavior and to condemn the marshals for use of alleged undue force in removing the disrupters. The effect of the resolution would have been to deny NPAC the right to hold its convention.

The resolution singled out Fred Halstead, who had participated actively in the marshaling for special censure. Halstead, the 1968 presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party, has served as chief marshal at several major New York and national antiwar demonstrations.

This motion was introduced by a member of the Quaker Action Project on behalf of a workshop held the previous evening by members of the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice.

Responding to this motion, the convention presiding committee offered a motion commending the marshals for an extremely difficult job well done.

The only open backers of the PCPJ workshop motion were some supporters of that group.

Since members of the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party were among those who participated actively in the marshaling, several of the various political sects attending the conference permitted blind factional animosity to influence their judgment in the matter, and they refrained from supporting the clearly justified presiding committee motion commending the marshals. The only one of these groups that supported the motion and offered to help with defense of the meeting was the Workers League.

Members of the Spartacist League actually joined with the PLers in the disruption and were evicted with them. The National Caucus of Labor Committees and International Socialists took evasive positions.

Some supporters of PCPJ sought to indicate their disagreement with the workshop motion. One speaker, Julius Margolin, a New York unionist, declared that while he disapproved of the way the conference was being run, he recognized the need for NPAC to defend its right to hold a meeting and supported the motion to commend

the marshals.

Ed Block, a representative of the United Electrical Workers, declared that as a unionist, he recognized the need for self-defense. "We should commend the marshals for what they did", he declared. "I think they acted with extreme restraint."

NPAC coordinators Jerry Gordon

and Ruth Gage-Calby spoke vigorously in support of the motion to commend the marshals, as did Dan Siegel, a member of the presiding committee.

The PCPJ motion received only a scattering of votes, and the motion to commend the marshals was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

Section Four: The Young Workers Liberation League Attacks Student Rights

[The following items deal with the attempt of the Stalinist Young Workers Liberation League to bar the Young Socialist Alliance from political activity at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. The attempt, which proved unsuccessful, included a physical assault led by a national leader of the YWLL, Richard Hoyen, on Will Stanley, a member of the YSA on the campus.]

1. YWLL Leader Defends Its Actions

From the February 2, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

The following letter from Matty Berkelhammer, organizational secretary of the Young Workers Liberation League, appeared in the Jan. 17 Guardian.

An item in the Dec. 27 issue of the Guardian raises serious questions about your journalistic integrity. It further shows the deterioration of your political outlook and the close kinship of your new-found Maoism to Trotskyism.

The article, "YSA Member Beaten" which appeared in the Movement column falsely states that Richard Hoyen, a member of the YWLL at Borough of Manhattan Community College, assaulted a member of the Young Socialist Alliance. This is a slander. It is totally unsubstantiated. What is the source of the Guardian's information? From a YSA press release? Is it Guardian policy to quote Trotskyite press releases verbatim? Why didn't the Guardian bother to check the accuracy of the story with Hoyen, the YWLL or the Third World Coalition at BMCC, which is in the leadership of the student government and which allegedly is denying the YSA its right to function on campus?

Does it matter to the Guardian

that Hoyen is an Asian youth who is being slandered by the YSA? Does it matter to the Guardian that he is the coordinator of the U. S. Nguyen Van Troi Hospital Committee, which is raising funds to build a children's hospital in Hanoi as an act of solidarity with the victims of U. S. aggression, and that the Trotskyites oppose this project, just as they oppose the signing of the 9-point agreement to end the war?

The Guardian likes to wrap itself in the cloak of the great defender of the third world. Aren't you interested in finding out the viewpoint of the Third World Coalition at BMCC, which has the overwhelming support of all students at BMCC, black, Puerto Rican, Asian and white, and has been engaged in a sharp political struggle with the racist administration of BMCC for several years?

We think that further investigation by the Guardian would reveal:

1) that the YSA, acting in harmony with the administration, has been playing a thoroughly racist role in trying to undermine the anti-imperialist Third World Coalition student government at BMCC.

2) that the YSA has not had its right to function politically inter-

ferred with. They can still use school facilities, issue leaflets, etc. As a matter of fact, they are currently circulating their scurrilous anti-treaty material on the campus.

3) that the real issue in this dispute is not between the YWLL and the YSA, as the YSA would have people believe. What is involved is a mass rejection by an entire student body and a student government, under third world leadership, of the racist and reactionary policies of the YSA.

We think the Guardian owes its readers and Hoyen, the YWLL and the Third World Coalition a public apology for the unsubstantiated, slanderous statements contained in this article.

Let's see the Guardian apply the concept of self-criticism which it so loudly flaunts. Or [is] the Guardian so motivated by anti-communism that it is willing to print falsehoods as a substitute for ideological struggle?

The Guardian replies: We believe that the main question in this matter is whether or not political disputes on the left should be settled by violence. Richard Hoyen has refused to explain to us why he disputes the account given by YSA

member Will Stanley, who says that a group of students including Hoyen physically attacked him.

While the Guardian has made clear its opposition to Trotskyism and its role in the antiwar move-

ment many times, the behavior and politics of YSA is not the central issue in this situation.

2. Democracy in the Student Movement; Where Does the YWLL Stand?

From the February 2, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

By JOSEPH HARRIS
and MALIK MIAH

The Young Workers Liberation League has finally issued a public letter concerning the denial of a student charter to the Young Socialist Alliance and a physical attack on a YSA member.

The letter, printed in the Jan. 17 *Guardian*, was written by Matty Berkelhammer, the national organizational secretary of the YWLL. It harshly criticizes the *Guardian* for printing a "false" news article about the events at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) last November.

Berkelhammer contends that Richard Hoyen, a national leader of the YWLL, did not assault YSA member Will Stanley, and that "the YSA has not had its right to function politically interfered with" at BMCC.

What are the facts? At the Nov. 22 Student Government Association meeting at BMCC, the YSA's student charter was revoked; members of the YSA were expelled from the editorial board of the *Third Eye*, the campus newspaper; and YSA members were excluded from attending future meetings of the student government.

Richard Hoyen, who is the YWLL's national peace director and a coordinator of the Nguyen Van Troi Hospital Fund, placed these motions on the floor. He motivated them by calling YSA members "wreckers," "manipulators," "agents," and "counterrevolutionaries." He claimed that the YSA posed a "political threat" to the Third World Coalition at BMCC, whose members make up a majority of the student government.

At the student government meeting on Nov. 29, the YSA returned to appeal the previous week's decision. The appeal was tabled, however. Soon after the meeting, Hoyen and two other members of the Third World Coalition physically assaulted Will Stanley, tossing him to the floor and kicking him in the face.

The YSA responded to these attacks by initiating a campaign against the

use of violence to settle political differences, and in support of the YSA's right to a charter. This campaign gained the support of many student, Black, and Puerto Rican leaders and groups in the New York area, as well as support from around the country.

As a result of this campaign, one student government official informed the YSA before the Dec. 21 student government meeting that its charter "was never officially revoked." Just three days earlier, however, the YSA had been forced to take down a literature table on the basis that it did not have a charter.

What does Berkelhammer say about these facts? He says they are false, a "slander," and "totally unsubstantiated," but he presents no alternative account. Most importantly, he avoids discussing whether the YWLL supports the YSA's right to campus recognition and where the YWLL stands on the use of violence within the radical and student movements.

Instead, Berkelhammer says, "What is involved is a mass rejection by an entire student body and a student government, under third world leadership, of the racist and reactionary policies of the YSA." (Emphasis added.)

Is it true that an "entire student body" has rejected the YSA? The fact is that more than 300 students at BMCC signed a petition supporting the YSA's right to campus recognition. Campus groups such as Black Arts, Society Quisquiyano, Circulo Boricua Baja (a Dominican organization), Phi Beta Delta, the Christian Fellowship, and other organizations have also supported the YSA's right to a charter.

In fact, at the Nov. 22 meeting the majority of the student government abstained on the motion to revoke the YSA's charter.

Berkelhammer makes another serious charge against the YSA that is untrue. He says, "the YSA, acting in harmony with the administration, has been playing a thoroughly racist role

in trying to undermine the anti-imperialist Third World Coalition student government at BMCC." (Emphasis added.)

Despite its political differences with the Third World Coalition, the YSA has consistently defended the group from administration attacks. In the past semester, the YSA supported the Third World Coalition against administration attempts to deny it the seats it won in the student government election.

During the fight over the YSA charter, the YSA strongly opposed a move by the administration to intervene in the matter. An open letter the YSA sent to the administration said in part: "Because the Young Socialist Alliance believes that all student affairs should be under student control. . . and because we oppose the administration's intervening in the affairs of students, the YSA will not prepare any reports for, or have any meetings with the administration on this matter."

What about the "racist and reactionary policies" of the YSA? Berkelhammer tries to equate racism and reaction with any YSA position the YWLL disagrees with. The YWLL, which supports the "peace" accords, says the YSA is "attacking the Vietnamese" by refusing to support the demand that Nixon sign the treaty. In addition, Berkelhammer makes the ridiculous claim that the YSA opposes fund raising projects for building hospitals in Hanoi.

The YSA supports Black nationalism, which the YWLL opposes. Thus, YWLL members have called the YSA "racist" for its strategy for Black liberation.

The YWLL uses these absurd slanders as a substitute for debating its real differences with the YSA. It hopes to discredit the ideas of the YSA simply by labeling them "reactionary."

In addition, the YWLL has shown that it is not opposed to using physical violence to intimidate those with whom it disagrees. Such undemocratic prac-

tices are in the traditions of the Communist Party, which the YWLL is in political solidarity with. The use of goon-squad tactics by any organization is intolerable and must be fought by every critical-minded activist. Such methods prevent free, open discussion and provide an excuse for school ad-

ministrations and the government to victimize radical groups.

The Berkelhammer letter completely avoids answering the real questions posed by the events at BMCC: Does the YWLL support the right of the YSA to have a student charter? Is the YWLL opposed to the use of phys-

ical intimidation and slander to resolve political differences within the movement?

The YSA believes that political differences within the movement can only be resolved in an atmosphere of open debate and discussion, free from any fear of physical threats.

3. Reviving Old Tactics

From the December 15, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

The Young Workers Liberation League, the Communist Party's youth organization, has organized a campaign to prevent the Young Socialist Alliance from obtaining official recognition at Borough of Manhattan Community College in New York City. One of the YWLL leaders is also implicated in a physical attack on a YSA member on the same campus.

Such undemocratic conduct by an organization that claims to be socialist is intolerable. YSA National Chairman Andy Rose has demanded that the YWLL repudiate these actions by its members and supporters. So far they have refused to do so.

The YWLL attacks are one of the consequences of a stepped-up anti-Trotskyist propaganda campaign presently being waged by the bureaucrats in Moscow and the Communist Party in the U.S. Slandorous articles that have appeared recently in Soviet "theoretical" journals and CPUSA magazines and newspapers brand Trotskyism—including Trotskyist organizations like the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance—as "a vulgar weapon of imperialism and reaction," a "counter-revolutionary element within the Left," an "advocate of blatant racism," and an "enemy of peace."

A two-part article in the June and July issues of the CP's magazine *Political Affairs*, entitled "Trotskyism: 'Left-Wing' Voice of Reaction," concludes with the admonition that "The SWP will not realize its hope of becoming the predominant force on the Left. It will continue to be a counter-revolutionary sect. But what must always be remembered is that Trotskyism will never disappear of its own accord. It must be fought."

The effect of these lies and the call to fight "counter-revolutionary" Trotskyists is to whip up an atmosphere among young CP and YWLL members that any measures against the SWP and YSA are justified if they can get away with them.

This hooligan conduct against socialists with whom they disagree harks back to the 1930s and 1940s, when such measures were the stock-in-trade of the Stalinized Communist Party. Attempts to revive these poisonous methods and to try to employ them today will not succeed in intimidating the SWP, the YSA, or any other critical-minded revolutionists. Such tactics will backfire and expose the true nature of the CP and YWLL's bankrupt politics, which are subordinated to the policies of the privileged bureaucracy in the USSR.

Section Five: Defending the Movement Against a Sectarian Rampage

[The National Caucus of Labor Committees is one of the sects that emerged out of the splintering of SDS. Organized as a cult around its leader, Lyn Marcus, the NCLC launched an effort in April 1973 to "mop up" the Communist Party and other leftists. In response, the Socialist Workers Party organized united efforts to defend the Communist Party against attack. Frustrated in its efforts to break up meetings, the NCLC turned to sneak

attacks against individual members of radical groups. This called for a change in tactics and, in addition to mobilizing the left against the NCLC's hooliganism, the SWP and other groups called for the prosecution of the attackers. Evidence had piled up, in the meantime, that indicated that police agents were active participants in the NCLC rampage.]

1. Labor Committee Goons Attack the YWLL

From the April 27, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

PHILADELPHIA, April 14 — On Wednesday, April 11, a group of 12 to 15 people, organized by and including several members of the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), attacked members of the Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL) at Temple University here.

Eyewitnesses report that the attackers used lead pipes and other weapons. Six of the injured required hospital treatment. According to the Communist Party's *Daily World* of April 13, both Steve Rasmussen and Ed Aguilar suffered broken noses; Robin Goldberg suffered a broken rib; Waldo Woods had an eye injury; Robert Rustin suffered facial wounds and possibly a fractured jaw; and Bill Meyer-son had facial injuries.

This attack follows a series of threats by the NCLC to physically destroy the Communist Party and the YWLL.

The course on which the NCLC has embarked poses a threat to the entire radical movement. The absurdity of this small sect's pretensions to "destroy" the CP and the YWLL in no way lessens the grave danger posed by the introduction of the tactics of violence into the movement.

The capitalist press in Philadelphia has already seized on the incident, devoting extensive coverage to it in an attempt to discredit all radicals as goons and thugs. There is also a danger that the NCLC's gangster-like tactics can be used by the university administration and the cops to justify measures directed at other groups on the left, and to restrict civil liberties and political activity on campus. NCLC's violent acts create an

atmosphere that facilitates the work of police agents, whose aim is to weaken and destroy all radical groups.

The NCLC has been in a faction fight with the CP and the YWLL within the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). Recently a segment of the NWRO including the NCLC broke away and held a convention to form a new organization called the National Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization (NU-WRO). The Coalition to Defend the NWRO, which includes the CP and YWLL, denounced the split as an attempt "to divide and destroy NWRO" and as a "racist movement operating under the pretext of advocating changes for the have-nots."

Following the NU-WRO founding convention, held at Temple, the NCLC escalated their factional warfare far beyond the limits of political discussion and debate. NCLC began to physically threaten the CP and the YWLL. An editorial appeared in the April 9-13 *New Solidarity*, the newspaper of the NCLC, under the heading "Death of the CPUSA."

The editorial announced that the CP was politically "dead" and that the NCLC had "the unique right and obligation to destroy the last vestige of left-hegemony of the Communist Party in the U. S. A. today. And that is precisely what we are about to do." The editorial states that the NCLC has the "awful responsibility" to organize a mass force within five years that would be capable of instituting "workers' governments throughout North America and Western Europe."

Seeing the Communist Party as an obstacle in carrying out their "awful

responsibility," the *New Solidarity* editorial states, "Immediately, readers will obtain a taste of our ruthlessness in the way we proceed to finish off the Communist Party."

In the following issue of *New Solidarity* an article called "Operation Mop-Up: The Class Struggle Is For Keeps" explained more clearly the plans of NCLC. "To implement our editorial policy of last week, we will enter CP-YWLL meetings, conferences, rallies, classes, etc. to confront the participants with the CP's alliance with Philadelphia fascists to help Nixon destroy the March 31 Philadelphia convention of the National Unemployed and Welfare Rights Organization. These meetings or other events will not take place unless their participants first condemn the class treachery of the CP leadership."

It was in the context of these serious threats of physical violence that the attack on April 11 took place. The Third World Solidarity Coalition of Temple University held a rally on April 11, attended by about 100 people. An NCLC member approached Tony Monteiro, a leader of the CP, and tried to sell him a copy of *New Solidarity*. Monteiro tore up the paper, slapped the NCLC member, and pushed her down.

Another NCLC member approached the scuffle and was knocked into a nearby bush. Members of the NCLC then left the rally. The *Philadelphia Tribune* quoted Monteiro as saying, "It's true that I pushed the girl down, but she kept pushing her paper in my face and threatening me, saying that I had five days to go."

The NCLC has sought to utilize

this action by Monteiro to justify its attack on the YWLL, but their public boasting about their attack as part of "Operation Mop-Up" demonstrates the spuriousness of this assertion.

After the rally, a group of people, including several members of the YWLL, went to the YWLL office in the Student Activities Center. Shortly after 1 p.m. the NCLC brutally attacked the YWLL members.

NCLC claims that they went to the Student Activities Center to talk to the YWLL and that a member of the YWLL "shoved a knife down the throat of a Labor Committee member — ripping his tongue."

Harvey McArthur, a member of the Temple Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party candidate for city controller of the city of Philadelphia, witnessed the attack and says he saw no knife.

He states that "the NCLC rushed into the offices, started beating people up, and then rushed out—the whole thing took about five minutes. If they came 'to talk' as they claim, they wouldn't have come armed with clubs and pipes." McArthur also says that Jose Torres, a leading NCLC member, was seen directing the attack on the YWLL.

According to the April 13 *Daily World*, "The injured individuals and the Temple chapter of the YWLL intend to press criminal charges against the perpetrators of this vicious attack." A warrant has been issued for the arrest of Jose Torres, and one NCLC member has been arrested.

The Disciplinary Committee of the Student Affairs Committee held hearings on Friday April 13 to gather

testimony and make a recommendation to the administration. Several members of the Third World Solidarity Coalition, the Attica Brigade, and Professor Zelnick of the English Department testified in agreement with the YWLL's version of the events.

The Disciplinary Committee, backed up by the administration, then voted to prohibit the NCLC from further political activity on campus.

The campus community has reacted very strongly against the NCLC actions. An editorial in the *Temple News* said that "if the National Caucus cannot tolerate the free exchange of ideas among students, then the University should not tolerate the National Caucus on campus." The editorial called for revoking the charter of NCLC at Temple.

Most students on campus feel that the NCLC bears responsibility for this vicious attack. Many radical students are concerned that the administration will use the attack to try to limit political organizing and other civil liberties on campus. The administration has already begun that process by restricting the rights of nonstudents to come on campus. On Thursday, April 12, for example, members of the Black Panther Party were kicked off campus when they tried to solicit funds for their Breakfast for Children Fund.

The National Caucus of Labor Committees has distributed a leaflet on campus about the attack. The leaflet admits and tries to justify the attack, and promises more of the same. It states: "We have warned the CP: the Communist Party has crossed class lines for the last time. Within two months, we will destroy the Communist Party as a political organi-

zation. That is the reason for the 'melee' on Wednesday."

The NCLC has escalated its epithets to a hysterical pitch: "The Communist Party, allied with the poverty pimps who 'speak for the community' but organize against it, with the fascist Ed Schwartz and the Nixon judenrat agency Philadelphia WRO. . . ."

The policy of the NCLC to physically attack the Communist Party and the YWLL is being carried out elsewhere as well. In New York City, for example, the *Daily World* reports that in the past two weeks the NCLC has attempted to disrupt a May Day planning conference and has harassed and threatened Communist Party members at the Jefferson Bookshop and the W.E.B. DuBois Community Center in Harlem.

APRIL 18—The National Caucus of Labor Committees has escalated its campaign of intimidation against those who disagree with them. Copies of the April 16 supplement to the NCLC newspaper *New Solidarity* were posted at the entrances to the offices of the Socialist Workers Party in Philadelphia and Lower Manhattan last night. The supplement contains a clear threat to all who defend the right of radical groups to hold and defend their views: "If other socialist organizations cross the line and actively join the CP's alliance with Nixon and the fascists in the name of 'workers democracy,' they will be treated similarly."

2. Temple University YSA Urges United Defense of YWLL

From the April 27, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

The following statement was made by the Temple University Young Socialist Alliance.

The Young Socialist Alliance condemns the recent physical attacks by members of the National Caucus of Labor Committees against members of the Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League.

The entire movement must come to the defense of the CP and the YWLL against such hooligan attacks. We must stand in solid support of the rights of all within the movement to carry out their political activities without fear of intimidation or violence from other groups.

Such violent attacks have no place within the student and radi-

cal movement and must be rejected as a means of settling political disputes. We must be able to consider and discuss all ideas in an atmosphere of free debate and discussion. It is only through this open exchange of ideas that the issues and differences facing the movement can be clarified.

The use of violence as a means

of "resolving" debates plays into the hands of the administration and cops by lending credence to their slander that the movement is basically violent and destructive. The atmosphere created by such tactics can also create fertile ground for police agents and provocateurs in their attempts to de-

stroy radical organizations.

The administration at Temple University has already begun to use NCLC's attacks as a handle to place restrictions on civil liberties on campus. On April 12, for example, NCLC's actions were used as a pretext for excluding non-student members of the Black

Panther Party from campus. We must oppose all such restrictions by the administration.

The Young Socialist Alliance calls on all radical and student organizations to condemn NCLC's attacks and to repudiate the use of such tactics.

3. Repudiate NCLC Gangsterism

Editorial from the April 27, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

The gangster-like tactics the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) used in its attack on members of the Young Workers Liberation League (see story on page 9) constitute a threat to the entire radical movement. Attacking with pipes and clubs, the NCLC thugs sent six YWLL members to the hospital.

The NCLC openly states that it intends to continue such attacks, publicly proclaiming their intention to "bury" and "pulverize" the Communist Party and YWLL. In an April 16 supplement to their newspaper, *New Solidarity*, the NCLC threatens to "treat similarly" any other socialist organizations that "join the CP's alliance with Nixon and the fascists in the name of 'workers democracy.'"

These methods must be condemned. The use of violence within the radical movement aids no one but the ruling class. If attacks such as the one against the YWLL are allowed to continue, they will be used against other organizations, as the Labor Committee itself has already threatened.

Violent attacks within the movement threaten the very right to organize, to present ideas, and to win others to those ideas. Movement groups face enough limitations on these rights from the rulers of this country without having to also face such assaults from within the radical movement.

The NCLC attempts to justify its hoodlum attacks by labelling the CP and YWLL as "fascist" organizations. Such use of the word "fascist" to excuse physical attacks on groups within the socialist movement should be repudiated by every organization committed to democratic rights for working-class organizations.

The NCLC's goon attacks are antithetical to the aims and principles of the socialist movement. Socialists support the practice of workers democracy—that is, the concept that the way to solve differences within the working-class movement is through free and open debate and testing of ideas.

The use of violence within the movement, on the other hand, makes it possible for the ruling class to discredit the left as antisocial sects fighting amongst themselves.

In addition, these methods create a perfect atmosphere for police agents whose aims are to destroy the entire movement. Agents-provocateurs would like nothing better than to see radical groups resort to armed attacks on each other. The work of government agents goes much easier in such an environment.

The Militant calls on all groups and individuals who sup-

port basic democratic rights to join in a campaign to repudiate the National Caucus of Labor Committees and their use of violence against organizations they disagree with.

We call on all groups to reject and condemn the use of physical attacks to settle disagreements within the movement. And we urge all supporters of democratic rights to come to the defense of the CP, YWLL, and any other group whose meetings, members, or offices are attacked by NCLC hooligans.

4. NCLC Hooligans Attack Candidates Meeting at Columbia University

From the May 4, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

By DOUG JENNESS

NEW YORK, April 24—About 60 hooligans from the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) unsuccessfully tried to storm the platform at a meeting of mayoral candidates at Columbia University last night. This was the most serious in the recent series of physical attacks the NCLC has launched against the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party.

The NCLC hoodlums were prevented from physically harming State Assemblyman Albert Blumenthal, contender for the Democratic nomination; Rasheed Storey, Communist Party candidate; and Joanna Misnik, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council president who was speaking for Norman Oliver, SWP candidate for mayor.

Members of the Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialist Alliance, and the Communist Party, as well as some Columbia University students, defended the platform.

The NCLC goons, however, were successful in breaking up the meeting. Armed with clubs, num-chucks (jointed sticks), and brass knuckles, they started to rush the stage immediately following a speech by Tony Chaitkin, the NCLC mayoral candidate. Chaitkin was the first speaker.

The NCLC thugs pulled clubs out of their jackets, picked up chairs, and started clubbing their way to the platform. They were confronted, however, by 75 to 80 marshals who were prepared to defend the stage. After a pitched battle lasting about seven or eight minutes, the NCLC thugs retreated, taking their injured with them. Six victims of the NCLC assault required medical treatment. They are Wayne Glover, Craig Gannon, Jack

Lieberman, Tom Tilitz, Nat London, and Jesse Smith. Tilitz was hospitalized overnight before being released. No one was seriously injured.

During the few days prior to the meeting the NCLC distributed a leaflet entitled "Whither Rasheed?" warning that they would attempt to break up last night's meeting and physically attack Storey. The leaflet reads in part: "With the CP hacks unable to hold public meetings or to organize, in terror of the YWLL [Young Workers Liberation League] membership enraged at yet another sellout, in terror of Operation Mop-Up, there remains only 1 question:

"If Storey shows up Monday night, can his fast-sinking mayoral campaign be buoyed up by anything less than several dozen 'husky workers' employed by the N. Y. P. D. [New York Police Department]?"

Attempts to convince the organizers of the meeting, the Columbia University student Board of Managers, that this was a serious threat and that NCLC disrupters should be excluded from the meeting, were unsuccessful.

About 20 minutes before the meeting began, the NCLC hooligans came into the meeting together. One of the thugs carried some long clubs concealed in a blanket. One of the defense leaders and the organizers of the meeting persuaded him to leave before the meeting began. Other NCLC thugs wore rings over leather gloves.

When Storey arrived, the NCLC hooligans started screaming, "Scab! Scab!" In their frenzy, some of them yelled out right-wing epithets like "Commie scab! Commie scab!"

Others screamed that Storey was a fascist and in cahoots with Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo. Some of them continued their yelling even while

Chaitkin presented an incoherent and frenzied tirade against the Communist Party and Rasheed Storey.

This reporter talked to several people at the meeting who have attended NCLC public functions recently. They indicated that they had never before seen many of the NCLC members at last night's meeting. These particular members looked the most like thugs. They were the ones who led the shouting and the charge on the stage. It is clear that the NCLC's public policy of physically trying to eliminate radical organizations like the CP and the SWP has opened the door for police agents and right-wing scum.

Protests against the NCLC's gangster-like campaign are beginning to be registered. Before last night's attack, a statement strongly condemning this hooliganism had been signed by Annette Rubenstein, Marxist literary critic; Nat Hentoff, *Village Voice* columnist; Norman Oliver, SWP mayoral candidate; Jim Ostroff, editor of the Queens College *Phoenix*; Jack Newgarten, New York University Social Democrats; Marshall Whitman, NYU Radical Zionist Alliance; Jim Fitzer, president of Hunter School of General Studies student government; and others.

In an editorial in its April 25 issue the *Guardian* also stated that it "strongly condemns the physical attacks and verbal threats against the Communist Party and its affiliated groups by a handful of people calling themselves the National Caucus of Labor Committees."

Since last night's attack a campaign has been launched at Columbia University to get as many organizations as possible to protest this outrage. A joint statement is being circulated

calling on "groups and individuals who support basic democratic rights to join in a campaign to repudiate the NCLC attack on Monday night's meeting and their use of violence in the movement."

So far it has been signed by Mark Kirschner, Columbia Democratic Caucus; Rebecca Waters, editor of *Barnard Bulletin*; John Buddenholtz, United Farmworkers Support Committee; George Robinson, Student Libertarian Action Movement; Rob McCauly, member of Community Service Council; Rudolfo Orapez, Columbia OWL; Arlene Abadlain, Student Assembly; Arlene Rubenstein, Young Socialist Alliance; Gail Robinson; Aura Riviera; Beverly Copeland; and Kathleen Graves.

Joanna Misnik, speaking for the SWP, told *The Militant* that "there are important lessons to be drawn from this attack at Columbia University. One is that even though the NCLC did not achieve its main goal of beating up the speakers, it broke up the meeting. This was a defeat for the right of political candidates to express their views and for students at Co-

lumbia to hear those views.

"The only effective way to prevent this undemocratic disruption is to exclude the NCLC thugs from meetings. They have only one purpose, which they have publicly admitted and demonstrated by their actions, and that is to break up the meetings."

She went on to say that no amount of pressure from the audience can deter armed hooligans who have this aim. In order to keep the meetings open to those who want to hear the speakers, it is necessary to organize defense teams to prevent disrupters from entering the meeting hall.

"Another lesson," she explained, "is that no section of the radical movement is immune from these attacks. This makes it imperative that all individuals and organizations who support democratic rights join together in mobilizing the broadest possible protest against the NCLC's hooliganism.

"Despite political differences, the entire radical movement should be alerted to the danger of this violence and cooperate in isolating the NCLC. Only when the NCLC recognizes that the

entire radical movement opposes its actions and that it cannot break up meetings will it be deterred from its vicious campaign."

A leaflet headlined "You will not goon for the CP!" and signed by the National Caucus of Labor Committees was passed out April 24. It concludes with an explicit "warning" to the Socialist Workers Party, saying, "When you did all the fighting for the Communist Party at the Monday mayoral forum, we held back—we gave you a mild warning. . . . But should you repeat as goons for the CP, we will put all of you in the hospital; we will deal with you as we are dealing with the Communist Party."

This threat underlines the importance of a broad defense of the right of radical organizations to function in the face of NCLC gangsterism.

5. Daily World Falsification

Editorial from the May 4, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

In the current campaign of attacks by the National Caucus of Labor Committees against the Communist Party, Young Workers Liberation League, and other radical groups, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance have been in the forefront of the fight to stop these hoodlum tactics (see page 5). Despite political differences with the CP, the SWP has helped defend democratic rights in the movement, as in the case of the recent NCLC attack at Columbia University.

Thus it was especially abominable to see the column by Morris Davis in the April 21 issue of the *Daily World*, Communist Party newspaper. Davis attempts to link the NCLC goon tactics with the Trotskyist movement, saying that "in the 40s the main disrupters were the Trotskyites, followers of Leon Trotsky." (Davis rehashes a number of other lies long since discredited: that the Trotskyists have supposedly been union wreckers in the service of the bosses and racketeers, and that the Trotskyists—the first victims of the Smith Act for their revolutionary socialist opposition to World War II—were "fifth columnists of the fascist Axis powers" during the war.)

The attempt to link Trotskyist organizations—the SWP and the YSA—with the NCLC attacks is outrageous, as is obvious to any honest person who has witnessed the role of the SWP and YSA in answering the NCLC's recent attacks. The NCLC

goon methods have nothing whatsoever to do with Trotskyism or the traditions of the Bolshevik Party led by Lenin and Trotsky.

The consistent record of the SWP in defending democratic rights within the radical and labor movements is well known.

Morris Davis' column is an attempt to cover up for those who *did* introduce violence into the radical movement: the Stalinists and the Stalinized Communist parties throughout the world. The hoodlum methods used by these parties were learned from the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, a bureaucracy that could only maintain its parasitic existence through the use of torture, frame-up trials, executions, assassinations, and secret police terror.

Just one example of the extent of these terror methods was Khrushchev's admission in 1956 that in the late 1930s Stalin executed 70 percent of the Soviet CP's central committee elected in 1934. To this day the heirs of Stalin in the Kremlin maintain a police state in which all political dissent is outlawed.

Trained in this tradition of using police-type terror to deal with political opposition, Stalinized parties throughout the world have used the same tactics against political opponents to the degree that their strength allowed them to get away with it.

When those who opposed the degeneration of the Russian revolution under Stalin were expelled from the U.S. Communist Party in 1928, CP goons repeatedly and viciously attacked meetings of the newly organized revolutionary socialist movement. CP thugs also attacked people selling *The Militant* on the streets.

During the 1940s Trotskyists and other militants in Europe were executed and assassinated both by the fascists and by the Stalinists. Trotsky himself was assassinated by an agent of Stalin in 1940.

The systematic use of violence against the American Trotskyists by the followers of Stalin abated only after the Trotskyists showed they could mobilize broad support for the right to carry on political activity and physically defend their meetings. But even in the recent past members of the CP and YWLL have resorted to threats of violence, and in some cases physical attacks, against Trotskyists. An example was the attack last winter on Will Stanley, a student at the Borough of Manhattan Community College in New York.

The *Daily World's* linking of the Trotskyist movement with goon tactics against workers organizations will be repudiated by all who are familiar with the record of the SWP. At the same time, *The Militant* urges all groups and individuals who support democratic rights to unite in a common effort to repudiate the hooligan attacks of the NCLC, to organize to stop the breaking up of movement meetings, and to defend organizations under attack.

6. Cops and Rightists Join NCLC's Anti-Communist Campaign

From the May 18, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

It has become clear that the so-called National Caucus of Labor Committees has been joined by police agents and right-wing thugs. The NCLC is a small group that has claimed to be socialist. However its current "Operation Mop-Up" campaign to physically "destroy" the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, and other groups on the left, has attracted right-wingers and cops who have exactly the same aim.

On May 6, 16 NCLC members were arrested in Philadelphia after attempting to invade a meeting of the Public Works Action Committee. One of those arrested, Nereida Cordero, was found to be a state parole investigator.

This was the second time that NCLC thugs were identified as part of the police apparatus. One of those arrested for the April 11 attack on Young Workers Liberation League members in Philadelphia was Daniel Valdes, another parole investigator, who was found to be carrying a loaded .38 revolver. Cordero gave the same home address to the police that Valdes had given.

According to the May 8 *Daily World*, the attackers at the Public Works Action Committee meeting were

armed with clubs and numchucks. Three of those who repelled the NCLC thugs required medical attention, one of them a member of the YWLL and two members of the Public Works Action Committee. Three defenders of the meeting were also arrested on charges of disorderly conduct.

Another example of right-wingers using the NCLC "Operation Mop-Up" campaign for their own purposes occurred in Tarrytown, N.Y. A leaflet appeared at the auto plant in Tarrytown signed by the "UAW Committee to Stop Communism." It appealed to workers not to support Bill Scott, a leader of Trade Union Action and Democracy, who was running for shop chairman in UAW Local 664 in Tarrytown.

The leaflet quotes the NCLC publi-

cation *New Solidarity*, which is identified as published by the "National Caucus of Labor," attacking Scott as a supporter of the Communist Party.

The headline on the leaflet says, "Stop the Pinkos—Do you want the commie flag flying at the union hall?" It says further on, "Fight GM and fight the commies—Hanoi, Moscow, Red China, Stalin, Lenin, Trotsky, or Scott. None shall replace the UAW President Woodcock as the voice and leader of the UAW member. The UAW blue shirt must never be changed to pink."

The violent campaign by the NCLC to "destroy" the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, and other radical organizations has become indistinguishable from the anticommunism of the rightists and the government.

7. Young Socialist Alliance Conference in Detroit Repulses NCLC Attack

From the May 18, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

By **MIKE KELLEY**

DETROIT, May 9—For the first time the so-called National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) has assaulted a meeting sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance. They were quickly repulsed by an organized defense guard. The attack was another in a series of frenzied, goon-squad assaults in recent weeks against the Communist Party, Young Workers Liberation League, and other groups on the left.

On May 5 a group of hoodlums, led by and including recognized members of the NCLC, attacked a session of a regional socialist educational conference at Wayne State University. Speaker at the session was Peter Buch, a nationally known spokesman for the SWP on the Mideast, speaking on the Palestinian liberation movement.

When the attack came, some 18 to 20 people, including the speaker, were inside the meeting room in the University Center Building. There were another six to nine people registering for the conference and those doing the registering outside the room. These included Jerry Crist, who is partially paralyzed and has to wear a brace and use special crutches to get about. He turned out to be a target of the thugs.

I interviewed Harold Schlechtweg,

a student from Bloomington, Ind., who was attending the conference. He was the first victim of the attackers. Schlechtweg was holding open the doors for arriving participants when he heard someone shout, "Let's go!"

At this point a group he estimates at about 15 rounded the corner of the stairwell, rushed up the stairs, knocked him over, and entered the hallway.

He said he was then beaten with wooden sticks by a number of them. He could only protect himself by rolling into a ball and covering his head and neck. He showed this reporter numerous welts and bruises all over his body.

Most of those in the process of registering in the hallway were chased down the hallway and out another door. Crist, however, couldn't move. He was knocked down and beaten with clubs by three or four hoodlums. He was later taken to Ford Hospital, where he was treated for a serious gash on the right side of the head and numerous bruises.

Doctor Mxolisi Ntlabati of the Center for Black Studies at Wayne State University, and a visiting friend from New York, Professor Nonceba Lubanga, confirmed this account of the attack. They had come up the stairs just before the attackers and were about to enter Doctor Ntlabati's fifth

floor office. Neither was attending the conference.

Dr. Ntlabati said the attacking group had "police sticks, wooden weapons, an iron bar, and iron hammers." He said he saw the registration table "knocked over" and the people sitting behind it were attacked.

Upon hearing the commotion outside, marshals in the meeting room rushed outside to aid the victims of the attack and to prevent the meeting from being broken up. They included members of the YSA, International Socialists, SWP, and unaffiliated individuals.

Within two or three minutes, the attackers were repelled and driven back out the doors they had come through. Several weapons were seized from them including a hammer and several clubs. Other weapons used by the NCLCers included at least one numchuck (two wooden blocks connected by a heavy chain), at least one length of chain, and karate sticks.

Apparently some of the NCLCers had no stomach for beating someone who is crippled. It was noticed that as many as five or six of the NCLC attackers, including one of their leading members, Richi Freeman, held back from participating in the initial attack and then retreated when the marshals arrived.

One of the marshals, Don Bechler,

was also injured seriously enough to require treatment at the Ford Hospital.

As the NCLC people hastily retreated, it was noticed that they were carrying several of their members. NCLC members later reported several "seriously hurt."

After the attack more people arrived for the conference, and Peter Buch's talk began on time at 3 p.m.

Just before the meeting began, however, campus police arrived. They took all the weapons captured from the thugs and objects that conference participants had picked up to defend themselves. The meeting organizers protested vehemently that this would leave the meeting open to further attacks.

Upon leaving the meeting, it was discovered the police had turned away a number of people who wanted to attend the conference shortly after it began. According to Ken Weber, a prominent local minister, he and some 20 others were not allowed to attend the meeting.

Members of various organizations, including the International Socialists, Workers League, and Spartacist League, joined the SWP and YSA in defending the Detroit SWP mayoral campaign banquet that same evening and the two sessions of the conference held on the following Sunday. There were no further incidents.

Most radical groups in Detroit have agreed to a united defense for future meetings threatened by NCLC goons.

A number of groups on the Wayne State University campus, including members of the Young Workers Liberation League, have agreed to help defend a meeting scheduled for Andrew Pulley, national secretary of the YSA, at the university tomorrow.

This is the first known physical attack by the NCLC in Detroit. Prior to this, however, they have verbally threatened a number of organizations and individuals. For instance, earlier the same day, at the broadly sponsored Michigan Committee Against High Prices demonstration, Richard Gibson, president of the local Welfare Employees Union, was told, "We're going to get you next," by people he recognized as members of the NCLC.

8. Attack on SWP Campaign Supporters Brings Demand for Arrest of NCLC Thugs

From the June 29, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

By LINDA JENNESS

JUNE 19—Three Socialist Workers Party members filed criminal charges against National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) goon Steve Getzoff on June 15. Rebecca Finch, coordinator of the New York SWP mayoral campaign, identified Getzoff from police photographs as one of the thugs who had attacked her and Jesse Smith and Ken Shilman on June 9. As a result of the assault, Smith was hospitalized with a broken arm and gashes on his face and head requiring 11 stitches.

To date Getzoff has not been arrested for this attack. On June 11, however, Getzoff and another NCLC hooligan, George Turner, were arrested for assaulting Ron Tyson, a reporter for the *Daily World*, and a companion, Rowina Pearce. Getzoff and Turner were charged with second-degree assault and possession of dangerous instruments. They had been armed with nunchakus, a karate weapon. Both were released on their own recognizance and ordered to appear for trial on June 26.

Nat Hentoff, *Village Voice* writer, Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Roland Watts of the Workers Defense League have added their names to a statement demanding that the city arrest the hoodlums responsible for the attacks. The statement, which demands

"immediate action from the city administration . . . to stop these attacks," is being circulated for additional support.

Norman Oliver, SWP candidate for mayor of New York, in a statement issued today reiterated his demand that city hall order the "New York Police Department and the District Attorney's office to arrest these thugs and bring full criminal charges against them in order to stop these outrageous violations of democratic rights."

In the June 18-22 issue of *New Solidarity*, newspaper of the NCLC, the Labor Committee openly claims responsibility for these recent attacks. In a box headlined, "The SWAMP Pays for Seattle Harassment," *New Solidarity* states: "One member of the Socialist Workers Party (SWAMP) was hurt during a confrontation with Labor Committee members in New York on Saturday, June 9. The incident was in retaliation for the harassment of Labor Committee members by SWPers in Seattle on May 14."

The so-called "harassment of Labor Committee members in Seattle" refers to a meeting held in Seattle to protest NCLC assaults. The meeting was organized by the Black Panther Party. The SWP, along with several other political organizations, participated in the meeting.

After the meeting in Seattle, NCLC

sent a letter to Jack Barnes, national secretary of the SWP, demanding a "repudiation" of the meeting.

New Solidarity continues: "Barnes' impertinent failure to respond to the request was directly responsible for the retribution on June 9."

In another article in *New Solidarity*, the Labor Committee admits to the attack on Ron Tyson. "The two LC members, Steven Getzov and George Turner, were in the process of teaching Tyson a lesson," the article states, "when a plainclothes policeman interfered and made the arrest on June 11."

Harassment of the SWP by the NCLC continues. On Saturday morning, June 16, a woman came into the Militant Bookstore at 2744 Broadway in New York and began buying some literature. YSA organizer Jude Coren, who was in the building, which also contains offices of the SWP and the YSA, noticed two NCLCers outside looking into the window. She recognized one of them as a participant in an NCLC assault at Columbia University on April 23, and another as a longtime member of NCLC.

"We sent a defense team downstairs to watch the door," Coren says, "and the two goons walked to the end of the block and waved. We assumed they were signaling more of their people around the corner. The woman

was in the bookstore about 15 minutes and then left. The two men walked up to meet her and they all walked away.

"About one minute later we received a call from Zeke Boyd, a leader of the NCLC. He said, 'This is Zeke Boyd. One of our members is up in your bookstore and if you don't let her go right away there's going to be trouble.' I told him that she had already left and he hung up.

"They were clearly trying to provoke an incident. They obviously sent the woman up to see how many of us were in the offices."

The Lower Manhattan branch of the SWP also received a threatening phone call from the NCLC. The person on the phone said, "This is the Labor Committee. Your people didn't listen too well last time. Your people have harassed us in Los Angeles. If you don't want another Jesse Smith you better discipline your people." The caller refused to give his name.

Apparently the caller was referring to SWP and YSA participation in the defense of a Los Angeles Chicana activist against threats by the NCLC.

Enriqueta Sánchez, a welfare worker in the Huntington area of Los Angeles, has been harassed by the NCLC since January. Several times NCLC members have visited Sánchez at her office and demanded that she join the National Unemployed-Welfare Rights Organization (NU-WRO), an organization set up by NCLC.

Last week, after making vague threats, pounding on the table, and shouting at Sánchez, NCLC members told her they would return to her office on Friday, June 15, to "discuss" once again her joining NU-WRO. Concerned about the threats, Sánchez invited several Chicano activists to participate in the June 15 meeting with her.

On Friday, when the NCLC members arrived at Sánchez's office expecting to meet with only her, they found instead 10 Chicano activists who wanted to sit in on the meeting. Miguel Pendás, a *Militant* reporter, was one of those present. Mark Schneider, YSA organizer in Los Angeles, was also present.

Schneider reports that the NCLCers told Sánchez she had a choice, "She

could either join with them or be on Nixon's side. They told her that either the revolution or fascism was coming in five years and that there wasn't much time.

"The Chicanos present demanded to know what the NCLC was up to. They referred to the articles in the *Militant* exposing the terrorist attacks by NCLC on the movement and demanded to know if they were cops.

"The meeting ended with the Chicano activists telling the NCLCers that they weren't going to stand for them coming back and harassing Enriqueta Sánchez. The NCLCers said that they probably wouldn't come back. On their way out, one of them said, 'We'll see you on the other side of the barricades.'

"Then they turned to Miguel Pendás and said, 'You did a good job here.' I guess they thought all the people present at the meeting were brought by the SWP because of the frequent references to *The Militant*. Actually, the people present were activists from different political persuasions, including some people from Sánchez's office. Sánchez had asked everybody to come to the meeting."

9. Committee to Stop Terrorist Attacks Demands Conviction of Goons

From the July 13, 1973, issue of *The Militant*

JULY 3—Jose Torres, National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) member charged with aggravated assault and battery in connection with the April 11 beating of six members of the Temple University Young Workers Liberation League, was acquitted June 28. Torres was formerly a CIA agent in Vietnam.

According to the YWLL, Philadelphia District Attorney Arlan Spector's office failed to carry out an adequate prosecution. An example is that Assistant District Attorney Bruce Neff failed to call several witnesses who had identified Torres as the director of the attack.

Marilyn Markus, secretary of the New York Committee to Stop Terrorist Attacks, organized to protest NCLC hooliganism, told *The Militant*, "There is no excuse for this inadequate prosecution on the part of the Philadelphia district attorney. His office is attempting to ignore these NCLC armed attacks on unarmed individuals by treat-

ing them as if they were part of a small feud on the left. What is really at stake is a serious attack against the civil liberties of the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, and other radical organizations."

Markus stressed the importance of putting pressure on the DA's office in New York City to vigorously prosecute NCLC goons Steve Getzoff and George Turner. "The acquittal of Torres in Philadelphia shows that we can't trust the courts and the district attorneys to protect the basic democratic rights of socialists. We must mobilize broad political pressure before they will respond."

Getzoff and Turner were arrested June 11 on charges of assault against Ron Tyson, staff writer for the *Daily World*. Getzoff was arrested again on June 26 after being identified by Rebecca Finch and Ken Shilman as one of five armed thugs who attacked them from behind on June 9.

Jesse Smith, who was with them, suf-

fered serious head injuries requiring 11 stitches and a broken arm. Finch, Shilman, and Smith are leaders of the Lower Manhattan branch of the Socialist Workers Party. Smith is also a member of the New York City Taxi Drivers Local 3036.

Hearings for Getzoff and Turner are scheduled for July 16, 9:30 a.m., at 100 Centre Street. Meanwhile they are free on their own recognizance.

Markus told *The Militant* that opposition to the NCLC's hooligan campaign, now in its fourth month, continues to grow. "Throughout the country scores of trade unions, student leaders, professors, Black and Puerto Rican organizations, civil libertarians, and virtually all radical organizations, despite sharp political disagreements, have condemned these attacks.

Support is also growing for the newly formed New York Committee to Stop Terrorist Attacks, which is attempting to organize broad support

to demand that the city government defend the basic democratic rights of all individuals and organizations attacked by NCLC thugs. Initial sponsors include, among others, Ruth Gage-Colby, longtime leader in the peace movement; Myrna Lamb, feminist playwright; Conrad Lynn, National Conference of Black Lawyers; Norman Oliver, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor; and Katherine Sojourner, a coordinator of the National Peace Action Coalition.

This week the committee sent a letter to Mayor John Lindsay explaining the history of the NCLC attacks and the serious abridgment of civil

liberties they represent. The letter demanded that the mayor initiate an investigation to determine if employees of the New York City Police Department or any other city law enforcement agency are operating within NCLC as agents provocateurs.

The fact that two NCLC assailants arrested in Philadelphia were identified as Pennsylvania parole officers, along with numerous public exposures of police provocateurs in New York City in the past few years, is sufficient grounds for beginning such an investigation.

The letter also expressed concern that the New York police are not doing

everything possible to apprehend and prosecute these hooligans. It demanded that the police question Getzoff, Turner, and known leaders of the NCLC to determine the identity of the other four assailants involved in the June 9 attack on Smith, Shilman, and Finch.

Markus also stressed the importance of writing letters and sending telegrams of protest to District Attorney Frank Hogan, 155 Leonard St., New York, N. Y. 10013; Mayor John Lindsay, City Hall, New York, N. Y. 10007; and Police Commissioner Donald Cawley, 240 Centre St., New York, N. Y. 10013.

Section Six: Tactics and Principles in the Fight Against Violence in the Movement

[The following article is reprinted from Volume 31, Number 25 of the SWP Discussion Bulletin, published in 1973. Barry Sheppard is a member of the National Committee of the SWP. Gerald Clark is a former member of the SWP. The appendix, added for this edition, is a letter written by

Leon Trotsky to the attorney-general of Mexico pointing to the Mexican Communist Party's role in organizing the May 24, 1940 machine gun attack on Trotsky's home. The letter is reprinted from *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40* (New York; Pathfinder Press, 1973.)]

Our Defense Against the Goon Attacks Launched by the NCLC By Barry Sheppard

The Militant recently received a letter from Comrade Gerald Clark criticizing the tactics the party has utilized in defending itself from the goon attacks launched by the National Caucus of Labor Committees. His letter concludes with the rhetorical questions: "Has the SWP given up the principle of working class solidarity against class enemies in favor of putting trust in the 'justice' of the bourgeois courts?"

Comrades probably find it odd that Comrade Clark would think that the pages of *The Militant* are an appropriate place for a SWP member to charge that the SWP has gone over to putting trust in the class enemy. The editors thought that this was not the proper place for an intraparty discussion and decided not to print the letter. However, the issues raised by Comrade Clark are important and should be answered.

The following is the text of Comrade Clark's letter (all emphasis in the original).

* * *

June 29, 1973

To the Editors:

I was quite interested to read in *The Militant* (June 29, 1973) two articles concerning the use of bourgeois courts by working class organizations. The first article entitled, "Teamsters sue Fitzsimmons, back UFWU," had to do with a group of rank-and-file Teamsters who filed suit in the Los Angeles Superior Court charging the union's top officials with entering into a conspiracy with grape growers to bust the United Farmworkers Union.

Regardless of the truthfulness of such charges, the tactic of one section of the union movement bringing another section of the movement—however reactionary—into the bourgeois courts to settle differences has always been opposed by revolutionary socialists. The reasons are simple: It is a *principle* within the revolutionary workers' movement that differences of opinion, including the resort to violence, can only be resolved by the working class itself. No bourgeois court can provide "justice" whenever the working class is involved in a fight for its rights. It never has and never will be "impartial" toward the class struggle.

But the tone of the article was one of *approval*. Take this quote for example: "As soon as certain technicalities can be ironed out with Superior Court Judge Campbell Lucas, Giler (the attorney for the Teamster group) plans to submit the suit. . . ." No criticisms follow this this

statement! The entire article simply explains what is happening. By implication, and from what *The Militant* has already written on the UFWU-Teamster dispute, the reader has no real choice but to conclude that the paper approves of such tactics. Is this the proper way to educate Farmworkers and Teamsters interested in working class solidarity?

But the photo beside the article, showing a group of rank-and-file Teamsters picketing a Safeway store, indicates that *The Militant* also supports that kind of a tactic—a public protest oriented toward mobilizing the ranks in solidarity with the United Farmworkers struggle. But why is there no comment about this *correct* tactic? Surely you were aware of the details concerning this demonstration?

The second article is related to the first. It was entitled, "Arrest of NCLC thugs demanded in N. Y." It begins: "Three Socialist Workers Party members filed criminal charges against National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) goon Steve Getzoff on June 15. . . ." The article also quoted from a statement issued by Norman Oliver, SWP candidate for mayor of New York, which called upon "the New York Police Department and the District Attorney's office to arrest these thugs and bring full criminal charges against them in order to stop these outrageous violations of democratic rights."

Now, is it the position of the SWP and *The Militant* that NCLC is *not* a working class organization? If so, what kind of organization is it? Fascist? Bourgeois? Petty-bourgeois? The question is not unimportant. Because if NCLC is a working class organization, would it not be incorrect to bring suit against it in a bourgeois court? But even if it weren't, certainly the SWP doesn't believe the New York Police Dept. is capable of stopping "these outrageous violations of democratic rights" perpetrated by the NCLC thugs?

Is it not true that the founders of NCLC came out of the SWP just like so many other small groups which exist on the left today (IS, SL, WL, CSL, etc.)? Aren't all of these groups still part of the workers' movement? Why, then, should NCLC be characterized any differently? Its fascist-like tactics are not new to the workers' movement either. They were first introduced by the Stalinists—which the SWP still considers a part of the working class.

Historically, revolutionary organizations have utilized the bourgeois courts and other bourgeois institutions to strengthen the position of the working class vis-a-vis the capitalist class, and at the same time, to dispel the illusions of the masses in bourgeois democracy in general. *But never have they used the bourgeois courts against another working class tendency, regardless of the crimes it may have committed.* (One need only mention here the numerous crimes of the Stalinists against workers and the Trotskyists to show the extent to which a working class tendency can degenerate and still remain a part of the workers' movement.)

What is the significance of these two articles? Has the SWP given up the principle of working class solidarity against class enemies in favor of putting trust in the "justice" of the bourgeois courts?

s/Gerald Clark
Oakland, Calif.

I will take up the following points raised by this letter: (1) Is it a violation of principle ever to demand that the bourgeois authorities protect our rights? (2) Is it a violation of principle to demand that bourgeois authorities protect our rights, in situations where we are under physical attack from a tendency in the working class? (3) How do we characterize the NCLC? (4) Why did we use the tactics we have in defending ourselves from the NCLC goons? (5) The suit brought by the rank-and-file Teamsters.

1. *Is it a violation of principle ever to demand that the bourgeois authorities protect our rights?*

Comrade Clark is not clear on this question. He says, "Historically, revolutionary organizations have utilized the bourgeois courts and other bourgeois institutions to strengthen the positions of the working class vis-a-vis the capitalist class, and, at the same time, to dispel the illusions of the masses in bourgeois democracy in general." On the other hand, the central argument advanced by Comrade Clark is that "No bourgeois court can provide 'justice' whenever the working class is involved in a fight for its rights. It never has and never will be 'impartial' toward the class struggle." This argument applies not only to cases where we are physically attacked by other tendencies in the working class, but also to the more general case of such attacks on us from any quarter.

Comrade Clark is correct when he says that the courts are not impartial in the class struggle. The courts are not impartial when the NCLC or the Stalinists use goon tactics against us, and they certainly are not impartial when the Ku Klux Klan, the Legion of Justice, Cuban gusanos, or other right-wing thugs attack us. In any conflict between the bosses and the workers, between racists and Blacks, between reactionaries and socialists, etc., the bourgeois courts and other authorities are not impartial and do not dispense justice equally.

In situations where we are under attack from any quarter, we have to start from the assumption that the capitalist authorities are "neutral" against us. We never place reliance upon them. Our primary line of defense is reliance upon ourselves and whatever forces we can mobilize in defense of our rights, including in the organization of the physical side of that defense.

But at present in the U.S., the capitalist class does not rule through a fascist dictatorship, but through a system of bourgeois democracy. Certain democratic rights have been formally won by the masses through struggle. The extent to which these rights are real for the masses and for organizations of the working class depends on the relation of forces. The working class in general, and ourselves in particular, can win certain concessions and protection of our rights, depending upon what support we can mobilize in the context of the overall relation of class forces. We have been able to win certain defense cases, for example, against attempts by the capitalist authorities to victimize us. Recently we have won cases extending our rights to be on the ballot.

In certain cases where we have been physically attacked by right-wing forces, we have utilized the tactic of demanding that the authorities protect our rights, and we have pressed for the arrest and conviction of the right-

wing thugs. This was done to help build our overall political defense against such attacks, which was the main thrust of our defense effort. Some examples of where we did this have been in defense against the armed attacks on our headquarters by gusanos in Los Angeles, the Klan in Houston and the Legion of Justice in Chicago. In Los Angeles and Houston, these attacks were carried out with lethal weapons. In all three cases, part of our overall defense effort was to demand that the authorities arrest and convict the culprits. We put no trust in the capitalist authorities by doing this. But the campaign put pressure on them, helped expose their lack of enthusiasm in prosecuting the attackers, and even helped expose their direct complicity with the attacks. This aided our overall defense effort and was a factor in halting the attacks in these cases.

The general democratic right we are appealing to when we make such demands is that of equality before the law. This right was raised in the bourgeois-democratic revolutions, and represents an important gain for the masses. It is a right we support, and would certainly be included in the constitution of a workers state. While we know that the capitalist state systematically violates this right, there is nothing wrong with our demanding that it apply to us.

2. *Is it a violation of principle to demand that the bourgeois authorities protect our rights, in situations where we are under violent attack from a tendency in the working class?*

On this question, Comrade Clark's answer is an unambiguous "yes."

This argument would put us in a peculiar position. Let's look at a few examples. Some years ago, our national office was firebombed. We notified the police, and conducted a campaign demanding that the police investigate the incident and arrest and convict those responsible. We suspected, and the police investigation later tended to corroborate this, that a right-wing group was responsible. The cops dragged their feet on the investigation—an example of a violation of our democratic rights. But we demanded those rights. Now suppose that it had turned out that the attack actually came from the CP or a group like the NCLC? Would we then have had to say, "Oh, since it turned out that a working-class tendency firebombed us, we drop charges, because, you see, we would have pressed charges if the attack was carried out by a capitalist-class tendency, but not if it was carried out by a working-class tendency." Further suppose that the authorities themselves went ahead and pressed charges anyway—would we then support a defense committee for those who firebombed us, in the name of working-class solidarity?

In the middle 1960s, a gunman came into the Detroit headquarters and murdered one of our comrades and seriously wounded two others. We notified the police and gave them all the information we have about the killer. We also formed a committee that demanded that the authorities prosecute the killer, and exposed their lenient treatment of him. In this case, the murder was a right winger, apparently acting alone. What should we have done if it turned out that he was from a working-class tendency?

These two examples illustrate the fallacy of Comrade Clark's position that it is a principle that we cannot de-

mand equal protection from the authorities in cases where other tendencies in the working class carry out physical attacks upon us.

The error that Comrade Clark makes is to take a valid principle and attempt to apply it in a situation that falls outside its scope of applicability. We do have a principle of working-class solidarity in the face of attacks by the bourgeoisie. We are opposed to any interference by the by the capitalist class in the political differences within the working-class movement. We are against appealing to the capitalist authorities to intervene into the disputes in the working-class and socialist movements. Although there is a line of blood between ourselves and the Stalinists, for example, we never call upon the authorities to intervene in the political struggle between us.

Along these lines, we say it was a violation of principles for the Stalinists to support the Smith Act proceedings against our comrades in the early 1940s. That was an act of political strikebreaking, of aiding the class enemy in delivering a blow to the rights of all workers.

But differences of opinion in the working-class movement are qualitatively different from the utilization of violence in the workers movement to settle those differences. The goon attacks of the NCLC are not just an extension of the political struggle in the socialist movement—they are just as much a violation of working-class principles as appealing to the bourgeois authorities to settle such differences is. Such attacks are a violation of workers democracy, a violation of democratic rights in general, and unless effectively countered and halted, will harm the socialist and working-class movement. In this case, the demand that the state authorities defend the democratic rights of the victims of such attacks is not at all the same thing as calling upon those authorities to settle political differences within the socialist or broader working-class movement. Insofar as a tendency in the working class utilized such methods, it has forfeited any right to appeal to working-class solidarity to defend such attacks.

There are many examples that could be cited where we have utilized this tactic. I will refer to two: the defense of Trotsky in Mexico and the struggle in the Teamsters union between the international bureaucracy and the revolutionary leadership of Local 574 in the 1930s.

The defense of Trotsky against the Stalinists was the most important instance where our movement had to defend itself from a murderous attack from another tendency in the socialist movement. The main thrust of this defense was a political one of mobilizing whatever forces we could, to counter the mountains of Stalinist slander directed against Trotsky, against the murders of Trotskyists, and against the threat to assassinate Trotsky. But part of that campaign included appealing to the bourgeois authorities, in this case the Mexican authorities, to defend Trotsky's rights. Part of our defense consisted of a physical defense. This physical defense included, but did not rely upon, acceptance of a police guard at Trotsky's home.

When the first attempt on Trotsky's life came in the attack led by Siquieros and his gang, SWP member Sheldon Harte was murdered. We and Trotsky not only cooperated in the police investigation of the crime, Trotsky publicly intervened in that investigation, calling upon the police to specifically investigate the Stalinists. This was necessary to counter moves the Stalinists were making to throw suspicion off themselves and onto us. We called

for the arrest and vigorous prosecution of the perpetrators.

When Trotsky was assassinated, *The Militant* carefully followed the police investigation. We called for exposure of the real criminals, Stalin's GPU, that had ordered the crime. In doing so, we were not calling upon the Mexican police to outlaw or ban the Stalinists, or deprive them of their democratic rights. Nor did we attempt to utilize the Mexican authorities to settle the political questions in dispute between ourselves and the Stalinists. We were demanding that the authorities defend Trotsky's rights. Exactly how we utilized this tactic, of course, was conditioned by the situation, including the nature of the Cardenas regime.

Farrell Dobb's new book, *Teamster Power*, recounts the struggle the leaders of Local 574 were forced to wage against the bureaucracy headed by Tobin. Tobin had sent a force headed by L. A. Murphy into Minneapolis to try to destroy the leadership of 574. This attack included goon assaults. It is worthwhile quoting from the book:

"On the morning of May 21 the new offensive began. Ray Dunne and George Frosig were distributing leaflets and talking to drivers in the freight yards of the Omaha railway. Suddenly a Buick sedan drove up and a gang of Tobin's thugs jumped out of it and assaulted Ray and George with blackjacks. They were severely beaten.

"Ownership of the Buick was traced to L. A. Murphy through a check with the automobile license bureau. This fact, along with an account of the atrocity, was published in the *Northwest Organizer* to inform the labor movement of the new danger. For the record, a protest was also made to the public authorities. But they did nothing about it, as was to be expected.

"Local 574 immediately called a mass protest meeting. Word of the outrage had spread rapidly and the hall was jammed with union members, many of them accompanied by their wives. As the latter development indicated, not since the 1934 strikes had the workers been so aroused. They were more than ready to fight back, and combat veterans that they were by now, they knew it had to be done intelligently.

"Accepting the executive board's advice, the membership adopted a three-point plan of action: efforts were redoubled to obtain speedy renewal of contracts that were about to expire; an assessment was voted to provide a special defense fund; and a resolution was adopted setting forth the basic line for a campaign to mobilize the city's working class against the new goon attack.

"The resolution condemned the gangsterism introduced by Tobin, calling it an open invitation to the enemies of the labor movement. If it could be made to work against Local 574, the other unions were warned, the same methods would be used against them as well. Thus an open challenge had been hurled at the leaders and members of all AFL organizations. It was their duty, acting in their own self-interest, to join in the struggle to free the movement from the menace of thuggery.

"Our appeal fell upon responsive ears. Officers, and especially rank-and-file members of the AFL locals, poured heat on the right-wing officials of the Central Labor Union and the Teamsters Joint Council. They also brought heavy pressure to bear on Mayor Latimer, as did Farmer-Labor Party ward clubs. Finding himself under heavy fire, the mayor felt he had to do something—so he set out to

smear us.

"Late in May a small army of police made a surprise raid on Local 574, charging into our headquarters with drawn guns. They were accompanied by news reporters and photographers. Bearing John Doe warrants for illegal sale of liquor, they searched the premises for evidence. Nothing was to be found, except part of a keg of beer which had been stored away after being left over from a social. Twice more in the next few days the cops descended upon us, but they were unable to spot anything that could be used against the union.

"It was in connection with these smear attempts that Frosig was arrested on the gun charge mentioned previously.

"Taking advantage of the propaganda cover Latimer sought to provide for him, Murphy resumed the physical assaults. In broad daylight on the afternoon of June 3, four rank-and-file members of local 574 driving along Washington Avenue in a passenger car were forced to the curb and ordered out of their vehicle by two carloads of Tobin's musclemen. Some held guns on the union members, while others pulled out blackjacks and beat them. When the victims ran to escape, a volley of shots followed them.

"Bystanders had gotten the license numbers of the thugs' cars, and this information was reported to Latimer with a demand that he take action. As usual though, no arrests were made.

"Instead the mayor held a conference with Murphy and Meyer Lewis. Reporters were then summoned and Murphy issued a statement to them. According to the *Minneapolis Tribune* account, he brazenly accused the victims of 'firing the shots themselves,' falsely asserting that they had done so 'after losing a fight with the employees of Stanchfield Transfer Company,' a firm located near the scene of the crime.

"A week later a Local 574 job steward Harold Haynes was attacked while at work. He had just got back into the cab of his truck after making a delivery. Then the Buick sedan, registered in Murphy's name, pulled up and blocked his way. Five goons leaped out of it. One pointed a gun at Haynes. The other four dragged him out of the car and beat him with blackjacks and gun butts.

"We made a strong protest to Governor Olson. In a letter signed by Bill Brown he was informed that we were holding a special meeting of Local 574 on June 15. We demanded an official answer by then as to what Olson proposed to do about Tobin's criminal attempt, with Latimer's collusion, to destroy a section of the labor movement.

"Coming immediately to our support, the fifth ward Farmer-Labor club insisted that Olson take prompt action. Demands were made that he invoke the executive power of the state to put a stop to acts of vandalism in Minneapolis, and that he uncover the instigators of the plot against organized labor.

"Similar demands upon the governor came from elsewhere in the unions and the Farmer-Labor Party. Since he was coming up for reelection in the fall, it was politically dangerous for him to ignore these pressures, and he knew it. So he passed word along that he would look into the situation right away, pretending that he hadn't known what was going on. Apparently Olson convinced Latimer that it was politically expedient to quiet things

down inside the labor movement, because the physical attacks on us now abated."

We see from this quote that after one attack, we notified the authorities for the record, that is, to help prepare our position to counter these attacks. Later, we were able to mount a powerful campaign that included demanding that the governor "invoke the executive power of the state to put a stop to acts of vandalism in Minneapolis, and that he uncover the instigators of the plot against organized labor." This campaign, based on the mobilization of the union rank and file, and of the labor movement in general, was aided by this demand, and became powerful enough to put a stop to the attacks in the political context of Minnesota at that time.

So we see that neither Trotsky nor the SWP considered that in such cases we could not as a matter of principle demand that the capitalist authorities protest our rights, or the rights of a left wing in the unions which we were in the leadership of, against physical attacks launched by a tendency in the socialist or labor movement. It is a tactical, not a principled question.

Perhaps some further examples will help Comrade Clark understand the difference in calling upon the capitalist authorities to intervene in the political disputes within the socialist movement, and demanding that those same authorities grant us our rights in the face of a violent physical attack on us by a tendency in the workers movement. It would be unprincipled for us to have aped the Stalinists and have called for the conviction of the CP Smith Act defendants. Those trials were an attack on the democratic rights of the whole working class and socialist movement, and the principle we follow in such cases is summed up in the slogan, "an attack on one is an attack on all." But this is an entirely different thing than the trial of Trotsky's assassin, although both the Foley Square defendants and Mercader belonged to the identical Stalinist movement.

Demanding that the governor of Minnesota utilize his executive powers to stop Tobin's goons is a different thing than if we had called for the jailing of Tobin to settle the political dispute in the union.

3. How Do We Characterize the NCLC?

Comrade Clark points to the fact that the leaders of these groups he mentions came out of the SWP. That doesn't prove anything, of course, so did James Burnham.

All of these groups can be characterized as petty-bourgeois sects, operating in the socialist movement and therefore in the workers movement, and are working-class tendencies. This still remains true of the NCLC. In the case of the NCLC, however, we must note that its campaign to attempt to destroy the CP and ourselves by physical means is being utilized by the cops and right wingers. It is becoming more and more stridently anticommunist. Whether this results in the NCLC becoming transformed, and moving right out of the socialist movement, is too early to say, in my opinion.

4. What Were the Reasons for the Tactics We Adopted in Defending Ourselves from the NCLC Goon Attack?

The major thrust of our line from the beginning of the announcement of "Operation Mop-Up" has been to mobilize the left to repudiate the NCLC and such tactics within the movement. This campaign has included attempting to

whatever extent possible to form a united front physical defense to repulse NCLC attacks on any tendency in the left, to keep them out of radical meetings, etc.

We rejected calling upon the police to defend our meetings or the meetings of others. We did this for a number of reasons. First, we decided that with proper organization, we would be able to defend our own meetings. The police could be counted on to attempt to utilize their presence at our meetings to victimize us. In the case of the NCLC attacks, we must assume that the cops would be "neutral" against us, possibly working with the cops inside the NCLC. Where possible, because we cannot rely on the bourgeois authorities to protect our rights, our first line of defense is ourselves and those forces we can mobilize in defense of our rights.

The CP took the opposite course. They placed reliance on the police as their primary defense, and refused to attempt to mobilize the left in a united front effort to repulse the NCLC thuggery. In one instance, this resulted in the cops coming into a CP hall before a meeting was begun, removing table legs and anything else that the CP might utilize to defend itself, and then leaving. Shortly thereafter, the NCLC showed up with clubs, and succeeded in hurting a number of CP members and disrupting the meeting.

Our tactics have been far more successful. The NCLC has to be taught that it cannot physically destroy us. In that regard, the experience they had at Columbia, and especially the education they received when they tried to break up the Detroit educational conference by attacking with clubs, chains, etc., did more to aid the campaign to stop the NCLC than anything the CP did.

The CP's tactics reflect their general class-collaborationist outlook. They placed primary reliance on the cops, rather than on a campaign of mobilizing the left to defend their rights and viewing any tactic of demanding that the authorities protect their rights within the context of such a campaign.

Our tactics began with the recognition that we must rely primarily on ourselves and those forces we can mobilize. However, there is another important point we must take into consideration in deciding tactics. We begin with our understanding of the nature of the capitalist state. We know that the capitalist state will not dispense justice equally. As Comrade Clark correctly points out, the state is not impartial. We must rely on ourselves first of all, and in the long run, help teach the working class to rely on its own power to defend its rights, and to place no reliance at all in the capitalist authorities to do this. But the very reasons why we place no confidence in the capitalist authorities to dispense justice fairly, indicates that there are limits, determined by the objective situation, on the physical means we can utilize to defend ourselves, without walking into police victimization. In the given situation in the country today, for example, it would be utter folly for us to attempt to counter an attack on ourselves with lethal weapons (guns and knives) by similarly arming ourselves. That would set us up for a murderous police trap, much as the Black Panthers were set up. Consequently, part of our decision to rely on our own forces to defend our meetings was predicated on the level of weapons utilized by the NCLC. We could stop them if they used clubs; if they utilized lethal weapons, we would not have been able to effectively counter them on that level, and would have had to review our decision

not to notify the police.

The NCLC has now apparently changed its tactics. Educational experiences such as the one they received in Detroit, the dispatch with which their goons were removed from in front of our headquarters throughout the country, and our demonstrated preparedness to defend all our meetings undoubtedly had had an effect upon them. Obviously, we must continue to keep our guard up until the danger from this quarter passes. But the NCLC has now launched a different kind of attack, not directed at breaking up meetings, but at ambushing individuals or small groups of comrades. It was this kind of attack that resulted in Comrade Jesse Smith's arm being broken. In the face of these new thug tactics, we had a new problem, in some ways similar to that which I cited from *Teamster Power*. Although we did take certain precautions concerning comrades entering and leaving the hall, we could not hope to provide a continuous personal guard for all comrades. Should we counter such attacks by striking back with similar attacks? There is no principle involved, but if we were to do this, we would be making a first-class blunder by providing the cops with a good opportunity to set up a trap for us, and by playing into the hands of the authorities who are attempting to picture the NCLC attacks as a "squabble on the left." To do nothing to defend our comrades is impermissible. Thus we decided, as part of stepping up our political campaign against the NCLC, to demand the arrest and conviction of the thugs who attacked Jesse Smith.

In no way does this imply that we place reliance on the authorities. This is a subordinate part of our overall campaign, which remains to mobilize the left against the NCLC. This aspect of our campaign will not harm our exposure of the role police agents-provocateurs are playing in the NCLC attacks, but can help it just as in the case of the Klan attacks in Houston, where our campaign demanding that the city authorities take action against the Klan complimented our exposure of police collusion with the Klan.

If Comrade Clark rejects the use of these tactics, he should tell us what other tactics we should use in this situation. Otherwise he sounds as if he is telling us that because of what he considers to be principle, we just have to take it if the NCLC uses such ambush tactics, or uses guns against us. That certainly would not inspire the working class with confidence in such "principles."

5. *The Suit Brought by Rank-and-File Teamsters*

Comrade Clark refers to an article in *The Militant* concerning a suit brought by a group of rank-and-file Teamsters against Fitzsimmons and other top Teamster officials, charging them with conspiring with the grape growers to bust the United Farm Workers Union. According to the article, the suit singles out the large sums of Teamster funds going to the goons who have attacked the UFWU pickets.

The principled questions involved in utilizing the courts against such goon tactics within the labor movement have already been discussed. There is another aspect to this question that relates to the method utilized by Comrade Clark of reducing tactical questions to formulas. Our principles help guide our work. But they also have limits of applicability, and sometimes one principle comes into conflict with another.

For example, we are opposed to strikebreaking. But there are strikes that we do not support. An example was the 1968 teachers strike in New York, which we characterized as a racist strike against the Black and Puerto Rican communities. At that time, our teacher comrades opposed the strike, and our presidential candidate, Fred Halstead, led a group of parents in opening a school shut down by the strike.

We are in principle opposed to government interference in the unions. But recently we supported a suit brought by the NAACP against the steel bosses and the steel union, against racial discrimination by both. We have supported suits brought against some unions by women workers under the Civil rights Act. If the Equal Rights Amendment passes, we can expect more such suits.

Concerning the recent struggle in the United Mine Workers against the Boyle machine, we warned the miners of the dangers of government intervention into the union. At the same time, we certainly did not object to the opposition group demanding that the authorities arrest and convict the murderers of Yablonsky—whether those killers were from the bosses, the Boyle machine or both. Similarly, we would be opposed to the rank-and-file Teamster group Comrade Clark mentions placing any reliance on the government, or seeking government aid in settling the political dispute they have with Fitzsimmons. But we have no objection to their bringing suit against Fitzsimmons using their dues to hire goons to attack the UFWU.

July 17, 1973

Appendix

Trotsky's Letter to the Attorney-General of Mexico

The Mexican press published on June 1 a letter, written by Leon Trotsky to the attorney general of Mexico, the chief of the federal police, and the foreign minister. By this letter Trotsky successfully thwarted attempts to direct away from the Stalinists the investigation of the May 24 attempt to assassinate Trotsky. The letter follows:

It is first of all necessary to affirm that the attempted assassination could only be instigated by the Kremlin; by Stalin through the agency of the GPU abroad. During the last few

years, Stalin has shot hundreds of real or supposed friends of mine. He actually exterminated my entire family, except me, my wife and one of my grandchildren. Through his agents abroad he assassinated one of the old leaders of the GPU, Ignace Reiss, who had publicly declared himself a partisan of mine. This fact has been established by the French police and the Swiss judiciary. The same GPU agents who killed Reiss trailed my son in Paris. On the night of November 7, 1936 GPU agents broke into the Scientific Institute of Paris and stole part of my archives. Two of my secretaries, Erwin Wolff

and Rudolf Klement, were assassinated by the GPU; the first in Spain, the second in Paris. All the theatrical Moscow trials during 1936-37 had as their aim to get me into the hands of the GPU.

In saying this I do not exclude the possibility of the participation of Hitler's Gestapo in the assassination attempt. Up to a certain point the GPU and the Gestapo are connected with each other; it is possible and probable that in special cases the same agents are at the disposal of both. Authoritative representatives of the German government have publicly indicated that they consider me a dangerous enemy. It is completely possible that these two police forces cooperated in the attempt against me.

The general scheme of the GPU organization abroad is the following: *in the Central Committee of each section of the Comintern there is placed a responsible director of the GPU for that country.* His status is known only to the secretary of the party and one or two trustworthy members. The other members of the Central Committee have but a slight inkling of the special status of this member.

As a member of the Central Committee the country's GPU representative has the possibility of approaching with full legality all members of the party, study their characters, entrust them with commissions, and little by little draw them into the work of espionage and terrorism, appealing to their sense of party loyalty as much as to bribery.

This whole mechanism was discovered in France and Switzerland in connection with the murder of Reiss and the later moves against my dead son and other persons. As for the United States, Krivitsky established that the sister of Browder, general secretary of the party, became a GPU agent through her brother's recommendation. This example proves the rule rather than an exception.

Agents of the GPU upon coming to a foreign country for a specific task always work through the local head of the GPU, the above mentioned member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; without this they could not orient themselves in the local situation and select the indispensable executors of their mission. The emissary from abroad and the local resident and their trustworthy aides work out the general plan of their undertaking, study the list of possible collaborators and draw them into the conspiracy step by step.

I do not have any information concerning the real role played by sergeant Casas and the five police under him who were on guard outside my house. I know only that they are arrested. One cannot be sure that they were not in the conspiracy; the GPU has means as no other institution in the world of convincing, coercion and bribery. They could have systematically insinuated to the police that I am an enemy of the Mexican people; promised them a career; and finally they could have offered a high price for their services. But foreign agents could not approach the Mexican police; local agents were necessary.

The GPU is particularly concerned with the problem of preparing public opinion for a terrorist act, especially when a person well-known nationally and internationally is the victim. This part of the job is always assigned to the Stalinist press, Stalinist speakers and the so-called "friends of the Soviet Union." The judicial investigation, it seems to me, from this point of view cannot fail to examine the work of the newspapers "El Popular," "La Voz de Mexico," and some collab-

orators of "El Nacional." I am not referring to criticism of my convictions, for such criticism, even though most severe, is the most elementary democratic right of everybody. But "La Voz de Mexico" and "El Popular" have never occupied themselves with such criticism.

I recall that many times they have accused me of connections with all the reactionary circles in Mexico as well as abroad; in one speech Toledano declared that I am preparing a general strike against the Cardenas government; in "El Machete" and afterward in "La Voz de Mexico" they accuse me, every Sunday, of preparing a revolution together with General Cedillo and many other real or supposed counter-revolutionaries; they pictured me in secret sessions with a certain Dr. Atl; in collaboration with the German fascists in Mexico, etc. etc. In recent times "Futuro," "El Popular," as well as "La Voz de Mexico," systematically repeat that I am in secret contact with the reactionary U. S. congressman Dies and that I gave him certain information against Mexico. All these accusations, it is easy to see, make no sense, for they ascribe to me acts which are not only contrary to my convictions and my life's work, but also against my immediate interests, since I would have to lose all reason to commit disloyal acts against the Mexican government which has accorded me such generous hospitality.

I need but recall that through the press I have called upon my accusers repeatedly to bring their case before an impartial commission, appointed by the government or the (government) Party of the Mexican Revolution, in order to publicly examine the accusations made against me. Toledano and the Communist Party chiefs have always been careful enough not to accept my proposition.

With this I do not wish to say that Toledano and the Communist Party chiefs took direct part in preparing the attempt against me. The GPU has a strict division of labor. Known persons are assigned the task of propagating the slanders against me. Lesser known but more serious agents are assigned the task of assassination. Nevertheless Mr. Toledano is no youngster. He knows perfectly well the methods of the GPU, particularly the systematic persecution to which the members of my family, my friends and I have been and are exposed throughout the world. It is no secret to Toledano that the GPU is out to annihilate me physically. I am therefore within my rights in saying that, in occupying himself systematically with the poisonous campaign against me, Mr. Toledano took part in the moral preparation of the terrorist act. Consequently Toledano as a witness should be of immense interest to the investigation.

It cannot be doubted in the least that the former and present chiefs of the Communist Party know who is the local director of the GPU. Permit me also to assume that David Alfaro Siqueiros, who took part in the civil war in Spain as an active Stalinist, may also know who are the most important and active GPU members, Spanish, Mexican, and of other nationalities who are arriving at different times in Mexico, especially via Paris. The questioning of the previous and the present general secretary of the Communist Party and also of Siqueiros, would help very much to throw light on the instigators of the assassination attempt and together with them discover their accomplices.

LEON TROTSKY