

# THE COMMUNIST

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!



"A communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against

all incorrect ideas and actions so as to consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist." Mao Tsetung

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## INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO DENOUNCE STATEHOOD PLOT!

Before he left office, Gerald Ford raised a proposal to Congress to make Puerto Rico our 51st state. This came at an opportune time when the pro-statehood party the Progressive National Party; (PNP) won the recent elections in Puerto Rico. Their candidate, Carlos Romero Barcelo defeated the independence parties who dominated politically for the last few decades.

Why does such a proposal for statehood arise now? The US has historically dominated Puerto Rico, politically, militarily and economically, Puerto Rico was forcibly taken over by the US after the defeat of the Spanish in 1897. The "Foraker Act" passed by Congress in 1900 was designed to provide for a Puerto Rican legislature and governor. This laid the political basis for the new colonial government.

Though the US imperialists were not ready to annex Puerto Rico as a state, they established firm political control over this new territory. For example, laws that were passed by the Puerto Rican legislature could be annulled by the US Congress. Territories such as Puerto Rico were officially known as "possessions" of the US - a word that accurately described their complete lack of democratic rights, particularly the right to political independence. (See THE COMMUNIST, Vol. 1, no. 3).

The Puerto Rican people never took colonial domination meekly or passively, and over the years, the rising tide of struggle increased against the rule of US imperialism. In 1917, the imperialist made them token citizens with the "honor" of fighting in the

imperialist armies. They gave the Puerto Rican people token representation in Congress and the use of US currency, but never what the people wanted most: self determination.

Militarily, the US occupies Puerto Rico. The Army and Navy bases sit on 13% of the land on the island. Surrounding islands are used as bases for counter-insurgency activity or for target practice, where hundreds of people have been killed by sporadic shelling offshore by the Navy over the years.

Economically, US corporations dominate Puerto Rico as well. Many corporations operate tax free on the island, paying workers sub-human wages. They justify the deplorable conditions and low wages on the fact that

they are providing Puerto Ricans with jobs and building the economy. However the reality is much more devastating. Puerto Ricans never reap the benefits from the wealth that they create. With unemployment as high as 80% in some towns, the masses are forced to pay high prices for essential items, that they must import. Because of these conditions, over 30% of the island's population have migrated to the US.

Because the means of production is in the hands of US imperialism, Puerto Rico's agricultural resources are concentrated on one crop - sugar, which leaves them open to that domination. All of their other natural resources - tobacco, oil, tin, nickel, copper, marble, etc.

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## DEBATE ON SADLOWSKI

We welcome the letter in the adjoining column for it speaks from the shop floor to conditions in steel and proposes a policy for the election February 8 to replace I.W. Abel as president of the United Steelworkers of America. The candidate of the Abel machine, Lloyd McBride, is challenged by the "progressive" director of the Chicago-Gary district, Edward Sadlowski. The letter says we should give critical support to Sadlowski.

We disagree fundamentally with this conclusion and the reasoning behind it. Lenin says that "to belittle socialist ideology in any way, to turn away from it in the slightest degree means to strengthen bourgeois ideology. In effect the letter fails to draw a clear line between the politics of trade unionism and communist politics. The correspondent bows to trade union strivings rather than showing the way to divert those strivings on to the path of socialist revolution.

We are told that it is to our advantage to support Sadlowski, even though in the long run Sadlowski is not enough. The basic argument here is that the Sadlowski campaign can break the Abel machine creating relatively more favorable conditions for trade union work. In addition, according to the correspondent, the advanced are in Sadlowski's campaign and our support for his candidacy is important to the task of winning the advanced. If we do not give our support we will be "irrelevant."

Other organizations which call for critical support for Sadlowski use essentially the same logic. For example, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) emphasizes the importance of breaking the Abel machine and adds that taking up the Sadlowski campaign can advance and develop the struggle of the rank and file.

These arguments confuse the issue. The fundamental question is not between the short run and the long run or between machine unionism and rank and file unionism. The basic question is the difference between trade unionism and Marxism-Leninism.

### WHAT THREATENS THE ABEL MACHINE?

Sadlowski is not the source of the threat to the Abel machine, but a product of it. The challenge to Abel and other old guard trade unionists is an immediate and direct by product of intensified capitalist crisis. Boyle, Meany and Abel, etc., Inc. sent the best of the working class to fight in Indochina. As a result, they no longer have any hold over steelworker veterans who will fight in no more imperialist wars. Under conditions of continuing crisis, these same trade union reactionaries draw the salaries of corporation executives, yet every steelworker sees his real wages cut each week. The old guard lives as high as ever but does not deliver the goods. In short, the domestic and international crisis of U.S. imperialism has led to widespread rank and file disaffection with the leadership of trade union reactionaries like Abel. The bourgeoisie needs a new breed of

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Steelworkers have been undergoing escalating attacks from the capitalists over the last few years. Our wages have been reduced relative to both what other American workers make and to what we can buy with them. We have been sped up to such an extent that thousands of jobs have been permanently lost (63,000 jobs were lost between 1973 and 1975) and steelworkers constantly face the threat of layoffs. These productivity drives by the steel corporations have likewise resulted in a huge increase in industrial accidents. Similarly, the attacks by the companies against minorities and women have continued. The Consent Decree basically paid off some minority workers a few hundred dollars for past discrimination and gave these companies a legal right to continue these same discriminatory policies in regards to hiring, promotions, and transfers. Blacks, latinos and other minorities continue to work in the dirtiest, most dangerous, least skilled and lowest paying jobs.

What has been the reaction of the United Steelworkers of America (USW) to all these attacks? I.W. Abel and the other top bureaucrats of the USW have totally collaborated with the company's attacks on steelworkers. They have signed the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) which bans strikes in basic steel until 1980. This makes the union powerless in the face of the capitalist offensive. Likewise, the Abel group has signed the Consent Decree and has consistently displayed a total unwillingness to take up the just demands of minority and women workers. And Abel has been more than happy to sign productivity agreements with the steel companies whose effect has been a loss of jobs and an increase in accidents.

Ed Sadlowski has decided to run against Abel's hand-picked successor, Lloyd McBride. Sadlowski has been director of District 31--the Chicago-Gary area--for the past 2 years. Sadlowski is running on a platform of fighting back against the steel corporations. He wants the USW to become a more democratic union where members can vote on contracts (which we don't have the right to now) and where the rank and file can determine the union's policies.

Many people think Sadlowski's program is vague. It is. Sadlowski has not taken unequivocal, clear positions on the issues. He says that steelworkers should have the right to strike and that he would let the rank and file vote on the ENA, but Sadlowski has not said he personally opposes the ENA. Likewise, Sadlowski has said little about racism and sexism in the steel industry. He has not openly opposed the Consent Decree. In general Sadlowski pushes a militant, progressive line against the companies, while specifically he is quite vague.

Thousands of rank and file steelworkers are actively involved in struggle against the capitalists--struggle for better contracts, struggle for better safety and health conditions, and struggle against racism. These workers think Sadlowski is on their side and will help them. It would be

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# THE UGLY FACE OF CHAUVINISM

In the ten days between Christmas Eve and January 2, 26 people, mostly children died in 3 major fires in Chicago. Two of these fires were in the 18th st. Pilsen barrio (neighborhood)-the largest Chicano barrio east of the Mississippi. The third was in a mostly Puerto Rican neighborhood. Over 30 families in all were left homeless.

The tragic losses in these fires, and the response that followed, reflected the ugly face of great nation chauvinism that has been propagated by the bourgeoisie as well as the bitter effects of the capitalist attacks on the entire working class, intensified in this period of imperialist crisis.

All the tools of the bourgeoisie, including bribed leaders of the firemen's union, city officials, and particularly the press and media, obediently served their masters insisting that the problem was primarily with the failure of the Latino population to 'Americanize' itself and learn English as well as questioning the basic intelligence of the people. On the other hand, the spontaneous struggle that did emerge, although winning some concessions from the city, did not sufficiently broaden the struggle. It did not link our fight against national chauvinism and for equal rights with the struggle against cut-backs in basic services for the whole working class, focusing in on the issues of inadequate fire protection and services, as well as general issues like housing.

## CUTBACKS

In the last 4 years the Chicago Fire Department has lost over 600 firemen through retirement or death. This decrease of 13%, from 4630 to 4030, is at a time when the city's population has been stable, about 3.5 million. There have been very few

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are sold for low prices and processed by US corporations in the US and sent back to the island to be sold at inflated prices.

The Puerto Rican people have never taken this oppression lying down. There has over the years been organized struggle to liberate Puerto Rico. National heroes arose such as Jose de Diego and Pedro Albizu Campos, who led the growing independentistas' movement. In 1948, workers went on strike throughout the island, paralyzing key industries. During the Korean War the independence movement took on an even more profound anti-imperialist character. The Puerto Rican Nationalist Party organized opposition to the drafting of young men in the army to invade Korea. They said in a notice to the US government that Puerto Ricans would rather die fighting for the independence of their country than serve US imperialism against other oppressed peoples. The US responded with violence and terror, and the heroic peoples took their stands in Arecibo, Jayuya, Mayaguez, Ponce, Naranjito, and Utuado. Even though thousands were arrested and many killed, the resistance to US domination wasn't crushed.

In addition to murderous US imperialism, the

new fire stations built during that time. Almost all of them have been around major industry or in 'redeveloped' neighborhoods, almost none in working class neighborhoods. There has been very little purchase of new equipment, including snorkels (special equipment to get to taller buildings). One of these could have saved some of the children burned in the fires. Of the six snorkels, all are in heavy industrial areas or redeveloped areas.

According to the National Fire Prevention Institute there should be six firemen per truck. Before the cut-back Chicago had almost 5 per truck. Now it has an average between

"I don't want to see anymore people in my neighborhood burn to death because there isn't enough firemen or equipment or because it's being used to put out some rich man's warehouse. I left my apartment just before the fire started to get my little baby at the baby-sitter's house a block away. When I came back I saw the whole building burning. I knew my children were on the third floor. It took 15 minutes for the fireman to come and the fire station is only 3 blocks away and then only 6 firemen showed up with 2 trucks. I could see that they couldn't get to my family on the third floor. They needed a snorkel and more men. I had to sit there hoping more would come. I watched my family burn to death and couldn't do anything about it." -- Statement by a mother who lost family members in the Pilsen fire.

3-4. The training firemen receive is more oriented toward saving property than human lives. All this has meant a tremendous increased workload for firemen, often working 12 hour shifts. Following the fires several firemen anonymously called radio and TV stations saying the city was in desperate need of more than a 1000 new firemen and more equipment. Plus, this winter being the coldest in Chicago's history and increased arson has meant more fires than ever, sharply focusing the effects of the cutbacks.

One hour before the first fire on Christmas Eve a major fire began at an old warehouse where no one was working,

Puerto Rican people also face the hegemonic ambitions of the Soviet Union who have a firm foothold in the Caribbean. Under the signboard of liberation, and utilizing conciliation with modern revisionism by elements in the independence movement such as the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), the Soviets are trying to bring the Puerto Rican people under their domination. Those like PSP that conciliate with the Soviet imperialists do not offer the people true independence, but merely open the door for control by one superpower to replace the other.

In addition, forces like the PSP have helped provide an opportune time for the US to seize on the confusion created among the people to push their call for statehood. The results of the last election are bitter testimony of this fact. During the last election, the PSP received a very small number of votes, and it is clear that one reason they lost support is because they preach friendship with the USSR, which is being more clearly seen by the people in Puerto Rico, as well as all of Latin America, as an enemy rather than a friend. The Puerto Rican people will not buy any effort to sneak in the influence of the social-imperialists under the name of independence as happened in Angola. Heading on this course, PSP lost their one-time popular support and the pro-US imperialist party took advantage of that fact.

only a mile away. Many fire trucks were called to save capitalist property and goods. Yet, it took 15 minutes after they were called for firemen and equipment to reach the apartment building where 12 children and women died. Only six firemen on two trucks came and were unable, due to lack of manpower and equipment, to reach the third floor, where most of the victims were trapped. The burning building is just 3 blocks from the fire station. This and the two fires that followed are only an example of what these murdering capitalists' priorities are!

## DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

The question of democratic rights and national chauvinism arose around the question of language. During the fires, not only was there inadequate equipment and men, but there were no firemen who could speak Spanish to those who were trying to escape the flames. As a result, people who could have perhaps been saved through rescue efforts were unable to understand the instructions given them, so they died in the flames. After the first fire, a coalition of neighborhood forces formed to protest these conditions. The coalition included many

The call for statehood is an attempt by the US imperialists to consolidate its control in the face of Soviet strivings for hegemony. The US, weakened with internal and external crises, is attempting to forcibly annex Puerto Rico once and for all, guaranteeing its access to the rich natural resources of Puerto Rico, including valuable off-shore oil. Also, if the US imperialists could force statehood on Puerto Rico, they would be even more ruthless in their attempts to smash the independence movement under the false cover that it was an "internal state matter." That is one reason that, even though the US imperialists effectively control Puerto Rico now, they still desire that final official annexation.

Any illusions that making Puerto Rico a state will improve the conditions for the people of the island must be shattered. Such a move would only benefit the rich. One can only look at the rising unemployment, inflation and increased attacks on the working class, oppressed nationalities and national minorities in the US to see that absolutely no "salvation" arises by such a situation. Besides, the correct demand for Puerto Rico is for unqualified independence. The call for statehood is a disguised neo-colonial plot to deprive the Puerto Rican people of the political control over their own territory. It is similar to France's relationship to Algeria - in no way can the limitations on political sovereignty implied,

honest individuals and progressive groups, including Marxist-Leninists. The focus of the coalition was demands for more Latino firemen, teaching Spanish to firemen in Latino communities, and local programs in churches and schools to teach fire prevention and protection. The demand for more Latino firemen correctly pointed to the long history of discrimination in the fire department. The situation is so bad that in 1974 federal Judge Prentice Marshall imposed hiring quotas on the city to hire more minority firemen. In 1975 the city agreed to hire 152 minority firemen to equal the 152 white firemen hired in 1973. But even this small step never happened. Presently there are 7 Latinos and less than 40 Black firemen and no other oppressed national minorities in this city of almost 3/4 million Latinos and 1.5 million black people.

The coalition went downtown to demonstrate and met with the fire commissioner and mayor. Under the pressure of the rising anger from the barrios and other progressive peoples, the city agreed to teach the present firemen to speak Spanish and set up a fire prevention education program in the community. It refused to hire more Latino firemen. Since

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## RETRACTION

The Workers Congress (M-L) withdraws the discussion of regional autonomy in the last issue of THE COMMUNIST (v. III #2) and our criticism of the October League on that point. While some aspects of this discussion are correct, others seem to us to be wrong, misleading and based on inadequate study. The question of regional autonomy has not been satisfactorily discussed or explained in our movement. We intend to make a contribution to that discussion shortly.

under statehood be applied to the conditions of Puerto Rico.

The call for statehood by the US represents its desperation in facing the rising struggles of the Puerto Rican people for independence, its swiftly taking advantage of weaknesses in the independence movement caused by those who conciliate with social imperialism, its increased contention with the Soviet Union in Latin America, and its panic as it faces the rising storm of the oppressed peoples and countries of the world as well as its own internal crisis. Even though the pro-US party won the recent election, that victory was by no means a consolidated one. It in no way represents a mandate for Puerto Rico to become a state unit of the US. The people know that Puerto Rico was taken by arms. Liberation will only be guaranteed through armed struggle for independence by the masses of Puerto Rican people, under the leadership of a vanguard party that exposes and opposes both super powers. We must demand that the US imperialists remove all military presence from Puerto Rico, that the ownership of all factories and means of production be placed in the hands of the Puerto Rican people, and that the Puerto Rican people be allowed to exercise complete and unlimited sovereignty over their own country.

US OUT OF PUERTO RICO!!

# SCWG ON THE "GANG OF FOUR"

In the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the following letter by the Seattle Communist Workers Group supports the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in the struggle unfolding in China against the counter-revolutionary "gang of four". We agree with the comrades that all variety of political chameleons calling themselves Marxist-Leninist have been exposed on this question.

Included in this exposure is the so-called "Leninist Core of the Revolutionary Wing of the Anti-Revisionist Communist Movement (PRRWQ and RWL) This "Leninist core" puts forward thinly disguised speculation in support of the "gang of four", but in the guise of waving the red flag to defeat the red flag. The "Leninist core" insists on guarding against "speculation", but then instructs cadres by directive to "Act according to the principles laid down." (BOLSHEVIK, v. 6, No. 11, Nov-Dec. 1976) Unfortunately for these super-Bolsheviks, this slogan, supposedly an instruction of Chairman Mao was in fact a fabrication of the "gang of four" and their mobilization order to usurp Party and state power.

Also incorrect are those individuals and groups which stand on the sidelines permitting themselves the luxury of "freedom of criticism". This is a petty bourgeois stance which ignores the responsibilities of proletarian internationalism. Every Marxist Leninist has an obligation to support the leadership of the Central Committee of the Chinese

party. This is our responsibility to a fraternal Marxist-Leninist party. Comrades who hesitate on this question take Leninist norms of organization far too lightly.

Dear Comrades,

We have noticed that the recent struggle which erupted in China between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie has led to a sharpening of contradictions within our communist movement. This is not a bad thing but a good thing as it more sharply distinguishes the staunch supporters of the Communist Party of China from those who have only been opportunistically raising the prestigious name of the CPC in order to have credibility in the communist movement.

Generally speaking we have noticed three positions being put forth with regard to recent events in China. While some forces within our movement are wavering in their support of the Central Committee of the CPC and others have shown their true colors through outright opposition and attack on the CC, still others have shown resolute support for the CC. As for ourselves, we align with the latter along with the 30 million members of the CPC and the 800 million Chinese people. We believe that Marxist-Leninists must be resolute in their support of the CPC and any wavering will only lead to disorientation and setbacks and will only benefit the bourgeoisie and their agents, the trotskyites, revisionists and other opportunists.

The recent promotion of Comrade Hua Kuo-feng to the

posts of Chairman of the CC of the CPC and Chairman of the Military Commission of the CC and the smashing of the counterrevolutionary "gang of four" of Wang, Chang, Chiang and Yao represent monumental victories for the CPC, the Chinese people, the international communist movement and all the oppressed nations and people of the world. Following the death of Chairman Mao this past September this "gang of four" which had been practicing factionalism as far back as 1974 saw their chance to usurp Party and state leadership, fearing to come out into the open under the watchful eye of Chairman Mao.

The aim of this anti-Party clique of capitalist-roaders was to establish a capitalist dynasty with themselves on the throne. Arrogantly throwing their political weight around, their bourgeois ambitions prevented them from realizing that the CPC cannot be easily destroyed. The "gang of four" failed to realize that Chairman Mao foresaw the great struggle which would break out following his death and therefore confidently proposed Comrade Hua for the leading posts of First Vice-chairman of the CC and Premier of the State Council in April, 1976, following the death of Comrade Chou En-lai. The "gang of four" did not think that Comrade Hua could rally the CC, the entire Party and the people of the whole country around his leadership and tried to use the opportunity following Chairman Mao's death to seize leading positions in the Party and the state. Chiang Ching, for example, wanted to become Chairman of the CC and wanted

her cohort, Wang Hung-wen, to become Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. But their wild ambitions were foiled by the Central Committee under the wise leadership of Comrade Hua. The "gang of four" at one time having tremendous power in the end found themselves completely isolated and with no support. The CPC and the Chinese people have demonstrated unprecedented unity and support for the Central Committee. Every major decision of the CC since Chairman Mao's death shows that the CC is of one mind and one heart with the Chinese people and the world's people. From the decision to build a permanent memorial hall for Chairman Mao to the decision to begin preparations for the publications of Chairman Mao's Complete Works to the decision promoting Comrade Hua to the post of Chairman of the CC to the decision to oust the "gang of four" from the Party, all these decisions eloquently demonstrate our point. We are therefore elated that a major retrogression for the CPC and for socialism has been averted. Such struggles between the two roads, the two classes and the two lines are bound to break out many more times in the future but we are confident that under the leadership of the CC of the CPC headed by Chairman Hua, the Chinese people will be able to rebuff the attempts of the bourgeoisie to restore capitalism and to march on continuously along the socialist road.

Comradely regards,  
The Seattle Communist Workers Group (SCWG)

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these events the courts and city agreed to a compromise plan of hiring 274 new firemen, including 40 Latinos, 168 blacks, and 66 whites.

## CHAUVINIST ATTACKS

While granting this concession, the bourgeoisie and its agents turned immediately to the counter-attack. Using the media and their "labor bureaucrats", they whipped up all kinds of disgusting great nation tirades. They said the main problem was that Latinos didn't want to learn English, not that the state must service all people equally. On the local ABC-TV station, commentator Joel Daley said, "If Latinos are quick to pick up words like 'rights' and 'discrimination', they can learn 'help' and 'fire'." This chauvinist attack on the democratic rights of Latinos and other national minorities was fueled even further by the reactionary president of the Chicago Firefighters Union, Jack Gallapo. He said in response to the demand that firemen learn Spanish, "It makes me furious to think that somebody could live in this country for years and not learn the language. This is America, let them speak English!" This tirade of chauvinism succeeded in having a detrimental effect on the opinions of the masses - and this was well publicized in the bourgeois media which printed many letters that insisted that English should be the official, and only, language used in the US.

In advancing our program, we should rely on Lenin who said, "The national program of working class democracy is: absolutely no privileges for any one nation or any one

language..." (CRITICAL REMARKS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION). Regarding the fire department as well as any other aspect of service provided for the people we demand that there be no barriers to full service because of language. Fire departments, as well as other city departments and facilities must be able to fully carry out their duties no matter what national minority is involved. This will require training of workers to speak the languages of national minorities, the hiring of translators, publishing of information in many languages. Connected with this demand naturally is full representation of national minorities in hiring and composition of the work forces.

Another aspect of this is the fact that despite the tirades of the bourgeoisie and its insistence that minorities learn English, they have done everything possible to prevent this kind of education. It does not provide free English programs and it has drastically cut back the TESL program (Teaching English as a Second Language) in all public schools.

## HOUSING QUESTION

Another issue which must be forcefully raised is the bourgeoisie's forced segregation of Latinos in completely inadequate housing.

A major factor for the rapid spread of the fires is the condition of the housing in the 18th st.-Pilsen barrio. The barrio is one of the two areas of oldest housing in the city. Almost all of the 3-story tenement apartments were built before 1900, some before the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Traditionally it has

been an area of high density.

After the second World War thousands of Mexican immigrants and Chicanos (almost all from Texas) filled the old, run-down apartments. Now, except for the huge Robert Taylor Homes and Cabrini Green housing projects, 18th street has the highest population density in the city, more than 50,000 people packed into one square mile. In being the most segregated city, by housing, in the country, the bourgeoisie of Chicago does all it can to divide the multi-national working class.

In most 3-4 story apartment buildings there are 12 or more different apartments, most of which have little access to fire escapes or porches. Most are heated with very dangerous gas space heaters. In the older cities of the U.S. the most number of burned children each year, particularly during the winter, comes from these type of heaters exploding or children running up against them. So it was during these fires; most people had little or no access to the fire escapes, and due to the rotten conditions a fire in one part of the building spreads within minutes to engulf the entire building.

## CHICAGO 21 PLAN

Yet another aspect of the oppression of people in the barrio and for the fires that are searing the community is the "Chicago 21 Plan".

18th street is one of the prime targets of the monopoly capitalists' "Chicago 21 Plan" which calls for urban "renewal", commonly called "urban removal". The barrio is only a few miles from downtown Chicago. The bourgeoisie wants

to destroy the housing there and build high-income housing for the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie working downtown to re-attract them to the city from the suburbs. The few small landlords owning apartments on 18th st. who are interested in improving their property cannot do so because the banks won't loan them money. In all neighborhoods targeted for the Chicago 21 Plan mostly big landlords have been paying off backward lumpen youth to start fires. Clearly, our fight against fires must be coupled with a demand for better, low-cost housing and an attack on the Chicago 21 Plan.

## OUR TASKS

It is of vital importance that all comrades take up the struggle against the frantic efforts of the bourgeoisie to whip up national chauvinism and to intensify the attack on the oppressed nations, national minorities, and the working class as a whole!

We should bring forward a program that demands the immediate hiring of more firemen (and women), especially from among the oppressed national minorities. We must fight for better equipment, better training of the firemen, and expose the bourgeoisie's priorities on how and where it uses its firemen and equipment. This includes building new fire stations in working class neighborhoods.

Second, we must put forward our views around the language question, showing how the rejection of privil-

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This article will take up the question of propaganda and agitation, with the focus an exposure of the economist positions taken by the August 29th Movement (ATM) in defense of the narrow character of their work at a particular factory. This dispute was first taken up in the April, 1976 issue of THE COMMUNIST, Vol. II no. 7, and then a response was written in the October, 1976 issue of REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE, Vol. 1, no. 9.

# POLEMIC WITH ATM FACTORY

to ideologically justify this amateurishness and confusion must be overcome if we are to win a decisive victory over opportunism.

POLEMIC WITH ATM ON CHARACTER OF PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION

ATM has criticized the WCML's position on propaganda and agitation as being dogmatic, abstract and unconnected to the day to day struggle of the working class. But in doing so, ATM attempts to justify a narrow, economist view that restricts our path. We welcome the opportunity to sharpen the difference between the application of Marxism-Leninism and opportunist principles on this question of propaganda and agitation and its application to our practical work.

We do not however sharpen our differences by whining like ATM has done that the work referred to was under their discipline but not by their cadre. Nor do we conduct struggle in full view of the movement by saying "The WC will hotly deny this... but facts are facts" or by complaining that the WCML "slandered" ATM in private discussions with workers by calling them right opportunists. Lenin writes:

"Every sensible person understands that if a bitter struggle is raging on any subject, in order to ascertain the truth, he must not confine himself to the statements made by the disputants, but must examine the facts and documents for himself, see for himself whether there is any evidence to be had from witnesses and whether this evidence is reliable." (Lenin, Collected Works, (LCW) Vol. 19, page 149) The reader should check ATM's polemic - how have they presented the question so that the reader can examine the facts. Knowing the reader can't make an accurate assessment on the basis of ATM's bare assertions and knowing that the reader has no way to test the correctness of these kinds of statements, ATM attempts to insinuate that they have been injured by unprincipled methods of struggle. Without presenting evidence, they ask the reader to take their word for what happened.

Facts are facts however, and we intend to present the facts in this dispute. In our article we criticized work that ATM had done in a particular factory, arguing that the line they defended was that economic agitation was for the workers in the plant, while propaganda was reduced to use only in study circles. ATM responded:

"First, ATM is accused of limiting agitation to only economic agitation. This was never the issue in dispute. The struggle which we had with the WC was not over whether communists must first put out economic or political agitation - but over the political content of communist agitation and propaganda." (page 9 of REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE, October, Vol. 1, no. 9) They said that the struggle with the WCML was "over the political content of communist agitation and propaganda." This is perfectly true. When we tear away ATM's fig leaf, we will show how the position they took in this dispute leads to the conclusion that they do only give workers economic agitation or political agitation on an economic basis. Lenin described this position in this way:

"We have already shown that the 'Economists' do not altogether repudiate 'politics, but that they are constantly straying from the social-democratic (communist-ed.) to the trade unionist conception of politics." (What Is To Be Done (WITBD) Page 67) This is where the differences should be focused on. For ATM not only strayed into the realm of trade unionist politics - but more importantly, they tried to justify this stand as consistent with communist practice. They said:

"We will refer to two examples of our political agitation. Both of them concern the firing of shop stewards and certain other shop issues. Starting from these issues our comrades explained to the workers that they were merely manifestations of a deepening capitalist crisis, which itself flowed from the fact that a capitalist class controlled the means of production (not the exact wording) in society. They laid out to the workers that the ills of their own shop as well as the ills of society flowed from capitalism. They then pointed out to the workers that it was only through a united and intensified (ATM's emphasis-ed.) class struggle that they would secure their partial demands as well as achieving a society which put the means of production into the hands of the working class." (Page 9, REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE)

### FACTS ARE INDEED FACTS!

The text of the leaflet ATM was referring to is as follows:

"This is not the first time that a shop steward had been fired at Western Yarn. (Name omitted) was fired six months ago for doing the same thing. The other shop stewards are also being threatened. But this is not an attack against the shop stewards, it is part of the general attack by the government and bosses against the working class. This firing happens when prices for food, gasoline and rent are skyrocketing, a time when unemployment is reaching 10 per cent, when workers from Mexico are terrorized by the government and bosses. This firing happens at the same time that the bosses at Western Yarn began stepping up their efforts to divide us and make us pay for their economic crisis. We're being made to pay for the crisis through speed-ups and by forcing workers to run two or three machines like in spinning and twisting departments. All workers face the same conditions and injustices we face at Western Yarn. It is important that we stand up against these latest attacks by the company. If we don't take a firm stand now, they will throw the gains we have won out the window and will stop at nothing to keep us divided and exploited. We must participate in our union and make it work for us, we must realize that the union officials are powerless, that it is only the united and organized workers that has real strength. The workers are the union."

The character of the above-mentioned exposures is the same as that of ATM's leaflet, revealed in statements like "...it is part of the general attack by the government and the bosses against the working class" This firing happens at the same time the bosses at Western Yarn began stepping up their efforts to divide us and make us pay for their economic crisis....All workers face the same conditions and injustices we face at Western Yarn...only the united and organized working class that has real strength....the workers are the union."

It is obvious that this leaflet contains some errors and much ambiguity. Most glaring is the statement that the "trade union officials are powerless." Union bureaucrats are not powerless - their ruthless and quite powerful hand is felt daily as it is used against the workers, handicapping their struggle against their employers.

# PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION

erful hand is felt daily as it is used against the workers, handicapping their struggle against their employers.

But most importantly, the great gap between what political concepts are brought out in this leaflet in reality and what ATM had claimed it to be. When they said "not exact wording" it was an understatement - for nowhere is mentioned "capitalist class controlled the means of production" (even in non-scientific terms) or putting "the means of production into the hands of the working class." As the reader can now see, the content of the leaflet is narrow and could use a lot of improvement. ATM could have openly and honestly admitted the limited character of this literature. But instead they defended it as fitting communist political exposure.

### POLITICAL AGITATION ON AN ECONOMIC BASIS RESTRICTED, LOCAL VIEW

ATM claims that their leaflet was political agitation, which it was - but it was trade union political agitation, which is what Marxist-Leninists mean by political agitation on an economic basis. This kind of political education is provided in trade union papers, and must not be confused, as ATM does, with communist political agitation. Lenin describes in some detail the character of this trade unionist political education:

"For the trade union secretary of any, say British trade union, always helps the workers to conduct the economic struggle, helps to expose factory abuses, explains the injustices of the laws and of measures which hamper the freedom to strike and the freedom to picket...explains the partiality of arbitration court judges who belong to the bourgeois classes, etc., etc...In a word, every trade union secretary conducts and helps to conduct 'the economic struggle against employers and government.'" (WITBD page 99)

The character of the above-mentioned exposures is the same as that of ATM's leaflet, revealed in statements like "...it is part of the general attack by the government and the bosses against the working class" This firing happens at the same time the bosses at Western Yarn began stepping up their efforts to divide us and make us pay for their economic crisis....All workers face the same conditions and injustices we face at Western Yarn...only the united and organized working class that has real strength....the workers are the union."

ATM not only characterized their trade unionist agitation as communist, but criticized our attempts to raise the trade unionist politics of the working class to the level of communist politics as dogmatism. ATM raised their criticism in this way:

"To return to the errors of the WC (at this plant). The WC printed a plant newsletter, 'Working Class Consciousness' (?). While this newsletter contained an abundance of revolutionary language and was salted with the phrases, 'capitalist class', 'labor power', etc., it provided the workers with absolutely no revolutionary direction." (Page 9 RC) We can only conclude from this that ATM is using the old and worn economist argument that our political agitation was abstract, divorced from real life because it did not raise "concrete demands". But this argument reduces our communist tasks around propaganda and agitation to only narrow and often reformist demands rather than using our literature to raise the scientific theories of Marxism-Leninism. This argument equates Marxism-Leninism with dogmatism and abstractness. This is exactly what ATM is saying:

"The workers did not want to hear about socialism in the abstract (and many workers are definitely open to socialism) but they wanted to know concretely how their struggle (ATM's emphasis-ed.) can become part of the struggle for socialism." (Page 9, RC) Later they say:

"Our task as communists was to give political direction to the workers in that factory." (Ibid.)

Comrades, here is revealed the narrow, economist view that keeps the workers' outlook restricted to their given region, trade, union and even plant. ATM's leaflet is presumably an example which shows concretely how the workers struggle can become a part of the struggle for socialism. We let the reader judge for himself. When ATM says "Our tasks as communists was to give political direction to the workers at that factory" - they fail to realize that the leaflet provides a trade unionist political direction, not a communist one. It is to fool the workers to pretend that a narrow concern with economic conditions in their plant is the way to connect their struggle to the class struggle for socialism.

We ask ATM, how can the "intensified class struggle" that you speak of, actually develop if the focus of attention of our agitation is kept within the confines of the plant? This merely maintains what spontaneously develops - trade unionist consciousness. What is necessary are comprehensive political exposures and the introduction of Marxism-Leninism - in that way the struggle against individual employers or certain government officials can be transformed into a struggle against the whole bourgeoisie and its state apparatus. Lenin says:

"The struggle of the workers becomes a class struggle only when the foremost representatives of the entire working class of the whole country are conscious of themselves as a single working class and launch a struggle that is directed, not against individual employers, but against the entire class of capitalists and against the government that supports that class. Only when the individual worker realizes that he is a member of the entire working class, only when he recognizes the fact that his petty day-to-day struggle against individual employers and individual government officials is a struggle against the entire bourgeoisie and the entire government does his struggle become a class struggle." (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 4 pp 215-6) In other words, in order for the workers to consciously take up the class struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and for socialism, they must look beyond the confines of their factory or local experience, they must

develop an understanding of the historical mission of the working class and learn to react to manifestations of the political tyranny of the capitalist class on a nationwide, a world-wide basis. But ATM criticizes us for not limiting our political direction to a given factory situation and ignoring concrete conditions.

### DID THE WCML'S NEWSLETTER REALLY IGNORE "CONCRETE CONDITIONS"?

ATM criticizes the WCML's newsletter for its failure to speak to safety and health conditions and other partial demands:

"The newsletter should have for instance, taken the partial demands of the workers, such as those around safety conditions and shown them; that bad safety conditions are an inevitable by-product of capitalism..."

"We must train ourselves and the advanced to be able to answer just these types of questions: otherwise socialism will remain a few words printed in 'Working Class Consciousness'..."

Again, they are implying that the WCML's political education was abstract, divorced from real struggle. Unfortunately for ATM, facts are facts. In our newsletter, "Working Class Consciousness", THIS is what we stated:

"In the recent history, workers from this company as any other company under the capitalist system, the workers have suffered a common oppression and exploitation. At Western Yarn, for example, this can be seen within the last three years there has been no significant wage increase, in spite of soaring inflation. Also this has been accompanied by hazardous and inhuman working conditions. The increase and speed-up of production and striving for greater profit have brought about an ever-increasing work load to the workers of Western Yarn. In particular, this has meant that women workers are forced to push heavy carts and lift heavy bobbins. Furthermore, in recent times workers have been harassed and have been intimidated for not putting out "enough production".

"These conditions described above are the conditions that working people as a whole are subjected to under the capitalist system of the bourgeoisie. In the problems that we as workers are confronted with, it is not enough to see our position at Western Yarn apart from other industries, there workers face similar exploitation. In order for us to understand the whole of exploitation, we need to take up the task of political education through the means of political exposure."

"When we speak of political exposure it is first important to recognize that we as workers are part of the working class (the proletariat) and because of this we own nothing but our labor power (ie. the ability to work) and the Bourgeoisie (the capitalist class) owns all the means of production (the machinery, land, raw materials, mines, etc.) and because of this, we are forced to sell our labor power to the capitalists in order to live and raise our families. This is how the bourgeoisie class exploits the working class and other sections of the population. Flowing from this, the bourgeoisie through its media and newspapers and

magazines, constantly mislead and misguide the proletariat that workers and employers have a "common" interest and should cooperate for the good of society. But as we look at the US today, we can see the growing upsurge of working people; layoffs, cutbacks, growing unemployment, soaring inflation, high cost of living, etc.: these are the things that directly and indirectly affect the working class in all aspects of their life. This is why we, the authors of this newsletter will take up the consistent task of the organization of comprehensive political exposures, providing political consciousness, so that the workers will be armed theoretically to recognize the bribes and the tricks of the bourgeoisie to dull the working class consciousness and divert them from the things that affect their interests as a class. For example, look at the company newsletter, November 26, 1975 and the other one dated December 16, 1975. One can see the shallowness and narrow content of their newsletter. In the one dated November 26, they say, "This is to help all of us share in the many little things that are going on in our company."

But if we notice, the newsletter goes on to say nothing of the "big things" that really confront the workers at Western Yarn, like the low wages the workers receive, the brown-lung disease that effects the textile industry, the unsafe working conditions, speed-ups, especially this point, because it should be made known that the company is expanding the plant and increasing the volume. And as a result of this, they say that this will "mean added job security". But any class conscious worker knows that no worker's job is secure under capitalism. Look how many workers have been laid-off in "supposedly" stable industries like public service industry, medical industries, auto industries, etc. Moreover, why doesn't the company talk about higher wages and benefits, the things that are hard-felt at the moment, because we know that expanding of the plant and increasing production means speed-up and harder work for the workers with the same low wages."

"While we resolutely take up the immediate demands of the working class, we will make it clear that the only fundamental guarantee that will emancipate the working class and other sections of the population from the exploitation and oppression is the forceful overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of a socialist society."

### ATM DISTORTS THE CHARACTER OF THE WCML'S NEWSLETTER

As the reader can see, ATM's criticism of the newsletter's supposed abstractness is unfounded; and the reader can also judge who has maintained a correct stand on the character of Marxist-Leninist political education. ATM writes off our newsletter as "an abundance of revolutionary language" that "provided the workers with absolutely no revolutionary direction." No, ATM, not merely direction toward concrete demands - but instead to openly and honestly speak to the workers about the task of taking up Marxism-Leninism, so that they can take as their own the revolutionary tasks facing us today and indeed make "their struggle...part of the struggle for socialism."

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The position taken by ATM in this dispute is one of bowing to spontaneity, failing to inject proletarian class consciousness into the working class at the factory. ATM took the position of justifying our already too narrow political education, thus narrowing the tasks of political agitation and propaganda, and restricting the role of propaganda as the chief form of activity.

trade union bureaucrat to maintain hegemony over the trade union organizations of the working class.

And in the effort to bring forward "open collar" bureaucrats like Sadlowski, the bourgeoisie is supported by the revisionist party which takes up the fight against the reactionary old guard in an effort to substitute a fresh version of the liberal labor alliance.

SADLOWSKI IS NO ALTERNATIVE FOR US

In fact there is not much confusion on this point. Our correspondent points out that with the exception of the attack on the Abel machine Sadlowski has sidestepped every important issue in steel. He gives the impression of opposition to the Experimental Negotiating Agreement but has not said straight forwardly that he opposes it. His record in District 31 is not even that of a good trade union militant. He has implemented the Consent Decree and used union goons to prevent anti-Klan mobilization. His record on grievances, health and safety, layoffs, etc. is poor. He tells us in fact that his idea of union leadership is cutting the workforce in basic steel from 400,000 to 100,000. (See his interview in the January 1977 issue of Penthouse magazine.)

There should be no confusion on this either -- Sadlowski is as open in his collaboration with the capitalist class as Abel ever was. His campaign has picked up all the liberal, humanist and anti-working class trash of a warmed over McGovern campaign. As a third generation steelworker, he thinks he can get over. But his ideology is anti-working class and anti-communist. His so-called "leftism" is nothing more than a classic form of reactionary petty bourgeois socialism that wants to reform society by making the distrib-

ution of wealth more equitable without touching the ownership of the means of production. Sadlowski, a representative of the bribed strata of the working class, thinks that it is plant work which "alienates" a steelworker, not capitalist property relations, and he thinks that it is 40 hours in a factory which "drains the lifeblood of a man," not capitalist exploitation. He thinks a doctor is more socially useful than a steelworker forgetting that the usefulness of a surgeon depends on instruments of steel.

But we know that Marxist-Leninists can work with even the most reactionary trade union leaders under certain conditions. Why do we not make use of Sadlowski in the short run to break the Abel machine? (or if we are light headed and fainthearted, why not vote for him even though we refuse to build his campaign (MLOC)!

THREE METHODS OF WORK

To begin with, it is a revisionist strategy to mobilize rank and file disaffection with Abel only. Our aim is to mobilize the rank and file against capitalism and the trade unionist politics that go with it. We do not become "irrelevant" by opposing Sadlowski as well as McBride. We become irrelevant by tailing the trade union movement, tailing Sadlowski's campaign, and by giving trade union politics priority over communist politics. We intend to mobilize not those who have had enough of Abel, but those who have had enough of trade union politics.

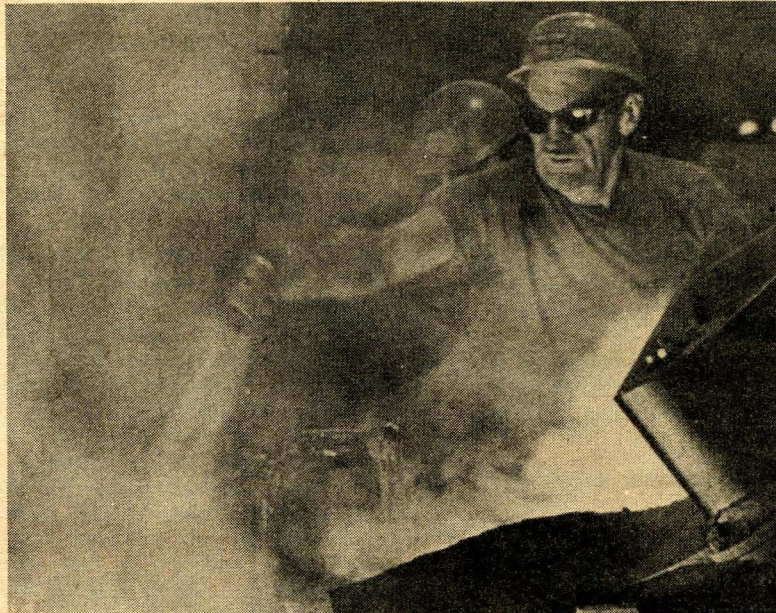
This is what determines the method we choose to attack the corrupt bureaucratic machine that dominates the Steelworker Union. On this point three basic policies have come forward:

1. The first is the policy of the revisionist party. The revisionists attempt to break the Abel machine by electing Sadlowski to the union presi-

dency. Their reliance on the emergence of a "new militant left trend" in the trade unions comes down to a reliance on one trade union bureaucrat against another--with the support of the liberal bourgeoisie.

2. The second is the policy of the economist trend in our movement which wants to break the Abel machine not by relying primarily on Sadlowski, but by relying on the militancy of the rank and file. While it gives critical sup-

Because the election campaign heightens the attention of every steelworker to trade union issues, we take short run advantage of the election campaign in order to intensify our propaganda and agitational work. In this our primary purpose is to lay a line around which the advanced can rally in order to further a party style of work in steel. Without consolidating the advanced into factory nuclei, we cannot hope to give revolutionary direction to the day to day struggle or to win the broad masses to our side on



port to Sadlowski, it refuses to accept the limits of the Sadlowski campaign but strives to mobilize the rank and file around trade union issues Sadlowski all but ignores. While this is the politics of militant trade unionism, it is still the politics of trade unionism. It is necessary to insist: the politics of rank and file militancy is not yet Marxism-Leninism.

the basis of revolutionary politics, not trade union or rank and file militancy.

DON'T VOTE

We use this election campaign to stretch a line around which the advanced can rally. Anti-machine politics is not enough for that. We need to show that Sadlowski's politics, every bit as much as Abel's, is the politics of class collaboration and narrow trade unionism, Sadlowski will not "most likely" sell out the rank and file in steel - he certainly will. This is not a matter of guessing at the future but of class stance. Sadlowski is a capitalist agent in the wor-

Continued on p.7

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Letter On Steel from p.1 wrong for us to try to convince workers that Sadlowski's election will make no difference at all. In the short run he will make the union more democratic and more of a fighting union. Although Sadlowski's positions are vague and leave much to be desired they are better than the stands of McBride and Abel. Whereas Sadlowski's organization is called "Steelworkers Fight-Back", the Abel-Mc Bride team openly stand for class collaboration. While Sadlowski is vague about the ENA and the Consent Decree, McBride is for these reactionary policies.

But it is more important for workers to realize that it is only our own organization that will change things for the better. Many of the union activists who support Sadlowski know this. We must struggle with those progressive workers who want to create fighting unions but who put their faith in men like Sadlowski. We must make workers understand that issues such as scrapping the ENA and the Consent Decree, THE COMMUNIST /Page 6

a health and safety program that protects our lives, grievance procedures that work for us, a real struggle against the companies racism and sexism, and others are far more important to fight for than winning any particular election. And we must convince people that we must do more than just fight for reforms as Sadlowski would have us do. We will only be able to deal adequately with issues like unemployment and layoffs in the steel industry (and in fact all issues) if people have an understanding that Capitalism is the cause of these problems and the education and organization of the working class for revolution is the only solution. Sadlowski says the key to improving the union is his election. So he has not taken clear stands on many important issues for fear of alienation of some workers. For example, Sadlowski never says anything about racism because he doesn't want to lose the support of those white workers who have racist ideas. But this is just the type of issue that has always held our union back by dividing us. We must confront these issues head on. If Sadlowski won't take clear stands now, we can't expect him to be better in the future. It is only strong rank and file organizations that can steer our union in a consistently progressive direction. But because Sadlowski depends so much on

these local organizations he will have to be receptive to their ideas. This is another reason to be in the Sadlowski movement.

HOW SHOULD COMMUNISTS VIEW SADLOWSKI?

As Communists we know that in the long-run, social-democrats like Sadlowski will hold the workers movement back. He will most likely sell-out militant rank and file actions (as Miller did to the mineworkers). With the danger of imperialist war growing, our propaganda must point out that social democrats like Sadlowski will either support US imperialism or will push for detente (because of the revisionist influence of the CP in his campaign). Neither of these lines will help US workers unite with anti-imperialist efforts all over the world to oppose the war-like efforts of both superpowers.

As communists we realize that our main task in this period is to build a party and win the advanced workers to Marxism-Leninism. I would argue that the most active and conscious of these advanced steel workers are already struggling in their mills and union locals to develop organizations that can effectively fight capitalism. These advanced workers think that Sadlowski may help their struggle in the short-run, but that in the long-run we need our own workers organization and can't rely on Sadlowski. Our job

is to win these advanced workers over to Marxism-Leninism, the science of the class struggle. We must do this not only to direct the steelworker movement in a conscious, planned way so we can develop plans and programs for our struggles and not merely react to events. But more importantly we must win people to the idea that only through socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat will workers be able to assure themselves decent lives.

To win these advanced workers we cannot stand outside the movement which they see as progressive (and is tied to Sadlowski) and criticize it. This will make us irrelevant and will allow these advanced workers to be led down revisionist and opportunist paths. No, we must give critical support to this steelworker movement and to Sadlowski. This means that in the organizations that are forming to fight around the most important issues to steelworkers (to fight the ENA and the Consent Decree, for example) we must be consistent hard workers. When leaders, such as Sadlowski, are unclear or backward on certain issues we must thoroughly expose them. We have to always be principled in our struggle around key issues and keep in mind our main purpose in this period--to win the advanced to Marxism-Leninism.

KLAN Cont. from P.8

of the monopoly-capitalist class (see our exposure of bourgeois democracy as a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in THE COMMUNIST, vol. II, #10.

PEOPLE UNITED TO SAVE HUMANITY (P.U.S.H.)

Less than two weeks ago Rev. Jesse Jackson from Chicago P.U.S.H. appeared at the Marine base. He was received by the base commander and allowed to visit the 14 brothers in the brig and "pray with them." In a press interview, Jackson stated that the Klan should be disbanded and that it was responsible for the actions of the 14 black Marines on Nov. 13. He went on to say that the Klan should be disbanded because it disrupts the necessary unity of the Marine Corps. This disunity, he said, weakens the armed forces and prevents the military from doing its job--protecting the U.S. throughout the world against its "enemies".

In this struggle, both the above organizations are apologists for the bourgeoisie. Their failure to link the history of the black masses to the struggle of their historic homeland, the Black Nation, limits the struggle of Blacks to the question of bourgeois democracy. Neither organization ties the lack of democratic rights, the oppression and super-exploitation of black people to the fact that they are members of an oppressed nation, dominated economically, politically, and culturally by the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie--the same bourgeoisie that oppresses the proletariat and the working masses throughout the U.S.

COALITION FORMED

A coalition has been formed to raise opposition to the KKK and to support the fourteen brothers in the brig at Camp Pendleton. The group calls itself "People United to Fight Oppression". A demonstration was organized based on the following principles: (1) support for the black Marines; (2) opposition to the KKK; (3) exposure of the role of the military. The demonstration was held in Oceanside and drew approximately 200 people. The coalition is composed of M-L forces from the community. We will take up the work of the coalition in future articles.

FIRE, Cont. from page 3

nation or language will strengthen the multi-national working class in its fight against the bourgeoisie.

Third, we demand better housing and call for a halt to the Chicago 21 plan, for the "progress" that it plans for is more profit for the bourgeoisie while the working class pays with the lives of its children and the destruction of its communities.

NO PRIVILEGES FOR ANY LANGUAGE!

HIRE MORE MINORITY FIREMEN!

FIGHT THE CHICAGO 21 PLAN!

WCML POSITION ON STEEL ELECTIONS from p. 6

king class. Our goal is not more militant trade unionism but replacing the politics of trade unionism with revolutionary politics in the trade unions.

Stretching a line around which the advanced can rally means drawing a line between trade unionism and Marxism-Leninism. The slogan "Don't Vote" can help to draw that line. We put it out to divert the advanced from trade union strivings to revolution and the struggle for the dictator-

THE KKK AND THE CRISIS OF IMPERIALISM

The activity of the Klan at Camp Pendleton, the recent crossburnings in the San Diego and Oceanside area, the discovery of right-wing arsenals in the desert, and the stepped-up open activity of the American Nazi Party here are all signs of the ever-deepening crisis of Imperialism. As the crisis deepens so does the exploitation of the masses of people, particularly the peoples of the oppressed nations. As exploitation increases, so does the resistance from the masses of people. Bourgeois democracy under these circumstances can no longer continue to conceal its class nature from the masses. Therefore it is necessary for the bourgeoisie to support (and historically that has meant financial as well as political support) fascist organizations to stem the tide of mass resistance to their rule. The KKK, Nazis, etc. are tools of the bourgeoisie state; they develop to suppress the resistance which capitalism in its bourgeois-democratic form cannot quell. This is demonstrated clearly by the fact that when the Black Nation was becoming consolidated during Reconstruction, 1865-1877, it was the Klan that emerged as an arm of the bourgeoisie to brutally suppress the spontaneous struggle for self-determination of the Black Nation. The Klan attacks the basic ally of the proletariat, the peoples from the oppressed nations and national minorities (in particular the Black Nation)

These peoples are a basic ally because their fight against the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie is the same fight of all the toiling masses in the U.S.

The Klan attempts to use the divisions in the class to prevent unified struggle against the bourgeoisie of the oppressor nation, and attempts to destroy the struggle for proletarian revolution. It is anti-communist, anti-semitic, and national-chauvinist.

With the growing danger of imperialist war, the Klan will play a significant role in suppressing any struggle that jeopardizes the Superpowers' plans for war. Under their banner of national chauvinism, they will attempt to cut down any and all forces which oppose the policy of their bourgeois bosses. For no matter how "slick" a picture they may

ship of the proletariat. But obviously, taken alone, it is not enough. In the hands of a trade unionist, it can be nothing more than a call to more thoroughgoing trade unionism, a means to expose Sadlowski's glaring weaknesses as a trade union leader or limited to a call for more militant rank and file action around important trade union issues raised in the campaign.

In order for the call to boycott the February 8 election to draw a line between trade union politics and Marxism-Leninism, we must unfold with it broad political propaganda and agitation, educating steelworkers not only to narrow trade union issues, but also to the political struggle of the proletariat and the ultimate seizure of state power.

AN ECONOMIST ERROR

It is the economist perspective from which our correspondent evaluated the Sadlowski campaign that leads to the incorrect call for critical support. When he says that "thousands of rank and file steelworkers are actively involved in the struggle against the capitalists for better contracts, etc." he narrows the subject to a trade union focus. What he says is true, but hundreds are also striving for

paint of themselves in the bourgeois press, they are part of the open terror of the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie. They will use any tactic necessary to squash the militant struggle of the working class and its allies.

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE BLACK NATION

Recognizing the role of the KKK under imperialism, it becomes clear that we must not narrow down our analysis to only a question of democratic rights. The attacks upon Blacks by the KKK and other reactionary forces must be tied directly to the question of the Black Nation. We must show that the oppression and exploitation of the Black Nation is at the heart of the question. Further, we must point to the fact that support for self-determination of the Black Nation strengthens the struggle of all oppressed peoples. To fail to provide this analysis means a failure to place the question in its communist perspective.

TASKS OF COMMUNISTS

First of all we must establish an independent communist policy around the issues growing out of the Klan incident at Pendleton. In opposition to both the reactionary Klan and liberal reformists, we must put forward a proletarian view (political line). Hate for the Klan burns deep in the hearts of all oppressed nationalities and progressive workers. Our job is to transform those feelings into a razor-sharp analysis that can cut through the various forms of bourgeois ideology and give firm direction to the struggles growing out of the Pendleton incident.

Our political line must become a guide to action. One type of action will be our legal work in the coalitions that are being formed. There is a tremendous opportunity for united front work around the broad-based opposition to national oppression. It is an important task of communists to give leadership in this work. This requires conscious policy on how to organize legal coalition work in this period when party-building is our central task.

Our legal work in coalitions must be tied to our illegal and legal work in the plants and in the trade

a way to struggle not only against capitalists in steel, but also against the capitalist class and against the government that supports it.

The correspondent also says that we must struggle with those progressive workers who want to create a fighting union --yes, but we do not measure the advanced by trade union militancy. There is a more fundamental question of openness to communism and the independent political struggle of the working class.

"We must make workers understand," the comrade says, "issues like health and safety, grievances, racism and sexism and others" -- yes, but these are trade union issues -- even national and sexual oppression in this framework -- and are nothing but the "thin gruel of economic politics" Lenin talked about in WHAT IS TO BE DONE. We must take to steel the need for socialism, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the final abolition of the wage system and the need for the revolutionary science that charts our course.

"It is only," the comrade says, "strong rank and file organizations that can steer our union in a consistently progressive direction." WRONG! It is only a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist

unions, where we are building Marxist-Leninist core groups and factory nuclei. These forces can take up the issues at Pendleton as questions facing the proletariat, using both verbal and written propaganda and agitation to help win the advanced to communism and further the struggles in the trade unions.

Given the vital role of the military as an armed force of U.S. Imperialism, its class composition--mostly working-class and oppressed nationalities-- and the history of G.I. struggles against the Vietnam War and against national oppression in the military, we must see the struggle at Pendleton as an opportunity to develop our line on work in the military and to begin to implement that line.

In the course of our work we must seek to build unity among Marxist-Leninist forces based on firm Marxist-Leninist principles and line. On the basis of that line, Marxist-Leninists must join in a common effort to give leadership to the growing struggle against national oppression in Southern California (for starters!) Lenin has said that the struggle for unity is a most difficult task, and we don't expect quick results. Nevertheless, the unity necessary to form the new communist party will only be forged by conscious, planned efforts to struggle for that unity.

This article has been an introduction to the struggles going on around the recent events at Camp Pendleton. We plan to develop our political views further in future articles. We also plan to sum up our coalition experience from the past and from our developing work in this struggle. Our purpose is to use THE COMMUNIST as a tool for establishing the common political and organizational line for the Marxist-Leninist trend. We must be armed both with correct political line and correct methods of work (organization) in order to become a powerful class force in winning the vanguard away from opportunism and to communism.

IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE PENDELTON 14!!

ARMED SELF-DEFENSE FOR THE BLACK COMMUNITY!!

SUPPORT THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS OF THE AFRO-AMERICAN PEOPLE!!

party that can steer our union in a progressive direction, a revolutionary party that gives leadership to the trade union struggles of the working class. It is a long standing and fundamental economist error to substitute building strong and militant rank and file organizations for developing the leading role of the party. It is this basic economist perspective that led our correspondent to confuse the active trade unionist with the advanced worker and to raise short run trade union advantages while neglecting the independent political interests of the working class.

CONCLUSION

We face the growing danger of imperialist war. Our work in steel is crucial to the tasks of preparing for war. It is of the utmost importance to prepare the stable conditions for giving revolutionary leadership to the steelworkers struggles. Trade union work, if confined to the fulfillment of immediate aims, will divert us from the path of revolution to the path of reform. Our task is to divert the working class from trade union politics to the Marxist-Leninist politics of revolution. THE COMMUNIST/Page

# Exposure by SDOC : DEATH TO THE KLAN!

In "Raise The Banner of Civil War", THE COMMUNIST, Vol. II, no. 8 (May, 1976), we stressed the importance of preparing for imperialist war. Among the practical tasks raised, was the importance of work in the military. We said:

"This is first of all a question of directing our propaganda to the military and opening the columns of our press to comrades and friends in the military for the discussion of affairs in the military forces, above all questions of national chauvinism."

On the question of national chauvinism, we emphasized:

"First and above all, preparing for civil war means fighting the great nation chauvinism of the US imperialist bourgeoisie. Lenin calls this our primary task."

The article contributed by the San Diego Organizing Committee which follows is an important contribution to our tasks in preparing for war. It exposes the activity of the Ku Klux Klan in the Marines and calls for communists to give firm direction to the struggle growing out of the racist attacks by the Klan at Camp Pendleton Marine Base in Oceanside, California.

In presenting this article we wish to emphasize the importance of a correct grasp of the relationship between self-determination for the Afro-American Nation in the Black Belt South and the struggle for equal rights which is a fight of Afro-Americans everywhere. The struggle against

national oppression in the military is primarily a struggle for equal rights and against national privilege of every kind. (The struggle for self-determination includes the struggle to get the military out of the Black Belt South!) But as we pointed out in our resolutions on the Black National Question,

"The struggle for equal rights is connected by a thousand threads to the struggle for the right to self-determination", "Blacks in the North and West are committed to winning the right to self-determination for the population in the Black Belt South since the historical roots of their oppression are intertwined with the oppression of the Black Nation."

As we show this connection, however, we must never belittle the struggle for equal rights or confuse the struggle of the Afro-American minority

for equal rights throughout the multi-national US state with the struggle of the Black Nation for self-determination in the Black Belt South. Ultimately such confusion will lead sooner or later to one form or another of national autonomy which is the conception of a nation as a union of individuals without regard to definite territory. The old RU nation of a new type line is a good example of this: a nation exists wherever there are Black people.

Also it is important to recognize that self-determination is itself a democratic right - the highest democratic right of a nation. Under the conditions of imperialism, it is the revolutionary and democratic demand by an oppressed nation against an oppressor nation. In this regard the following article is misleading when it counterposes self-determination to the struggle

for democratic rights, saying that we must not narrow down our analysis to only a question of democratic rights, but must take up the question of self-determination. As Lenin makes clear, self-determination is a question of democratic rights and for that reason is always subordinate to the demands of the class struggle of the proletariat. What the argument should say is that we must not narrow our analysis to the democratic struggle for only equal rights, but must also link that struggle to the struggle for the highest democratic right of a nation, the right to self-determination.

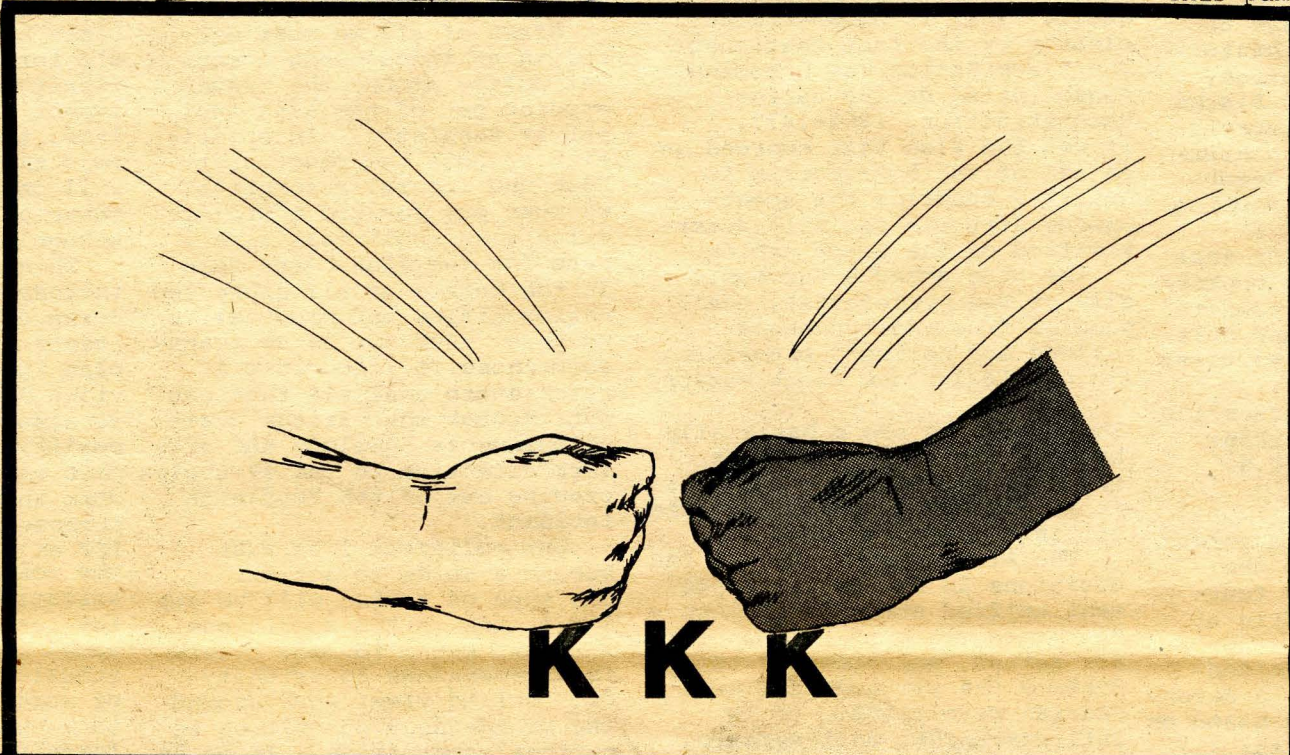
The San Diego Organizing Committee has recently published an important pamphlet in honor of Comrade Mao Tse Tung entitled THE GROWING DANGER OF WAR - THE IRRESISTIBLE TREND OF REVOLUTION!! This pamphlet collects three

articles from PEKING REVIEW on the increase in the factors for both war and revolution. To order the pamphlet you can write:

SDOC  
P.O. BOX 1332  
SAN DIEGO, CA  
92112

Send 25¢ per copy. Comrades and friends should add money for postage.

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On November 13, fourteen black Marines were charged with assault on six white Marines and thrown in the brig at Camp Pendleton (near Oceanside, California). For several weeks after the so-called "attack" took place, the Marine Corps and bourgeois media were effective in covering up the basis for the actions of the fourteen brothers. They portrayed it as a case of black attacking white without provocation. Despite the cover-up efforts, however, information slowly leaked out showing that the brothers had substantial reason to believe that the white Marines were leaders of an on-base chapter of the Ku Klux Klan.

Prior to the fight on November 13, the Klan had distributed leaflets throughout the base, full of white chauvinistic propaganda and with racist caricatures of Blacks, Jews, and Chicanos. According to some local news articles, the leaflets gave the time and place of a KKK meeting that evening (in the barracks where the fight took place). Other sources say the 14 brothers heard of the whereabouts of the Klan headquarters through "scuttlebutt" on the base. In either case, it is clear that the fourteen were operating in their own self-defense in attempting to disrupt the meeting and eliminate Klan activities on-base.

As it turned out, the fourteen apparently got the wrong people. The KKK has recently stated that, had they found the Klan meeting they would have been attacked with force. Investigators found clubs, knives, and a 357-magnum

pistol hidden in the barracks, as well as a list of 16 on-base KKK members or supporters. The Klan appears to have known that their actions would provoke attack, and were armed to kill or injure the black Marines.

Since this incident the Klan, the press, and the Marine Corps have each played up the role of the fourteen brothers and attempted to obscure the fact that it was the KKK that provoked the actions. They continued to do this even after the discovery of the weapons and the Klan membership list was made public. The Klan has used these events as a means by which to spread their reactionary, racist line (with the aid of the bourgeois press) and to gain acceptance by the masses. Their "Grand Dragon," David Duke, has been in Oceanside for several days pressing for prosecution of the fourteen (their pre-trial hearings, on charges of "conspiracy to commit murder" (!) are going on now). Duke has been interviewed by the TV media, and the papers have printed articles favorable to the Klan. One local newspaper printed a lengthy interview with the

"Grand Dragon" in which he states that the KKK is a non-violent (!) organization which carries out strictly legal activity (!) with the hope of advancing "white culture and the white race." He says, "It is the blacks who are attacking us, not the other way around," and the interviewer comments that "he speaks softly and avoids racial epithets... he dresses like an Ivy League lawyer."

On the one hand, the Marine Corps has refused to see Duke (publicly, at least) and says that the "attack" was not related to Klan racism. On the other hand, they have reportedly transferred 14 of the 16 known Klan members to bases all over the country "to protect them from possible harm," and admit that their presence on base creates an inflammatory situation. Even this is used to build sympathy for the KKK, which calls the transfers a violation of their members democratic rights. But despite these outcries, both the Marine Corps and the Klan know that the transfers were necessary to lighten up the heat on the Corps that could come from legal and mass actions organized by the community. Such action would jeopardize the "open" existence of Klan groups on all military bases where they might spring up.

The Marine Corps may outwardly shun meeting with the Klan, but it is just for show. The Corps stands for essentially the same interests as the Klan--that of the bourgeoisie of the oppressor nation, U.S. Imperialism.

## SAN DIEGO URBAN LEAGUE

In the early stages of the investigation of the November 13 incident the League played a progressive role in leading the exposure of Klan activity. The League itself had been a recent victim of right-wing activity, when their Oceanside office was firebombed. The director of the Urban League (Clarence Pendleton) held a press conference, stating that the 14 black Marines' "attack" on the white Marines stemmed from a history of racial dis-

turbances at the base. (predominantly attacks against black Marines.) However, in a speech made on December 14, the UL came out against mass demonstrations and other militant forms of support for the black Marines. They have stated that they do not "condone" the actions of the brothers involved in the incident, and claim that the Klan members have a "right" to belong to the organization as long as they do not violate the law (bourgeois law, that is). They call upon Congress to investigate the activity of all extremist organizations at Camp Pendleton (black or white). This paves the way for further harassment of blacks in the military, not the elimination of national oppression.

Rather than rely upon the masses to struggle for the interests of the 14 brothers, they place the matter squarely in the hands of those who perpetuate the problem and who support the brutal suppression of the black masses--the bourgeois state. They liquidate the question of national oppression by putting forward the question of democratic rights as one of "racists have rights, too."

The Urban League is funded almost entirely by county revenues; it is a black reformist service organization. Its opportunism is clear in both its political program and practice. The UL sees the oppression of blacks (and others) as merely a lack of democratic rights which can be won through legal reforms. The UL sees the government as a neutral, democratic state, not as a reactionary force in the hands

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