

**Chou En-lai**

# A Communist All His Life

On January 8, Chou En-lai, a great leader of the Chinese Communist Party and the international working class died after a three year battle with cancer.

His death is not only a gigantic loss to the people of China, but also to the workers of this country, and workers and oppressed peoples throughout the world. Chou En-lai's entire life was dedicated to the triumph of working class revolution throughout the world and the march forward to communism. He was one of the principal leaders of the party of the working class in China, the Communist Party of China. He played an important part in leading the workers and the masses of Chinese people to victory in their revolution and the creation of the People's Republic of China, which, as a state under the rule of the working class, belongs not only to the Chinese people but to the working class throughout the world.

Revolutions are great upheavals of the exploited and oppressed and are not principally the result of

revolutionary leaders, however great their genius and dedication. Revolution, the seizure of political power by the working class and the masses, the construction of socialism and the final triumph of communist classless society are inevitable.

But revolution cannot happen automatically or without genuine revolutionary leadership. Revolutionary leaders are a product of the class struggle of the proletariat. Marx pointed out, "Every social epoch needs its great men and when it does not find them, it invents them." Revolution is inevitable partly because it is inevitable that the class struggle will produce revolutionaries like Chou En-lai, who dedicate their life to the cause of the masses, the cause of communism, and are able to lead the struggle through twists and turns to final victory.

Communist parties and leaders must provide guidance to the working class and oppressed masses. And this is all the more necessary because revolutionary

struggle passes through different stages and because different contradictions exist in society, in the revolutionary movement and in the consciousness of the masses themselves. The masses constantly come up against and strive to solve new problems at every stage of their constant struggle to change the world. It is only by steadfastly standing and struggling together with the broad masses that communist parties are able to carefully listen to their opinions, use the science of Marxism-Leninism to help sum up their experience, and on that basis formulate the lines and policies which correspond to the needs and demands of the time.

By then returning these ideas to the struggle in a clear and consistent way, and by persevering in them, leadership enables the masses to take up these ideas as their own, go into action in a united way and exercise their endless initiative in advancing the struggle.

The working class cherishes leaders like Chou En-lai, who through their entire lives, and especially at the crucial turning points of the revolutionary struggle, help to formulate, and are strong and bold in carrying out, the correct political line. All this is crucial in allowing the struggle of the working class to advance step by step forward to the goal of communism when all exploitation and oppression, and the cleavage of society into classes, will be eliminated, when, as Mao Tsetung puts it, "all mankind will voluntarily and consciously change itself and the world."

Chou's life, and the Chinese revolution he was a key part of, are not only an inspiration but a teacher for the revolutionary struggle of the workers and all the

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## REVOLUTION

Organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

25¢

Vol. 1, No. 4



January 15, 1976

# Fight Back July 4! 200 Years Is Long Enough!

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on July 4, 1976 is going to be the high point of all the Bicentennial hoopla. But even as the capitalists go all out to make their birthday party a festival of loyalty to them and their system, thousands of workers and others will be there to take on all their attacks on us up front. These fighters will be marching under a slogan that sums up the real history of this country: "We've carried the rich for 200 years. Let's get them off our backs!"

In the midst of the "Bicentennial Era," working people are fighting back against the highest unemployment, the most vicious speedup, the most blatant union busting, in short, the most thoroughgoing attacks by the ruling class since the Great Depression. July 4th in Philadelphia is a good time to pull all these battles on different fronts together and hit hard at the ruling class.

The initial call for the July 4th demonstration was put out by Vietnam Veterans Against the War in their paper *The Veteran*. The national headquarters of the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee has taken up their call and sent a letter to all the UWOC chapters urging them to do the same. The Revolutionary Communist Party is calling on all workers organizations and other groups among the masses as well as individuals to build for this demonstration. It is an important part of the growing battle against the desperate assaults of the capitalists on us and an advance in the overall battle to do away with all oppression and exploitation, and the class that causes them.

As they observe their 200th birthday, the U.S. capitalist class finds itself with damn little to actually celebrate. Even their continued existence is in question—*Time* magazine frets about "Can Capitalism Survive?" They are in the midst of the worst economic and political crisis in two generations. Their worldwide economic empire is eroding away. For them the only way out is on the backs of the working class. To cut their losses and increase their profits, they lay millions off, speed up those still employed, force through open or disguised wage cuts and slash murderously at social services.

All this is getting people in this country mad, fighting mad. Strikes are longer and harder fought. Protests against cutbacks are more and more frequent. People are also asking searching questions about what

they see around them: "Why is everything going to hell? What's wrong with this system?"

All the Bicentennial business is helping to raise and deepen these questions, as the ruling class has to use it to help deal with their troubles, to put forward their answers and advance their attacks on the people. (Meanwhile, many of them are also out trying to make a quick buck on everything from red, white and blue Eldorados to stars and stripes cupcakes.) They constantly repeat "This is the greatest country in the world. You may not have a job, but at least you're free!" Their dream is reviving the "Spirit of '76"—not of a revolution, this time against them—but of a nation united, under their leadership of course, and patriotically sacrificing to them to overcome hardships. But even in this fantasy, the best they can offer us is 200 more years of the same.

What is this 200 more years of the same that they offer? Nothing but more of the same misery for the great majority while they continue to live in luxury and dabble in decadence. Great running sores reveal the rot and decay of their system.

Today there are more than 10,000,000 working people unemployed, men and women who want to work, who cannot even find a boss to sell themselves to for a crummy survival wage, because the capitalists can't make enough profit off them just now. Meanwhile their fellow workers still on the job are being worked harder than ever. People aren't about to take it lying down either. There are strikes against layoffs and organized refusal of overtime from coast to coast; last spring 60,000 workers hit Washington to rally for jobs; by this Mayday the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee aims to have a quarter of a million names on its "Jobs or Income" petition.

Today, less than a year after the final defeat of their attempt to crush and enslave the Vietnamese people, the capitalists are gearing up for war again. This time they are spending billions on weapons and preparing to put millions of young people into uniform and throw them into battle in a giant showdown, a new world war, against their opposite numbers, the capitalist rulers of the Soviet Union, who are bidding to replace America's rulers as the number one imperialist bully boy. Their army recruiters specialize in hanging around

unemployment centers, offering "the only jobs around." The festering sores of unemployment and war show how the capitalist system is being eaten away by cancers that were born with capitalism and are now its very nature. The last 200 years of this decay have been far too much. Two hundred more? No way!

### Now It's the Turn of the Working Class

Much as the ruling class hates and fears even the thought of revolution, they have few qualms about celebrating the American Revolutionary War of 1775-83. After all, it was *their* revolution. While the laboring people, the farmers and craftsmen, did the fighting, it was under the leadership of the gentry, merchants and slaveowners, and at times during the revolution the masses even had to fight them too, to win some basic rights for themselves. The American Revolution was fought for the bourgeoisie's goals, which were progressive at that time—independence from British rule and the freedom to develop production and remake society in their own image and interests.

From the first day of their rule, these men began grinding more wealth out of those who worked for them. With this wealth they lived higher off the hog than ever, while reinvesting the bulk of it in new machines, raw materials and, most important, workers to run those machines and turn the raw materials into goods they could sell to make more profits.

Soon the capitalists had brought into being factories to get greater and greater profits. And the laborers in their factories working together and struggling together were molded into something new—the working class.

It is the working class which has created with its labor the great wealth of this country that the capitalists so love to brag about. And every step of the way that wealth has been turned into new machines, new factories for them—new chains to bind us. We who produce everything have nothing to call our own—mostly, the bank owns even our houses and our cars—and we have to scratch just for a living every day and as we do, we make them richer still.

History has moved on since 1776. The capitalists have long since ceased to be revolutionary, to move so-

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3000 angry strikers with families and supporters march on the Washington Post building in answer to owner Katherine Graham's "final offer."

# Post Strikers Slam Union Busting

On Saturday, December 13, two to three thousand workers, their families and supporters marched around the *Washington Post* newspaper building, chanting "Boycott the Post," and "On Strike, Shut it Down!" The march and rally had been organized by the Post Unions United and endorsed by the Central Labor Council of the Washington D.C. area.

The strikers have been out against the *Washington Post* since October 1, and this demonstration showed exactly what the strikers thought of the *Post's* so-called "final offer," which had been made one week earlier. Katherine Graham, the owner of the *Post*, had delivered an ultimatum along with it—after December 15 she would begin hiring permanent non-union replacements. This "final offer" had been overwhelmingly voted down by the pressmen 249 to 5.

Chants of "Workers United Will Never Be Defeated!" at the large rally, showed the spirit and determination of the strikers. There was plenty of anger directed at the *Post's* union busting attempts. One child carried a sign that read, "I'm proud of my Dad, he's not a scab."

Determined to spread their "Don't Buy the Post" campaign, the workers and supporters were ready to keep marching and protesting all afternoon. They wanted to shut down the whole block around the Post Building, but the leadership of the march wanted to make the point that they strictly complied with the rules and regulations in the rally permit, so they took the march back to the original rally point.

But the strikers were not ready to be dispersed home by the union leaders, so they got in their cars and began driving around the block honking their horns. The cops, who had tried to pose as "friends" of the strikers until then, went into action—passing out \$5.00 tickets for "causing an unnecessary disturbance." One striker even got a ticket for yelling "beep, beep" out his window. Ticket writing didn't disperse the workers. At one point a crowd gathered on the sidewalk yelling at the scabs on the roof, telling them to jump. The crowd also surrounded the cops yelling "Cops are strikebreakers."

## Speedup and Union Busting

The main issue for the striking *Washington Post* pressmen is their fight against job elimination and the deliberate design of the *Post* to bust their union. The *Post's* so-called "final offer" was a direct attempt to greatly increase speedup. The offer called for 63 fewer regular

jobs for pressmen—over a 25% reduction in the workforce to do the same amount of work. The *Post* also wanted to establish a labor pool where the "non-regular" pressmen would be on call 24 hours a day, although they would not be guaranteed any work at all, and would lose all benefits, including their right to collect unemployment compensation. All this is on top of a 20% increase in production a few years ago when new motors were installed on all the presses.

Speedup and job elimination is the key issue not only for the pressmen, but for the striking mailhandlers too. The *Post* claims that there are more men working in the mail room than necessary and has installed new equipment to automate much of the mail handling.

To push through this heavy speedup and automation in order to increase its profit, the *Post* is out to bust the union. Union busting has become a trend in the newspaper industry and the Pressmen's Union has been busted in a number of cities including Portland, Miami, Los Angeles, Jacksonville, Kansas City and Dallas. In Miami, workers fought for two years before facing defeat at the hands of the American Newspaper Publishers Association.

## Union Busting

Capitalists throughout the newspaper industry have been out to bust the unions as part of a general campaign to maintain their profits. Paper costs have skyrocketed and competition has driven many newspapers bankrupt. Companies have been trying to introduce new technology throughout the industry, resulting in speedup and big job eliminations. At the same time the printing unions' leaders have put the unions in a weakened position by failing to organize unorganized printing workers whose number has increased as non-union print shops using new technology have sprung up around the country.

Katy Graham's job elimination attack on the *Post* workers is an open union busting campaign. The *Post*



Effigy of Katie Graham goes up in flames. Workers promise the same fate is in store for her union busting schemes.

began preparations years ago. Larry Wallace, an "ace" strikebreaker and union buster, was hired after breaking unions at several other newspaper and TV stations. Lower level management and other scabs were trained at a special school in Oklahoma City, which is operated solely for this purpose by over 200 U.S. and Canadian newspapers. Paper was stockpiled and non-union shops were lined up to print the *Post*. Since the pressmen walked out, the *Post* has even resorted to flying their scabs in by helicopter and printing sections of the paper as far away as Miami.

## Striving for Unity Among the Workers

These vicious and planned attacks by the *Washington Post* have been recognized by the workers as exactly that. As many as one third of the striking pressmen, before they came to D.C., belonged to locals which were driven out of pressrooms. This has led the workers to demand the unity of the different unions at the *Post*, across craft lines.

Actually only three of the nine unions at the *Post* are on strike—Pressmen Local 6, Washington Mailers Local 29 and Graphic Arts International Union Local 285. The Printers have been locked out. The Electricians, the Machinists, the Operating Engineers, and the Paperhandlers/General Workers are all honoring the strike and not working.

However, one union, the Newspaper Guild, made up of editors, reporters, clerks, office personnel, photographers, etc., the largest union at the *Post* with over 800 members refused to walk. While one third of the Guild members won't go in, this betrayal has hurt the strike. The International Union voted to honor the picket line but the *Post* unit of the Guild voted to continue working.

The management at the *Post* has made a concerted effort to foster this division. Many Guild members were given bonuses and generally wooed on a professional and personal basis prior to the strike.

Besides this the *Post* has tried to confuse and win over wavering Guild members, making a big deal out of the "senseless violence" of the pressmen. As the workers walked out in October, a number of presses and other equipment were damaged and made unuseable. In fact, given the *Post's* open strikebreaking plans, damaging the presses made good "sense," since it was one way for the pressmen to insure that the scabs being trained in Oklahoma City would have a hard time replacing them on the job during the strike.

Katherine Graham has also tried to keep Guild members from joining their brothers and sisters on strike by portraying the *Washington Post* as an "impartial" paper providing an "invaluable" service to the people through its highly touted Watergate articles, Jack Anderson's column, etc. But the fact is the *Post*, like the rest of the media, is primarily a business, run for profit and to put out the bourgeoisie's line. Graham not only owns the *Washington Post* but also *Newsweek* magazine and numerous other newspapers, as well as radio and TV stations around the country. And the vicious speedup and union busting of the *Post* proves just how "impartial" it really is.

Of course, by themselves, the management of the *Post* could never have faced the workers as long as they have. But they aren't alone as is becoming clear as the police and the courts line up on their side. At the very beginning of the strike, grand jury indictments were issued accusing the workers of malicious destruction of the printing presses. A few days after the strike began an injunction was slapped on the pressmen limiting their pickets to three men at an entrance. These connections have not passed unnoticed by the workers. As one striker said, "Hell, they'll make laws that say we can only picket in our living rooms watching TV if they need it to break our strike."

## Fighting on Many Fronts

The strikers are taking on the company on many fronts. The *Post* building has had round the clock pickets since the strike began. A city-wide "Boycott the *Post*" campaign has covered the city with posters and stickers, forcing Graham to distribute free copies of the paper door to door in some neighborhoods in an effort to rebuild its circulation.

The workers have also persuaded advertisers to pull their ads out of the *Post*, again hitting it where it hurts in the pocketbook. K-mart, one firm which refused to withdraw its ads, became the scene of "shopping sprees" by well organized strikers who would enter a store in the hundreds, fill up shopping carts and then "forget" them in the aisles and head for home.

The mass march showed the workers that their own strength was the basis for continuing and building the strike. It also showed, along with the boycott, the growing consciousness about the strike of other workers in the D.C. area. This is a vast reservoir of potential support for the *Post* workers, who are fighting job elimination and union busting, attacks all too familiar to American workers everywhere these days. As one *Post* striker put it, "Washington ain't no Detroit, but there are lots of working people here. They're the ones we need to reach out to 'cause they know what the hell we're up against. They're in the same boat as us." ■



# Chou En-lai

## 1898-1976

*"Landscapes of the north:  
hundreds of miles ice-frozen...*

*Some fine day you will see the land  
dressed in red, wrapped in white,  
flirting, enchanting...*

*For heroes, now is the time."*

—from the poem "Snow," by Mao Tsetung, February, 1936,  
Engle translation.

The death of Comrade Chou En-lai is a great loss to the working class and oppressed people of the world and to the international revolutionary Communist movement.

The Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA unites in grief with the Chinese people and the Communist Party of China and calls upon all genuine fighters for working class victory to honor the memory of Comrade Chou En-lai by learning from his life:

To be a revolutionary Communist all of one's life. To maintain one's bearings in the face of difficulties and setbacks. To aim high and persevere in step-by-step struggle according to changing conditions. To be firm in principle and good at uniting with others. To stand, ever, with the surging masses; to learn and to lead. To be conscientious in preparation and bold in execution. To uphold the Red Flag against all enemies within and without.

In this moment of solemn reflection, we strengthen our resolve to unite the universal practice of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought with the concrete practice of United States revolution in solidarity with the revolutionary struggle of the peoples of the world.

Central Committee,  
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

## Chou En-lai...

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oppressed in every country.

Chou En-lai became a revolutionary because of the struggles of the oppressed. Although he was born into a family with connections to the old Manchu dynasty, Chou En-lai, from his earliest days as a student, deserted this class and took a stand with the masses of people in China.

Seeing China carved up by various imperialist powers, the grinding poverty and oppression of the masses of Chinese people and their resistance to it, Chou supported the goals of China's nationalist revolution led by Sun Yat-sen. It had overthrown the Manchu dynasty and sought to unify China, wipe out feudalism and drive out the foreign imperialists.

Chou was studying in Japan when the May Fourth Movement broke out. It was a great upheaval of China's students and intellectuals directed at imperialism and feudalism. Chou rushed back to China to join the movement and quickly played a leading role, for which he was sentenced to jail by the reactionaries.

After his release Chou left to study in France. Chou was searching for the solutions to the problems of the Chinese revolution. Chou, like other early members of the Chinese Communist Party, was deeply affected by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, where for the first time in history, the masses of workers and oppressed had seized power and become masters of their own destiny. As Mao put it, "the salvoes of the October Revolution brought Marxism-Leninism to China." In France Chou discovered Marxism-Leninism and saw that only the proletariat could lead the Chinese revolution to victory and eliminate oppression and exploitation. Together with other revolutionaries, Chou helped found the Communist Party of China (CPC) and became a leader in the Chinese Communist Youth Corps, from which many of the early leaders of the Communist Party of China emerged.

Chou became a communist because he wanted to eliminate oppression. He saw in Marxism-Leninism the

tool by which the working class could emancipate itself and all mankind. In Marx's words, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it."

### Early Party Work

Chou returned to China in 1924 to join the upsurge that was beginning to develop. At that point the process of integrating the science of Marxism-Leninism with the realities of China had just begun. Armed with the Party's basic line, Mao, Chou and other communists plunged into the task of leading the mass struggle, learning, and step by step advancing the Party's understanding and the revolution. The Communist Party of China sunk roots among the workers in the industrial centers, where many of the first organizations among the working class were being built and powerful struggles were beginning to be waged.

At that point the CPC was engaged in an alliance with the Kuomintang (KMT), which represented the Chinese bourgeoisie. Such an alliance was possible in China because, unlike the U.S. or other advanced capitalist countries, revolution had to proceed through two fundamental stages—first the overthrow of foreign imperialist domination and feudalism, before the socialist revolution could advance.

Chou was given the post of political commissar of the Whampoa Academy, which was set up at Sun Yat-sen's instructions to train cadres for the nationalist army. Chou played a key role in winning over many of the cadets to the CPC, thus helping lay the basis for the later formation of the Red Army. The political work done among the cadets also resulted in important victories for the nationalist army in the war against the feudal war lords.

In 1927 Chou went to Shanghai to work among the masses of workers. A general strike and insurrection, involving 500,000 workers, overthrew the warlord. Chiang Kai Shek, who was approaching the outskirts of the city, betrayed the Chinese people and his alliance with the CPC by launching an attack on Shanghai, slaughtering thousands of workers and executing every communist he could capture. Chou En-lai was one of the leaders of the CPC who had struggled against the line of Chen Tu-hsiu, the Party's leader at

that time, which held for complete subservience to the KMT within the united front. Chou was even criticized for having armed the workers of Shanghai.

### The Red Army

After barely escaping Shanghai, Chou made his way to Nanchang where an uprising was launched under the leadership of Chou and Chu Teh. It is from this date, August 1, 1927, that the Chinese celebrate the foundation of the Red Army.

Following the terrible losses suffered at the hands of the butcher Chiang Kai-shek and the collapse of the Communist Party alliance with the Kuomintang, the leadership of the CPC re-evaluated their line and policies. The CPC had gained rich experience in the struggle of the masses since its formation, and especially in the years of upsurge, 1924-27.

But the Party was still young, and the process of integrating Marxism-Leninism with the conditions of China had just begun. At this point the Party's understanding of the road to making revolution in China had to become more correct in order for the struggle of the masses to advance. Mao Tsetung in particular had begun to develop the theory of encircling the cities from the countryside and relying on the peasantry, under the leadership of the working class and its Party, as the main force in accomplishing the first stage of China's revolution.

On the basis of repudiating many of the past errors of the Party, including neglecting work in the countryside, failing to see armed struggle as the main form of struggle in China's conditions, the Party was able to establish the first base areas. By the summer of 1932 they had rapidly grown to include over nine million people.

But the Party had still not achieved a high enough understanding of the Chinese revolution to lead it to victory. Mao Tsetung, who by that point had solved several of the fundamental problems necessary to advance the revolution, was not among the top Party leadership. Several erroneous ultra-"left" lines appeared which insisted a new revolutionary upsurge was right around the corner and led to frontal attacks on the cities, the strongholds of power of the reaction-

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# '76 Contracts Call For Struggle

In 1976 contracts expire covering 4.5 million workers, more than twice as many as last year. These contracts cover many basic industries: auto, electrical garment, rubber, trucking, construction, as well as others.

These contracts expire at a time when wages have been held down to such an extent that average real pay has fallen 5.3% since the contracts last expired in 1973. Unemployment remains high and the companies have been pushing speedup. At the same time they are trying in numerous other ways to chip away at long standing victories won by the working class in the past, for example, undermining the seniority system.

All of this points to 1976 as a year of struggle. But the ruling class is already preparing for this year's contract struggles, hoping they will be able to defuse the struggle before it blows up in their face. 1976, according to *Business Week* and other ruling class spokesmen, will be "Labor's Year of Compromise."

"Labor" refers to the traitors who control the top of the unions. Despite some tough talking on their part, they stand ready to do the bidding of the capitalists by selling out the contracts and trying to control the rank and file. As the personnel vice president of one giant company said, "I think that there is a greater recognition on the part of the unions of the importance of companies being in good economic health. Productivity isn't as nasty a word as it used to be." Up to now these so-called leaders of the unions have done such a good job of holding down workers' demands that the government has not yet had to try to push through new wage controls, although they always keep that threat hanging over our heads.

An important upcoming contract is auto. Leonard Woodcock, the President of the UAW, talks about the companies profits being too "razor thin." Already the UAW leaders are putting up a militant front, talking about a shorter work week, allegedly to spread the existing jobs around—while paving the road for a sell-out. This year's big "victory" may well be the "winning" of a half hour paid vacation for every week of perfect attendance, a proposal favored by the companies to tighten up on absenteeism and actually eliminate jobs. They have already "won" this in the farm equipment industry. Neither the auto bosses or their counterparts in the UAW International foresee a long auto strike.

The same kind of trickery and sellout can be expected around most other contracts. Frank Fitzsimons, president of the Teamsters has said, "We have never had a national strike in this union and I will do anything possible to ward off any work stoppage." The United Electrical Workers (UE) which, along with the IUE and the IBEW, has contracts expiring at General Electric and Westinghouse, is reportedly sending its organizers out to discourage the rank and file from striking.

### Battle in Rubber

A major contract where a strike is more likely is rubber. This is because the rubber workers got sold out so badly in 1973 that real wages fell by 15% from January 1973 to July 1975. The head of the International is under tremendous pressure from the rank and file to do better this time. A strike in rubber could become very significant, especially if the rubber workers win big wage increases, since this could be an inspiration to other workers to fight for good contracts and a blow to the officials' sellout plans.

There are important possibilities to advance the struggle this year, making use of the opportunities presented by these contracts. This is so even though the level of rank and file organization is still low and cannot guarantee that the workers will be able to break the shackles all at once which have been imposed

by the capitalists and the union officials who sing their tune.

But in order to advance, to break through the stranglehold of this two headed monster, we have to understand and expose the treacherous poison that the capitalists and their agents in union office are pushing in order to confuse our fellow workers and paralyze the struggle.

### Can We Fight and Win?

Their big push is to try to sell the line that since the economy and the companies are in trouble, workers have to go easy. They try to seize on the perceptions workers have of attacks on every front as a result of the capitalist crisis, only to say that we can't fight to win, that we must cave in before the companies and choose between poison and the noose. If we demand "too much," they say, we could blow the whole thing and lose our jobs altogether.

So their advice is to accept a "little" layoff here, inadequate wages, some speedup—all the companies' measures to save their skins at our expense. At the same time, they push the line that the only way to get out of this situation is to concentrate on electing Democrats this year.

But the lack of struggle has never protected jobs. The capitalists use the opportunity to lay off even more. Instead of "recovery" lessening the problems of the working class, the capitalists use their collaboration with the union leaders to "recover" their profits. But unemployment stays high, speedup intensifies and, in general, the misery of the working class



## Editorial

increases. The "don't fight during a recession" line contradicts a growing understanding in the working class, learned through bitter experience, that the more you surrender to the bosses, the more they try to take.

The truth is that it is the nature of the capitalist class to drive the working class down. More profits for the companies means they invest in newer and faster machinery so they can push through even more grinding speedup and layoffs.

The stand of the working class is to fight for every job, to resist every attack and seize every opportunity to advance our struggle. This stand is not some abstract moral principle; it is the only way to actually move ahead; it is the inescapable conclusion coming from the fact that capitalist solutions are no solution at all. They make things worse for the workers today, and still worse tomorrow.

### Decided by Our Class Struggle

The only limit to what they'll take is the limit of our resistance. It isn't predetermined by fate how much of the product of the workers' labor they grab for profit, and how much the working class is able to win in struggle to meet the needs of life. This is determined by the class struggle.

This was shown to be true in some of the proudest moments of the history of workers in this country—during the '30s. This was a time of deep economic

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## Major 1976 Contracts

Contract Expiration	Employer	Union	Workers Covered
Jan. 31	Women's dress manufacturers	Ladies Garment Workers	85,000
Mar. 31	Trucking Employers Inc., local cartage companies	Teamsters, Chicago Truck Drivers Union	436,340
Apr. 15	New England cotton & synthetic textile manufacturers	Textile Workers Union	15,000
Apr. 20	Goodyear, Firestone, Uniroyal, Goodrich	United Rubber Workers	67,700
May 31	General construction contractors (10 states)	Building trades	117,350
May 31	Women's coat and suit manufacturers	Ladies Garment Workers	42,000
May 31	International Paper	Electrical Workers (IBEW), Paperworkers	10,600
June 1	Warehousing and building service employers (San Francisco)	Teamsters, Longshoremen (ILWU)	10,000
June 27	General Electric	Electrical Workers (IUE, UE, IBEW, others)	125,000
June 30	Food Processing employers (northern Calif.)	Teamsters	60,000
June 30	General construction contractors (6 states)	Building trades	27,600
July 1	Voluntary hospitals (New York City)	Hospital Employees (Dist. 1199)	40,000
July 11	Westinghouse	Electrical Workers (IUE, UE, IBEW, others)	60,000
July 27	Western Union	Telegraph Workers	11,250
July 31	Women's knitgoods manufacturers	Ladies Garment Workers	12,000
Aug. 31	Wilson, Swift, Armour, Mayer, & other meat packers	Meatcutters	37,500
Aug. 31	Men's cotton garment & outerwear manufacturers	Amal. Clothing Workers	95,000
Sept. 14	GM, Ford, Chrysler American Motors	United Auto Workers	717,350
Sept. 14	GM (electrical)	Electrical Workers (IUE)	25,000
Sept. 30	International Harvester, Deere, Caterpillar	United Auto Workers	93,350
Dec. 1	RCA	Electrical Workers (IBEW)	17,500

## Revolution

*Revolution* is the organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA (RCP, USA). It is published on the 15th of every month. All correspondence to the Party should be sent to RCP, USA, P.O. Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654.

## December Demos Demand "Jobs or Income"

# Jobless March Nationwide

The latest piece of news that twenty states have been cut off of Federal Special Unemployment Insurance Assistance funds ("Due to the improvement in the situation, unemployment insurance is unnecessary") is a real attack on millions of workers. The *Wall Street Journal* and the capitalists' economic councils consult their charts and statistics and tell us the recession is over, we're on the way to recovery. No matter whether they say the recession has "bottomed out" or not, the unemployed need jobs. Unemployment is getting worse, not better.

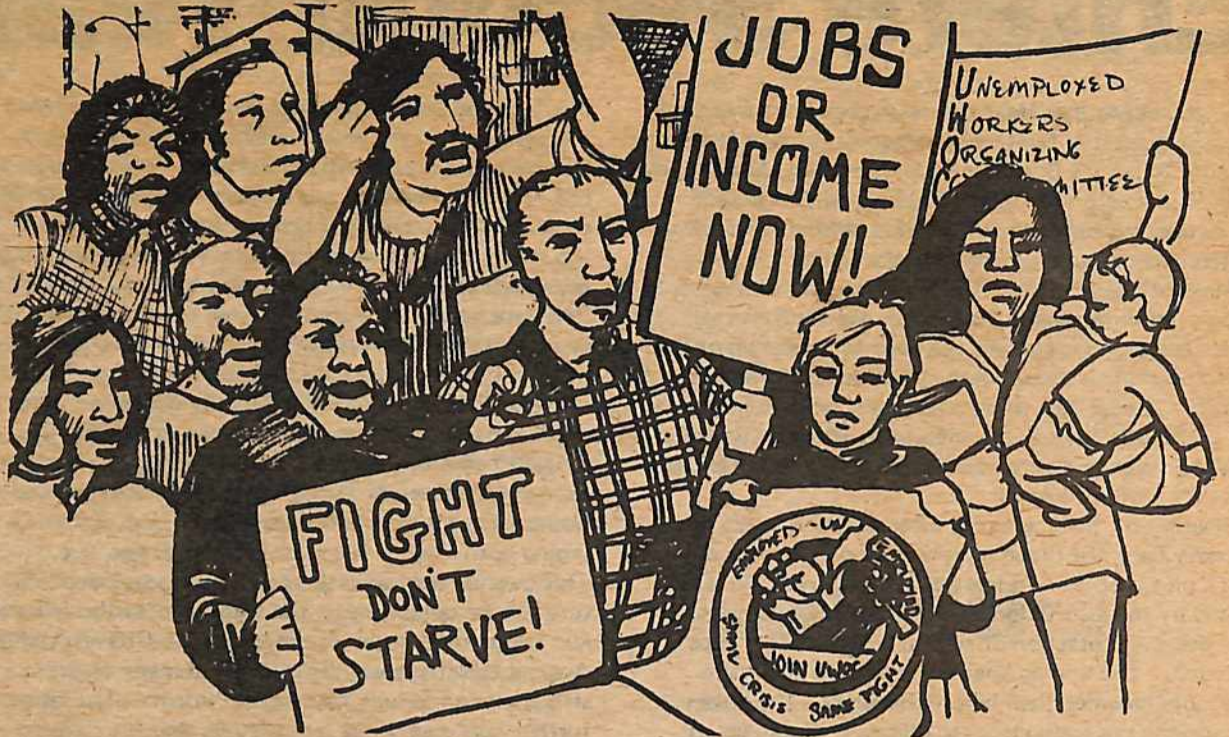
Increasingly plants and factories have "no applications" signs hanging in front, telling workers to not even bother to put in an application in person. They're probably learning from earlier times, trying to avoid the anger of people frustrated at being turned away at place after place.

The rising unemployment and growing anger of the unemployed was confirmed by the response to demands made by the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee (UWOC) in demonstrations in over twenty-five cities during mid-December, demanding "Jobs Now," "Extend the Extensions" and "Food Stamps (No Cutbacks)." They were joined by Vietnam vets and young workers fighting for jobs, by employed-unemployed committees fighting layoffs, by workers on strike who joined UWOC's slogan "We Won't Scab and We Won't Starve."

### Demonstrations from Coast to Coast

In Birmingham UWOC demonstrators refused to be stopped by cops and went in to confront the mayor in his office. In Houston UWOC had its first action at the unemployment office and was warmly received by the hundred or so people inside. In New York City the march went through the 14th Street shopping area to Union Square. Thousands of workers of all nationalities showed solidarity with the marchers. In Milwaukee the line of march stretched for blocks as it went through a working class area and was joined by young workers and some high school students. In Los Angeles, 75 to 80 people demonstrated at the unemployment office. One woman waited from 8:00 AM (when she thought it started) until 9:30 and went through the whole day and then asked "when is the next one?" In Rochester and Buffalo, New York people went to the downtown areas to the local Chamber of Commerce. As their leaflet said "This is where big business gets together to plan to take profit out of our hide." An employed worker spoke: "One week of work and I'm laid off. I can't lay off my family or my bills. And that's why I'm here, to fight this rotten system."

In Atlanta a Jobs Convoy drove through town to the downtown shopping area where hundreds of workers are left jobless as the stores they were working for are torn down to make way for a subway. As they went through the streets, many unemployed and em-



ployed joined in. In Baltimore demonstrators went to the city hall where they demanded that long proposed subway jobs be opened for hard hit construction workers. Then they picketed city papers in support of the striking workers at the *Washington Post*.

In Chicago UWOC held a spirited picket line in front of the unemployment office and passed out thousands of leaflets. Hundreds of unemployed workers were wearing buttons that said "Jobs Now" and gave the date of the rally. In Portland, San Francisco Bay Area, Jersey City, Portsmouth and Dover, New Hampshire; Providence, Rhode Island; Hartford, Conn. and many other cities, working people united with UWOC's national demands, signed petitions, raised fists and honked horns in solidarity. People in the unemployment offices and on the streets joined the lines and rallies. TV and radio picked up and covered the news. They had to—it was right out there and couldn't be ignored.

The demands most enthusiastically taken up all over were for jobs and unemployment insurance. Workers spoke emotionally about trying everything and then joining in this fight, joining with UWOC. One woman who took the bullhorn at the Germantown, Philadelphia unemployment center said, "We're sick and tired of the way things are going here—we are going to deal with it, and we are going to win."

In the San Francisco Bay Area a veteran spoke about how tough it is and how one third of prisoners are vets, and how hard it is to find work, especially because of the great number of dishonorable discharges.

More and more people are convinced of the seriousness of the situation. The capitalist's lies and the big build-up for words like "Recession over" are just an attempt to shove aside our demands.

Well, there might be a few job rehires and openings (one reason being that some companies are stockpiling products in preparation for upcoming strikes and contract battles), but in no place are there enough jobs opening up to make a dent in record unemployment. And what are they doing? Trying to cut back on benefits!

### Plans to Cut Benefits

A plan in Georgia—the so-called Caldwell plan, similar to the one pushed by Federal Reserve Board Chairman Arthur Burns—could cut back benefits through state legislation lowering unemployment benefits from \$90 maximum to \$70 maximum and ending benefits completely for people forced to quit jobs, no matter how long they are out of work.

A piece of legislation in Washington State is also designed to cut unemployment benefits by making base periods needed to collect twenty weeks rather than 16. This would take away benefits from at least 12,000 workers and hit especially hard at seasonal workers in canneries, logging, fishing, construction, etc. In the past, workers who were forced to quit jobs had to wait ten weeks for benefits. But under this legislation they wouldn't collect unemployment insurance at all. Washington State's unemployment fund is running in the red and so the bill is introduced as though the unemployed are to blame for self-indulgence. "IMAGINE! Wanting some income! How could you!" it says.

But the fight in Washington is mounting strongly against this bill, SB 2373. The demonstrations in

Seattle and Tacoma in December have helped build for the struggle against this legislation.

There's no question about it. If we weren't out there fighting they would have cut back on our needs even more by now, and they wouldn't even be making empty promises. But we are fighting. Organization is growing and the fight has begun.

All over the country the crescendo is rising and more and bigger demonstrations will be held. National UWOC has answered the call of VVAW to join the national Bicentennial demonstration on July 4 with a resounding YES! And the local and regional UWOC actions will continue. UWOC plans to collect one quarter of a million signatures on its "Jobs or Income" petition by May Day.

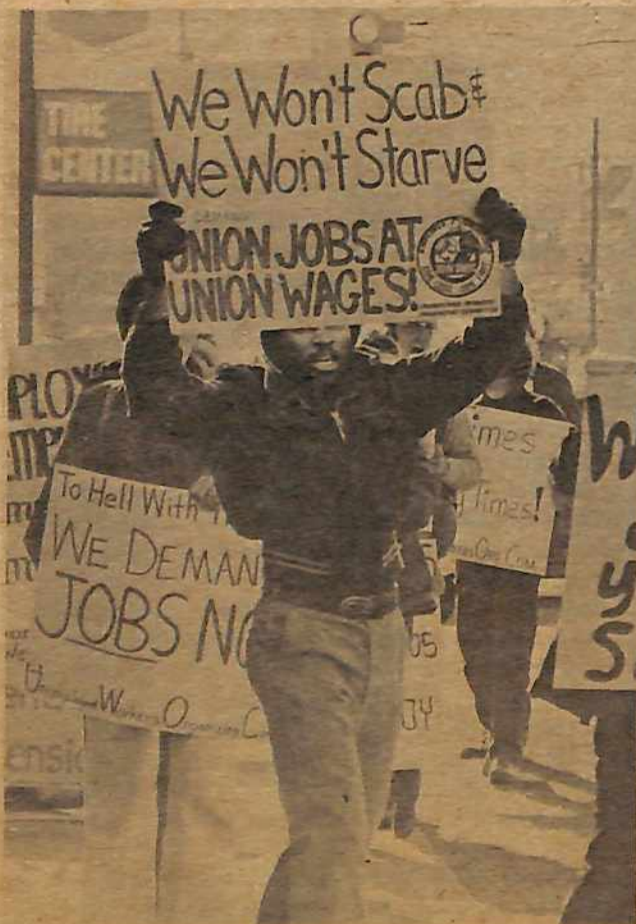
The anger of the unemployed is growing and the fight for jobs or income is stepping up. The UWOC national newsletter spoke the sentiments of growing numbers of the unemployed when it said "We mean to have our demands." ■

The following song, sung to the tune of *Twas the Night Before Christmas*, was performed in the Bay Area at the December UWOC demonstration:

"But not all is quiet as one would think  
With unemployment and inflation,  
SOMETHING STINKS!

We workers are strong,  
We'll accept no defeat.  
We make everything from the building above  
To the shoes on our feet,  
From the clothes that we wear  
To the food that we eat.

So we stand up together as they tremble in fright  
As we millions organize with all our might.  
In the factories and the street we do vow  
That we will have JOBS OR INCOME NOW!"



The anger and determination of these unemployed workers in Denver were echoed in similar demonstrations which took place in 24 other cities in mid-December.

## Strikers Determination Deepens

# Meatcutters Strike Enters Second Year

As the Milwaukee Meatcutters' strike approaches the one year mark, the Meatpackers Association, the National Labor Relations Board, and the local press have launched an all out effort to smash the struggle. But despite the increased attacks, the strikers are closing ranks with a bitter determination to keep up the fight.

In mid-December the NLRB dismissed all of the union's unfair labor practice charges against the companies' association, opening the door for a new union representation election and the possible decertification of striking Local 248. If the election is held after the one year mark, the strikers will not be allowed to vote. Only the scabs, or "permanent employees" as the NLRB calls them, will be eligible.

Whether it's held before or after the January 25 anniversary date, the union representation election is an attack on the strike. At least 600 scabs have been recruited by the association. They cross the lines every day with the protection of an injunction and the cops' riot sticks. The boning lines and trimming tables are now more crowded than before the strike. The bosses are working the scabs elbow to elbow, trying to get as much production as they got before the strike. These scabs will be allowed to vote.

Right now there are only about 650 union members. Around 250 of these strikers have been terminated and will probably be ruled ineligible to vote by the NLRB. Forty-five of the most active were fired for picket line "misconduct." And about 200 lost their jobs when two of the packing houses went out of business. The strikers are still terminated even though the two houses were bought up by Peck Packing, one of the two main companies in the seven member association.

The Labor Board's dismissal of the unfair labor practice charges was in keeping with every ruling they have made throughout the strike. Last February, the NLRB initiated the legal action which resulted in a blanket injunction against any kind of intimidation of scabs. Then in May the local head of the NLRB petitioned the federal court, which held Meatcutters Local 248 in contempt of court for mass picketing, firebombings, and other actions against scabs. To the strikers and the many workers who are following the strike developments any thought of the NLRB as an impartial referee has been long forgotten.

### Casting Away Illusions

The workers who man the burning barrels in front of the packing houses every day know they can't count on the NLRB for any breaks. Yet union leaders still keep promoting a false hope saying, "I think even Squillacote [local head of the NLRB] is beginning to see through Brigden's [association's attorney] tactics."

Throughout the fight, the union leaders have pushed

a reliance on the system, distorting the facts to disarm the workers. By preaching reliance on the lawyers and strict obedience to the injunctions, the leaders sabotaged the strike. Momentum was lost when times were right to attack. One striker reported, "At the beginning of the strike the leadership told us they'd never hire scabs—because it was illegal." The men and women of Local 248 have had to wade through a lot of wrong ideas. But as each "rely on the system" line is proven to be empty, more and more strikers are grasping the fact that the unity of the working class is the only choice we have.

The most recent bourgeois scheme to confuse the struggle came in November. The three top government executives, Governor Lucey, Mayor Henry Maier, and County Executive John Doyne issued a joint letter urging both sides to "be reasonable and negotiate." This development was trumpeted by a headline and pictures of the politicians on the front page of the *Milwaukee Labor Press*, paper of the local AFL-CIO leadership. Again a false hope was promoted and many of the strikers began to look for a breakthrough. The letter further confused things by implying that the strikers were being just as "unreasonable" as the association. But when no results came out of this letter, it was seen by many strikers as the cheap election year stunt that it was. The letter came out a week after a workers' solidarity rally of around 800 workers. The ruling class politicians and union hacks were trying to channel some of this mass support into Democratic Party campaign momentum.

### Determination to Win

Through the twelve months of the strike, the meatcutters have all taken a hell of a financial beating. Many of the strikers are working temporary jobs, with the experienced boners scattered all over the Midwest. But the two to three hundred who picket every single day are hanging in there with a strong determination to win.

When a second shift was started up at one of Wisconsin Packing's plants, a couple of scabs came very close to getting "knocked upside the head" in full view of a paddy wagon full of cops. On Christmas Eve a large and militant picket line caught the cops at Wisconsin's Butler plant by surprise and a few days later a scab truck's windshield was shattered.

Many of the steadiest and most active strikers are older workers who remember the fighting spirit of the CIO packing house unions. Many of these guys lost jobs when Armour and Plankinton Packing, a division of Swift, left Milwaukee in the '60s for modern, low wage plants in Nebraska and Illinois. Now they are fighting to protect and strengthen the union, wages and working conditions they have struggled for over the last twenty, thirty, and forty years. "We've got to win this



Trainmen pull up in locomotive to take part in October 24 meatcutters rally.

fight. Where am I going to get a job at 55 years old?" reflects the sentiments of many of these veterans.

From the beginning it was stand up and fight or get rolled over. And that's still the way it is. Despite the weaknesses of the strike, in particular the inability of the strikers to shut down production, there is only one road forward—to tighten up the ranks of the strikers and to reach out, building the fight broadly among the workers.

### Picketing Conference on Strikebreaking

On January 7 the meatcutters, strikers from another company—Hein Werner, members of UWOC and other workers united to hit back at union busting and build support for the two strikes. The target was a banquet featuring the Meatpackers' and Hein Werner's union busting legal advisor. Patrick Brigden was speaking to the Personnel/Industrial Relations Society of Wisconsin. He was speaking on how to break unions to some of the state's top corporations, many of which have labor contracts expiring this year.

Brigden is also the attorney that advised the mass use of scabs at Harley Davidson, Masterlock and Stroh Die Casting during the strike wave of '74. The meatcutters and other workers braved sub-zero evening winds to picket at the door step of this conference on strikebreaking. Chanting "Workers Say Hell No, Union Busting's Got to Go" they echoed their point into the ruling class dinner and out to the local working class on the ten o'clock news.

The gains of the meatcutters strike, win or lose, have been many. Most important has been the increased workers' unity and consciousness. Over the course of the fight thousands of workers have become involved in one way or another—through the mass rallies, the special contributions in many locals, the boycott of scab meat, the buck-a-month clubs, or through contact with neighbors, friends, or relatives who are meatcutters. The class solidarity behind this fight against union busting has become a social force locally.

All across the Midwest, packing house workers are working side by side with members of Local 248, hearing the lessons of the struggle and looking toward their own upcoming battles. At Lindsay Meats in Milwaukee, workers threw down their knives and wildcatted when they first found scab meat in the coolers. That fight was sabotaged by the Meatcutters' leadership. Now Lindsay's contract is expiring and Brigden is negotiating this one too. In Iowa and South Dakota, three meatcutters' strikes have been going for the better part of 1975. In Wisconsin two other houses are presently working without a contract. And the big packinghouse contract expires later this year. The lessons and inspiration of the Milwaukee fight can go a long way in guiding these as well as the many struggles in other industries that are soon to break out.

Over the course of the strike the class consciousness of the meatcutters as a whole has advanced considerably. The vast majority of strikers recognize that the strike is a key fight for the whole working class. And as picket line talk turns to questions like the role of the cops, the union hacks, unemployment, war and the rest, things are all starting to fit together; it's the working class against the capitalists. That's what it all boils down to.

One picket said, "When I see a coal truck driver or a truck full of city workers, I give them the fist. They usually hit the horn and wave back. I want them to see us down here on this picket line every day. Those are my people. Someday we're going to rise up." Another striker put it this way, "Someday somebody's going to have to pay for what they're doing to us." ■



Striking meatcutters have fought to maintain strong picket lines, like this one at Peck Packing, throughout their struggle.

# Students Beat NJ Tuition Hike, Tax Increase

Students in the New Jersey State College system have defeated a threatened 50% tuition hike for this coming spring term. In early December Governor Brendan Byrne had to call off the hike he called necessary back in September. The victory culminated months of struggle in which thousands of students had taken up the battle in rallies and other actions against the college administrators, state legislators, and governor.

The struggle was also significant in that communists played a leading role uniting students to take up the struggle and direct their anger and fire at the real enemy, the capitalists. The Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB), the communist student organization of the Revolutionary Communist Party, played a major role in leading the masses of students to beat back the attack.

This past September Governor Byrne told students on the Jersey state colleges of a proposed \$175 tuition hike for the coming semester starting in January. This was on top of a number of cutbacks which had already brought on course closings, doubling of class sizes, etc. Tuition hikes and slashes in education such as these have been coming down on students throughout the country as part of the overall attacks of the bourgeoisie on the working class and masses of people.

Many of the students at the Jersey state colleges are sons and daughters of workers. Faced with unemployment rates in cities like Newark of 30-40%, many go to college in hopes of learning a skill that will help them get a decent job. The \$175 tuition hike, it was estimated, would force over 30% of the student body out of the school—unable to pay the higher cost. Many of these students were only a year or two away from graduating.

There was only one other choice, the politicians told the people of Jersey—and that was higher taxes. Either way—the tuition hike or the taxes—the masses of people have to pay.

## Organization Built

As the semester started in September, the RSB, with chapters on four of the eight state schools, set out to unite students around two main demands: (1) No Tuition Hike and No Cuts, and (2) No New Taxes. Committees to Fight the Tuition Hike were started by the Brigade to unite all people who wanted to actively organize students to fight for the demands.

Some of the committees, such as the one at Patterson State, brought forward a hundred students and more to regular meetings where political discussion was held around the sources of the tuition hike, means to fighting it, plans for demonstrations, etc. Committees on the other schools were having more varied success in uniting people—ranging from 15 students on up.

The committees as a whole proved to be an important means of bringing activists forward to get involved in building organized struggle—though the Brigade narrowed too much of the political discussion within them to questions solely concerning how to fight the hike (more on this later).

The slogan "If There's a Hike—We'll Strike!" was taken up as a statewide campaign was launched. In late September rallies were called simultaneously on a number of the state colleges. Six hundred rallied at Patterson State, 400 marched through the streets of downtown Jersey City, and 150 rallied at Rutgers-Newark.

The word of the demonstrations spread like wildfire and students at two different state schools contacted the RSB and started mass committees around the demands. Throughout October the Brigade sold thousands of buttons proclaiming "If There's a Hike—We'll Strike!" as it built towards more unified actions at the end of the month.

On October 29 the RSB called for a statewide "armband day," a day in which students on the different state schools would wear armbands to show their unity, solidarity and organization in the face of the tuition threat. In its propaganda the Brigade put forward the armbands as a symbol of resistance to the tuition hike and a clear step towards a statewide stu-

dent strike should the hike be carried out. Over 10,000 students wore armbands at the different state schools. That day students were wearing armbands in schools where the Brigade had no contacts and had done no build-up work.

## Sense of Common Struggle

As students saw each other on the campuses wearing armbands symbolizing resistance to the hike—their unity and sense of common struggle against the attack moved forward. Throughout the day the talk among the students on many of the campuses was about the tuition hike—where it was coming from and how the students must stand together. And the Brigade was reaching thousands of students around these questions through its propaganda and agitation.

The "armband day" was a successful action because it brought thousands of students throughout the state forward to wage struggle and see their common enemy. It marked a major advance in the battle against the hike. Off this work, the Brigade also brought a number of new people to its national convention, which was the following week, where it transformed into a communist student organization.

The Brigade then put out a call for a state-wide demonstration at the state capital of Trenton on December 10. The rally was to unite students from all the different state schools and serve notice to the capitalists and their politicians that the students were going to strike if the hike was implemented.

Fifteen organizations on different state schools endorsed the rally and the Brigade set out for four weeks of build-up. Banners and posters were all over the campuses and some students hung them out their dorm windows: "Stop the Hike—On to Trenton," "Tuition Hike Go to Hell, Jersey Students are Gonna Rebel." In the dorms "shit lists" were rolled down the hallway and everyone came out and wrote their complaints and signed up for buses. The Brigade was boldly putting out the need for a strike and a number of students were talking about it.

The student governments also started to get into the act, calling a rally in Trenton that brought out 800 students. And while the thrust of the student governments' organizing was to rely on bourgeois politicians, call for more taxes, etc., the capitalists were increasingly getting worried about the growing turmoil, anger and level of organization among the students.

## Capitalists Back Down

So in late November, Governor Byrne had to admit defeat—there would be no tuition hike in January and no new taxes. The masses of students on a number of campuses were rising up in anger over the tuition hike and were increasingly directing their fire at the capitalists and their politicians. Especially with the economic crisis deepening and the bourgeoisie's stepped-up attacks on the working class, the capitalists were increasingly worried about students throughout New Jersey getting organized and isolating them as the enemy. If they forced a confrontation, the sparks of the student struggle could spread to others as well.

Upon Governor Byrne's announcement, the Brigade made an important political mistake. It should have called for "victory and vigilance" rallies on the different campuses—to celebrate the victory, politically sum up the entire struggle, and point the road forward to prepare people for future battles. Instead the Brigade continued to call for the December 10 statewide rally in Trenton, stating that the tuition hike may still come about. This reflected isolation from the actual views and struggle of the students. For they were confident that the immediate battle had been won, and that while tuition hikes would certainly be a future battle, it was no longer an immediate question to be fought.

And the students were correct because the politicians and their capitalist backers had been politically

defeated in this battle by the masses of students. They had tried a huge tuition hike, and the students had met them head-on with organized resistance. The bourgeoisie wanted to avoid this confrontation at this time—though there will certainly be thousands of others in the future. On top of this there was growing concern among the students about a wave of teacher firings that hit a couple of the state schools at this time, a struggle which the Brigade did not take up, as it had isolated itself from the struggle of the students with its continued concentration on the tuition hike.

## Practicing Mass Line

Over the last few weeks, during breaks between semesters, the RSB in New Jersey has been summing up the strengths and weaknesses of its work around the tuition hike battle. A strength of its work had been its implementation of the mass line, summing up the concrete demands of the students in the face of attack, uniting the advanced to take up and organize around the demands and persevering in bringing it out broadly to the masses of students on a number of schools.

In carrying out the mass line the Brigade had also done a good job of summing up the actual level of struggle among the students and developing tactics such as "armband day" that developed the unity and level of organization among the masses of students, assisting them in learning in the course of their own experiences—while isolating the capitalists and their politicians, college administration, etc., as the enemy.

On the other hand there were certain weaknesses to the work which held back even further political advances and victories from being gained. This mainly centered around the Brigade narrowing the struggle down to a battle solely for decent education and not bringing out how the fight was part of the resistance of the American working class and people to all the attacks caused by the ruling class. This amounted to a tendency to narrow the mass line to simply reflecting the current main struggle and level of understanding.

This certainly came out in the propaganda, but mostly it centered around not drawing the political links out of the actual struggle that was fought. For over the course of the semester hundreds and sometimes thousands of students were actively fighting against a heavy attack. Many saw their hopes for a decent life being ripped away and came into struggle against politicians, college administrators, the police, etc. All this was a strong basis on which to expose the bankruptcy of capitalism and the need for revolution.

But instead the communists tended to narrow the battle down to a fight for decent education and what we have to do to get one. This hurt especially in terms of consolidation of many of the activists who had come forward to organize and fight against the hike. Without moving forward their understanding of how capitalism is the source of the problems and not bringing out in a living way the need for revolution, new people do not see clearly the need to continue to build organized struggle, to be part of a revolutionary organization and join the Brigade.

But all in all, the work of the semester was marked by advances. The bourgeoisie launched an attack and the masses of students, with leadership from communists, had risen up and defeated them. The masses of students were strengthened by the victorious struggle, with a better understanding of the need to unite and wage organized struggle in the face of attacks.

And the young communists in the RSB learned a good many lessons about uniting students around a program of struggle and drawing out of the actual struggle the class nature of capitalism and the need for revolution—lessons which, spread throughout the entire RSB, will help enable it to lead a student movement that fights around particular attacks on students and around broader issues against the ruling class and capitalist system, as an ally of the proletariat. ■



A wave of struggle on college campuses against tuition hikes and cutbacks, like this march of 1500 in Boston, is still building. Recently, NJ students beat a bill calling for new taxes or increased tuition.

## Sellout, But Bosses Want More

# Ford Vetoes Construction Bill

In mid-December, President Ford vetoed the "common site picketing" bill, drawn up by his Secretary of Labor, John Dunlop, and vehemently supported by the AFL-CIO. Even though the bill was openly aimed at "stabilizing" (straight-jacketing) rank and file activity in the crisis-ridden construction industry, the ruling class sunk it as a possible obstacle to their attacks on construction workers and their unions.

Meany and the bigwigs in the building trade unions were outraged at the veto, particularly since Ford had previously promised he would sign the bill. Eight leaders of AFL-CIO building trades unions, as well as Fitzsimmons of the Teamsters, resigned in protest from the President's Collective Bargaining Committee on Construction. They vowed to start an all out "dump Ford" campaign to elect a Democratic president in the upcoming elections.

On the surface, the whole to-do looked simple: union leaders push for pro-union legislation; pro-business government kills it. But in the first place, the "common site" bill wasn't exactly the peach Meany and his bunch made it out to be.

With fewer construction jobs around and more of them being done by non-union contracting firms, the hacks tried to sell the bill to the workers as a weapon in their fight. Large construction sites usually have several sub-contractors doing part of the work. It is now considered an illegal secondary boycott if a construction local shuts down a whole site, pulling out the members of all the craft unions, in order to strike or organize one contractor. The bill would have established the right of a union to picket the whole site.

In the hands of the rank and file this could be an important weapon. But in the hands of the present union leaders it would be meaningless. And that was exactly what the bill was aimed at doing—strengthening the hold of union officials against the growing struggles of the rank and file.

What the union hacks didn't talk much about was the key provisions of the bill. These included: In order to strike a whole job site, the local union would first have to give ten days notice and get *written authorization* from the international union. Picketing against non-union contractors was limited to 14 days. Picketing was not allowed if there was a no-strike clause in any of the contracts, even if with just one of many subcontractors. And about 90% of the contractors building homes were specifically exempted.

### Reduce Strikes

The real meat of this bit of "pro-labor" legislation was the "Collective Bargaining Act of 1975." The *Wall Street Journal* summed up the bill as a whole and this section in particular by saying that the purpose of it was "to reduce the number of strikes by the nation's 10,000 local construction unions and to hold down their wage gains....It is intended to give national unions more power over the often rambunctious locals."

This section of the bill set up another labor-management committee with authority to take over negotiations between local unions and contractors. Once this committee entered negotiations, contracts had to be okayed by the national union and national contractor's association involved, effectively cutting out the local entirely. As if this weren't enough, this section also set up an automatic 30 day injunction against striking on any negotiation taken over by the committee.

To understand why such a masterpiece of class collaboration was rejected by the capitalists, it is necessary to take a look at conditions in construction. The construction industry is one of the pillars of the U.S. economy, and it has been hit hard by the crisis. Who can afford a house? And commercial construction is way down. Close to 2000 construction companies folded in 1974. In their scramble for profits and survival they have launched a major attack on construction workers.

In the past several years there has been a media barrage against the so-called "outrageously high wages" and "cost-inflating work rules" of construction workers. This has accompanied industry efforts to force speedup, reduce crew sizes, wipe out craft jurisdictions and drive down wages.

Contractors have used high unemployment in the cities as a source of non-union labor. They are drawing skilled workers out of government sponsored training programs, breaking the monopoly of skills

once held by the union apprenticeship programs. And the companies have used to their advantage the fact that craft unions in some areas have long excluded Blacks and national minorities. And prefabrication and other mechanization has been introduced.

Today non-union contractors account for over 40% of all commercial construction, up from virtually nothing a few years ago. The capitalists are using the threat of scab contractors to further drive down conditions for union workers.

The response of the construction union leadership has been to fall right into line with the bosses' efforts. Instead of struggling to organize unorganized workers and expand the unions throughout the industry, they have pushed to make union labor "more competitive with non-union labor."

In Arkansas, operating engineers were hit with a \$2 an hour pay cut which the union business manager justified as "an effort to counter open shop contractors who do 85% of commercial earth moving work." Last January the 25,000 members of the Chicago District Laborers Council were stuck with a contract with no increase in wages or benefits. The head of the Florida Building Trades summed up the sellouts' stand: "If wages keep going up in the present atmosphere, we can't be competitive with non-union labor. Our people are realizing they've got to change the rules which give the non-union contractors an extra step."

### Officials' Positions Threatened

Where the anger of the rank and file has forced the hacks into some action against the spread of non-union construction, they have pushed the narrow approach of pressuring contractors to hire "their men." This is one reason they were so hot to get the picketing restrictions lifted. But in the face of the capitalist profit crunch, their determination to put the screws to the unions and the increased introduction of mechanization and pre-fab construction, this approach has proven to be a dead end street.

In sharp contrast to the collaborationists sitting on top of the unions, the rank and file have shown no inclination to roll over and play dead. Last year mass demonstrations against unemployment, which averages 35% in the industry, and non-union contractors took place in Trenton, New Jersey, Manhattan, Atlanta, Boston, Milwaukee and several other cities. Locals around the country have broken through injunctions and the sabotage of the internationals to defend their jobs, in several cases shutting down whole

construction sites despite the Taft-Hartley law.

The heads of the AFL-CIO and the Building Trades Unions are as uptight over growing rank and file militancy as the bosses are. This is another reason they were so anxious to get the picketing bill. It seemed to show that they were doing something. They wanted to use it to turn away a little of the heat they are catching from the rank and file and at the same time get a lot more control over the locals and their ability to strike.

When the bill got through Congress the AFL-CIO leadership thought they had it in the bag. A section of the construction industry seemed to go along with it as a way to "stabilize industry bargaining." And Ford said it was okay with him if it was okay with them. But that support disappeared fast as the most powerful sections of the capitalist class made it clear that they wanted the legislation buried. The Construction Industry Users Council, made up of representatives of the countries largest corporations and utility companies, was strongly against the bill.

### Big Capital Calls the Shots

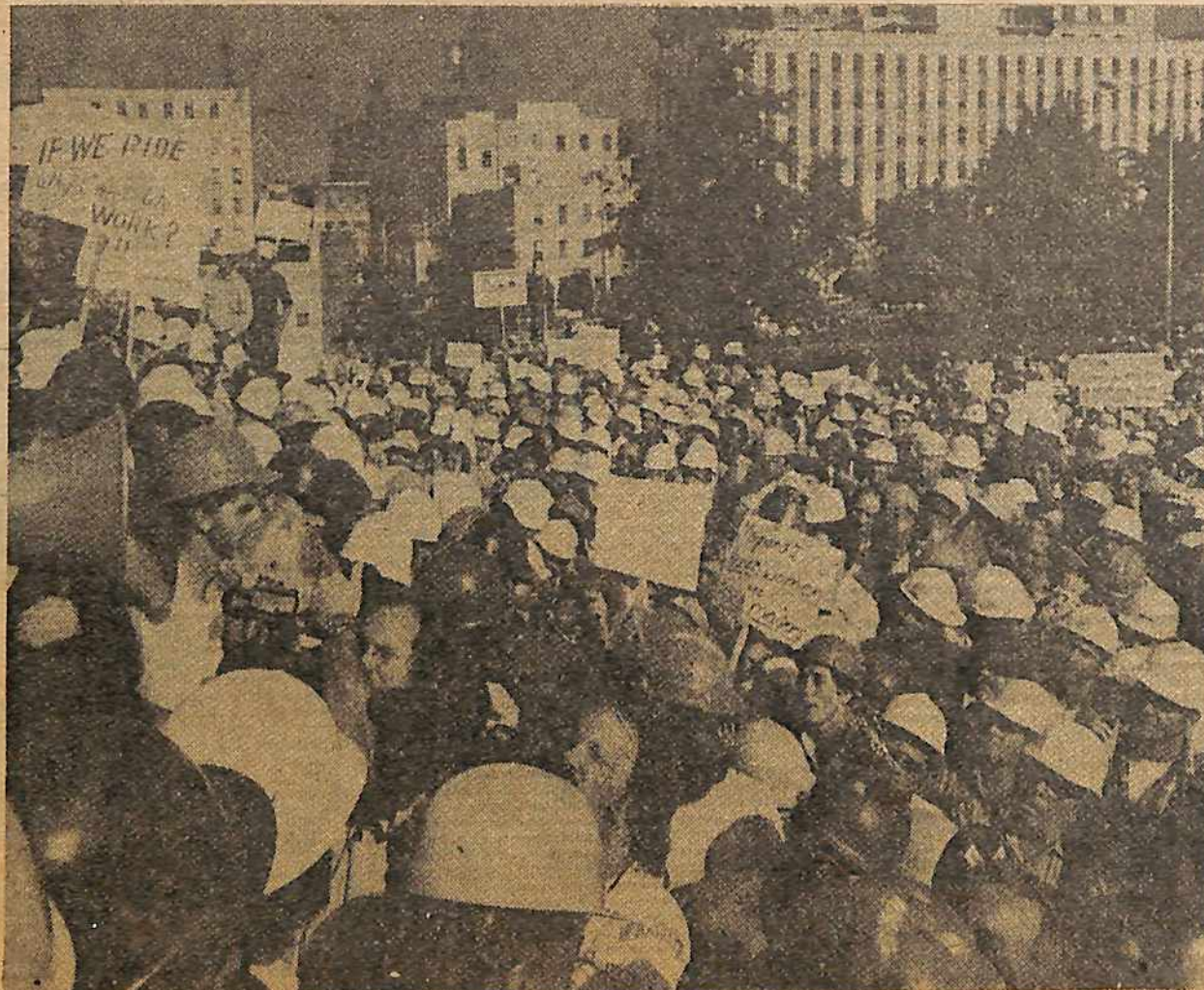
A *Chicago Tribune* editorial emphasized that it was not just the "right wing" Reagan supporters who blocked the bill. "Industry and the national press—liberal as well as conservative—were almost unanimous in opposing the bill."

The message of the veto is clear: the bourgeoisie is not about to give a damn thing to the working class that they're not forced to, and they don't see the need to even concede anything to help the officials secure their positions. As much as the capitalists like to use the union structure to strangle the rank and file, they never give up their dreams and schemes of getting rid of unions altogether. And the picketing bill would only be of advantage to the capitalists as long as the hacks were firmly in the saddle. But the bronc is already bucking and this is no time to weaken the fences, betting all their money on the rider's control.

In the face of the obvious fact that it is the capitalist class as a whole that forced the veto of the bill, Meany and friends are blustering and raging about Ford not being a man of his word and an enemy that labor can no longer support. As the capitalists announce openly what they have in mind for the working class, the AFL-CIO leadership is going all out to divert the struggle of the class into the '76 election campaign in an effort to "put a friend of labor in the White House."

The maneuvers around this bill are a clear example that the power of capital calls the shots in government while politicians and presidents scurry to carry out the orders. The clearer this gets, the harder Meany and the AFL-CIO leaders try to hide the fact, proclaiming that if we could just get the right people in office, everything would be okay for the working class.

But everything is not okay for the working class, and it won't be as long as the capitalists and their labor henchmen are around. The veto serves notice of the capitalists' intentions. Dunlop and Meany predict chaos in collective bargaining as a result of the veto. They are sharply aware that construction workers and the class as a whole are not going to be steamrollered by the capitalist attack. ■



With unemployment over 30% and union busting on the rise, struggle in the building trades is sharp. These Atlanta workers rallied against non-union wages in building the city's transit system.



## High Stakes in Angola Civil War

# U.S., USSR Face Off in Africa

The civil war in Angola continues to intensify and the rulers of the U.S. and the USSR are escalating their intervention even further. Angola is a major political question, both in the world arena as the two superpowers jockey to improve their position and within the U.S. as the ruling class fights bitterly over the best tactics to deal with the situation. More is at stake than just Angola—the Soviet Union is trying to take advantage of the loosening grip of its U.S. rival and leech off the struggle of the masses against them, so it can push into the southern tip of Africa.

The rulers of both superpowers went all out to dress up in halos in preparation for the conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) called to discuss Angola. Even as the Soviets increased their forces to over 2,000 Soviet "advisors" and 8,200 Cuban troops, *Pravda* claimed the USSR is "supporting the just struggle of the Angolan people" and had the gall to call for the "termination of foreign armed aggression." President Ford meanwhile pretended he was putting pressure on South Africa to withdraw the 3,000 plus troops he had had them send in in the first place and declared that the problem is "Russian colonialism" and sang the very familiar tune that U.S. interference is aimed at "giving the Angolans an opportunity to make the decision themselves."

This "Mr. Nice Guy" charade was pretty flimsy. The Soviet Union, along with more soldiers, sent more arms, including missiles, tanks, and ships, to the group it is backing, the MPLA. The U.S., which had already put up over \$50,000,000 for arms and mercenaries to the outfits it supports, FNLA and UNITA, sent missile equipped helicopters and hundreds of American "mercenaries." These were trained at Fort Benning, Georgia and included Green Berets "on indefinite leave."

### OAU Split

All this military hardware is likely to get a lot of use in weeks to come, now that the OAU conference has ended in a stalemate. Of the 46 member nations, 2 abstained, 22 voted to recognize the MPLA as the real Angolan government, many because of the open participation of hated South African troops on the other side, and 22 voted that all foreign powers should leave so a coalition government could be set up. This was supported by the U.S. government as the best it could do for its side in the diplomatic arena as things stand now.

This split in the OAU, a serious setback for the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa, is directly the fault of the two superpowers, who not only stirred up the war in the first place but used all sorts of pressure tactics to swing the vote their way.

Even before the OAU conference, there was a good deal of struggle in the U.S. ruling class over the course to follow in Angola. A lot of them think the Ford/Kissinger "don't-give-an-inch-to-the-Russians" approach hasn't worked out very well. The FNLA/UNITA forces are not doing so good militarily. Not one country has recognized their "government," while over 30 have recognized the MPLA's "People's Republic of Angola." And the open nature of U.S. military cooperation with South Africa is losing its support everywhere.

### Peaceloving Imperialists?

In calling for a change, some politicians and media mouthpieces are playing at being peaceloving Buddhas to win support: "We learned our lesson in Vietnam." Of course, these types are no more opposed to U.S. imperialism and military aggression than they ever were.

The only lesson they think they learned is "Don't back a sure loser." They fear that the kind of open U.S. intervention going on now only helps the Soviets and prevents the ruling class from adjusting to new conditions in southern Africa and shifting the means by which it maintains its control.

For years, U.S. imperialism has been the number one power in southern Africa, even more so than on the rest of the continent. Most African nations won formal independence in a big surge at the beginning of the 1960s, as Britain, France and Belgium gave up their colonial empires in the face of mass struggle in the colonies and secondarily pressure from the more powerful U.S. imperialists who wanted easier access to plunder Africa themselves. The Europeans, free of the problems of colonial administration, found it possible to still maintain some economic control after granting independence, but they did so as junior partner of U.S. imperialism.

The situation in the whole southern tip of Africa, however, was different. Instead of granting independence, the Portuguese, with the blessings of the Ameri-

Each superpower tries to dress its own Angola intervention up in a halo, and tries just as hard to rip the other side's halo off. The mutual exposures demonstrate that both are imperialist aggressors. Right, the Richmond News Leader sticks up for the U.S. Below, the revisionist Daily World does the same job for its Soviet masters.



MacNelly—Richmond News Leader



can ruling class, kept Angola and Mozambique as colonies. They sent in large numbers of white settlers to try and create a base for their continued rule. White capitalists in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) encouraged by the ruling class of Azania (South Africa) declared independence from Britain, but they did so in order to keep the Black majority in their countries, and in the South African colony of Namibia (South West Africa), under colonial style rule.

All of these reactionary, white supremacist regimes had the full support of the U.S. government, including economic aid, sale and grants of military equipment, and political backing in the U.N. And the U.S. capitalists benefitted tremendously, investing large sums of money in these countries. The U.S. is the main importer of their raw materials, agriculture, precious metals, gold, diamonds, oil, uranium and many others. 350 U.S. corporations have branches or subsidiaries in Azania (South Africa) alone, including many manufacturing plants.

This wealth, both in valuable raw materials and an average return on investment of over 15% per year, rests on the racist oppression and superexploitation of the African masses. South Africa's notorious *apartheid* system keeps blacks rigidly separate from whites, denies them all political rights, and forces them to work for a wage 80 to 90% lower than a white worker doing the same job.

Profitable as it is for U.S. imperialism, this oppression has given rise to resistance that will destroy it. Armed guerilla struggle for liberation broke out in 1961 in Angola, 1964 in Mozambique and 1967 in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia (South West Africa). In Azania (South Africa), a more developed and industrial country, most of the resistance has come from the working class in the form of demonstrations, strikes and union organizing—all of which are punishable by death.

These struggles directed hammer blows which battered the status quo in southern Africa. The most dramatic change has been the Portuguese surrender in late 1974 and the subsequent independence of Mozambique and Angola last year.

South Africa is worried sick by this collapse of reactionary governments on its northern flank, which were a buffer against the independent Black ruled nations of Africa. South African Prime Minister Vorster is even trying to force the white settler government in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) to negotiate some com-

promise with "responsible" Black leaders which will allow the masses of people some token political rights, before the growing liberation struggle there seizes power completely.

The handwriting is on the wall. The U.S. backed and controlled white supremacist governments face extinction and the U.S. imperialist hold on southern Africa with them. Losing their position in Mozambique and now maybe Angola is bad enough in itself, but South Africa is threatened and that's worse. There is over a billion dollars in U.S. capital invested in Azania (South Africa), more than in the rest of Africa combined, and the government is a major link in the U.S. worldwide "military defense perimeter."

And the advancing struggle of the masses is only one part of their problem. The Soviet Union has made big efforts to take advantage of these struggles and the changing situation. It keeps up ties with groups fighting for independence by lading out small amounts of cash and military aid, providing publicity and inviting young leaders to Moscow for "training." As the movements get closer to victory and genuine independence, the aid is stepped up in hope of continued Soviet influence. For example, the first Soviet heavy weapons and vehicles to appear in southern Africa were sent to the MPLA—after the Portuguese surrendered! A further advantage the New Tsars have is the respect the Soviet Union won when it was still a socialist economy. Today they cover their power bids with proclamations like "Aid to national liberation struggles is a Marxist-Leninist principle."

### U.S. Fights to Protect Its Plunder

Even the U.S. imperialists can see the value of posing as "friends" of national liberation movements, as they are now doing with the FNLA and UNITA. But their basic problems remain, and are typified by what's happening in Angola. Having backed the old order of Portuguese colonial oppression to the bitter end, they are awkward in passing themselves off as anti-colonialists. In fact, far from being able to break its ties to the old order, the U.S. government had to rely on the exposed and hated South African regime to help with the dirty work. In contrast, the Soviet Union has a lot more freedom to do what the U.S. did back in the early '60s when it was pushing farther into the rest of Africa, billing themselves as opponents of the old European colonialism and big supporters of independence.

With their position shaken, the U.S. monopolists are at each others' throats over how to salvage the situation. With precious little support for their aggression either here or around the world, even Ford has to claim to support "an African solution" to the war. Those who challenge his policies share his goal, an "African" regime subservient to U.S. interests. They are arguing, however, that the U.S. should pull out—meaning the government should either try to make some deal with the MPLA, if they can't beat it, or at least carry on its activities on a smaller scale and very secretly and let the USSR have "its Vietnam" so it will be shown up to be as bad as the U.S. If the present approach continues, they fear, the U.S. will sink its chances for salvaging neocolonies not only in Angola but the rest of the southern tip as well.

As the liberation struggles build in Zimbabwe, Namibia and Azania, this debate will continue and grow sharper. All the fine talk about "helping Africa against Russian colonialism" or "no more Vietnams" is aimed only at concealing the real question at issue—how best to stay on top of the masses in southern Africa and keep bleeding them. As U.S. aggression in Angola so graphically shows, these imperialist schemes can be carried out only at the expense of the people in southern Africa and the U.S. too. ■

# Crisis Hits Steel, Rank & File Organize

A year and a half ago the owners of the big steel companies never stopped talking about how bright the future was. The mills were churning out steel. The workers had been held down to a lousy contract. The no-strike no-fight I.W. Abel crew in the steel union headquarters was continuing its offensive on the minds and bodies of the workers by constantly preaching how the interests of the rank and file could best be served by serving the interests of the steel companies.

Even when the heavy layoffs started coming down in the auto industry, the steel bosses said, "Don't worry, steel is different." The company's agents in the press cried out, "Steel—bright ray of hope on a dim horizon."

The leadership of the United Steelworkers of America chimed in with an article in their paper entitled "Steel—an Island of Stability." According to the USW leadership, workers should give thanks for having a job to the leadership's policy of company-union cooperation and the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) that gave away the workers' right-to-strike until 1980.

## "Island of Stability" Sinks

But no sooner had this issue of *Steel Labor* on the "economic stability" come out, when heavy layoffs came down in the industry. Everywhere you looked thousands upon thousands were being thrown into the streets, while the ones left inside were pushed still harder. In the South Works of U.S. Steel in Chicago the company put up signs congratulating the workers for record production in September. In October almost everyone in these departments was laid off. At U.S. Steel Fairless Works in eastern Pennsylvania, a worker was sent home for refusing to take his shovel to the bathroom with him to do some work on the way.

The bright ray of hope has turned into the general gloom of the economic crisis. The steel companies pushed workers out the door blaming everyone except the capitalist class for the problems. Saving their profits was much more important than the workers, their "partners in production," being able to feed their families.

*Steel Labor* didn't have much to say either. In fact they didn't run an article saying that there were any layoffs in the industry for a year after the "island of economic security" article. Then, of course, they didn't have much to say about the struggle being built against the layoffs. So much for the benefits of company-union cooperation.

## Building a Movement of the Rank and File

For rank and file steelworkers the future has always been wrapped up with fighting the steel companies. That goes for so-called good times and bad times, although these days it's hard to distinguish between the two.

Hardly any rank and file workers like the steel companies. Very few think that union-company cooperation policies like the ENA are super ideas, and everybody knows they haven't brought good times. But for the rank and file the real question hinges on whether they can fight and win against the steel companies.

Steelworkers have never stopped fighting the companies, but like other workers, the struggle has had its high and low points.

Right now the rank and file is beginning to build a big and powerful movement throughout the industry. It is a movement that says steel workers won't starve for steel company profits; a movement that fights for what workers need, and not only for what the companies say they will give; a movement that demands unity among the ranks, between basic, non-ferrous, and fabrication, between the employed and unemployed, and among the ranks of the entire U.S. working class.

Two events are good examples of this movement. One is the struggle that is now developing in the



Steelworkers are organizing to fight the attacks the companies are coming down with. Above, steelworkers and supporters in Seattle hold a march against Bethlehem's attempts to cut crane operator crews from six workers to five.

Bethlehem Steel Company and the other is the publication of a nationwide newspaper, called *The Steelworker*, which will be a big help in building the fight against the steel companies.

Over the last few years the profits of the major steel companies have been going down. The crisis of over production has hit hard because of the general economic crisis, especially the downturn in auto and construction. It is also true that in this country the basic steel plants are generally old and use machinery that does not make use of the most modern techniques. As a result steel companies from Japan and Europe, using more modern plants, have been eating into the U.S. markets.

## Bethlehem Intensifies Nationwide Attack

The steel companies are trying to "solve" this profit squeeze by productivity—driving fewer workers harder and harder at the same old machines, and by wage cuts. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation is a good example of this. They are the second largest steel producer in the country and in recent months have launched a new wave of attacks on workers across the country. A growing struggle is developing against this.

The attack at Bethlehem Steel has come down especially in its threat to close its four fabrication plants across the country. Fabrication is the industry that processes basic steel. Generally wages are much lower than in the basic steel plants, speedup is even more intense, and a lot of struggle is jumping off. The "problem" that Bethlehem has is its four fabricating plants operate under the same contract as its basic steel plants, while many of its fabrication competitors pay their workers less. Bethlehem is also afraid that its "problem" could be further compounded if the struggle in fabrication plants sparks off heavier struggle in its basic steel plants.

Bethlehem's solution to the problem was to present the 3,000 workers in its fabrication plants with an ultimatum. They must take an immediate \$1 an hour pay cut, plus a freeze on wages over the next couple of years. This would mean an over \$3 wage cut over the life of the present contract and break the fabrication locals out of the basic steel contract. Otherwise, Bethlehem threatened to close all four plants and farm the work out, or possibly just reopen the plants under a new name without the current union contract.

Workers in all four fabrication shops refused to choose between poison and the noose and told the company to go to hell with their offer. In Pottstown, Pa., where the largest shop is located, workers have begun to organize against the threatened shutdown. *The Steelworker* ran an article on the struggle calling for resolutions of support for these fabrication locals and some of these have already been received by the workers.

Workers at the Bethlehem Steel Lackawanna Plant in upstate New York have been faced by a series of attacks. Bethlehem worked out a deal with the local government to maintain the plant in return for some tax breaks, and then they laid off so many workers that only 7,000 were left. In 1970 the plant had 20,000 workers. In addition the company began to systematically violate the union contract, refusing to honor grievances and letting foremen work in place of those laid off. Faced with these attacks the men began to refuse to work when foremen were work-

ing and backed up safety violations by walking off the job. The local union backed up these actions and requested strike authorizations from the International. As of this date no one has heard a word from I.W. Abel, the union president, but in any case struggle continues to break out in the plant.

## Fighting For Every Job

Also in the Beth Steel Mill in Seattle, Washington where there were already over 200 workers laid off, Bethlehem attempted to cut the operator crew size from 6 to 5 on each shift. The workers responded to this with a three day walkout in August and with a recent march and rally against the layoffs and crew reductions. The workers there have formed a committee of employed and unemployed steelworkers to build the fight against the company.

The company has also come down hard in the Beth Steel Sparrows Point, Maryland plant, the scene of some heavy battles and wildcats in the coke ovens. Layoffs reached into almost every department and speedup has increased. With many people laid off, the workers took on an International union bylaw, which removes workers from "good standing" status, when they have been laid off a year or more. A resolution against this blatant pro-company bylaw was unanimously passed by the Sparrows Point locals, but union leadership has done little to actually unite the employed and unemployed to fight both the bylaw and the company attacks.

This fight, however, has been taken up among the rank and file. A petition opposing the bylaw and putting forth the need to unite together to fight was circulated and the struggle has advanced off of this. *The Steelworker* carried both an article on the events in the Sparrows Point local and a call for all steelworkers in all divisions of the union to oppose the existence of the "unemployed" bylaw.

## Newsletter Uniting Battles

A problem up until now has been that many of these struggles are isolated from each other and the company has spread lies in the vacuum. But now the new newspaper, *The Steelworker*, is playing an important role in communicating details of the struggle in Bethlehem and in calling for support from all steelworkers.

The idea for such a newspaper sprang up when rank and file forces, including some who are members of the Revolutionary Communist Party, united to hold a picket line and rally at the last USW constitutional convention in Atlantic City, N.J. The event, which called together about 250 people was called to voice opposition to the sellout ENA no-strike deal. In building for the picketline, steelworkers in the East and some in the Midwest decided it would be a real help in the struggle if there could be better communication between the different mills throughout the country.

The first issue of *The Steelworker* is filled with articles from around the country—articles written by rank and file groups, individuals, or taken from local working class newspapers. Articles that talk about slowdowns being built, wildcats, strikes, and demonstrations and rallies against speedup and job eliminations. There are also editorials and calls to action

Continued on page 11

## Coalfield Wildcats Continue

# Miller Launches Wave Of Attacks on Miners

Across the coalfields, wildcat strikes continue as miners fight firings, new absentee policies, violations of job bidding procedures, shift rotation and other abuses. Federal judges turn out the injunctions levying huge fines. A U.S. Steel local in Gary, West Virginia, struck with an \$88,000 fine already against them. Now the fines total over \$125,000 with all union dues going directly to the company. Local officers and committeemen (who like all United Mine Worker local officers work at the mine) are serving without salary or expense money for time spent on union business.

The court injunctions, huge fines, increased firings, and the rising numbers of accidents and deaths, all point to the tremendous need for a strong, fighting miners movement to take on and beat back the attacks by the companies and the government. But in August when rank and file workers, 80,000 strong, came out on strike to demand the Right to Strike and Stop the Injunctions, what was the response of the officials sitting at the top of the United Mine Workers of America (UMW)? They jumped on the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) bandwagon, landing beside Federal Judge K.K. Hall, and screamed, "Go back to work! You don't have permission to strike!"

Right after the strike, the BCOA filed a court suit demanding that the union come up with a plan to stop the strike and to discipline its members. While UMW President Arnold Miller put up a phony front, ranting how the BCOA has no right to interfere in union affairs, that same week he issued the 10 Point Program containing the same policies the BCOA suit demands.

### Miller's 10 Points

The 10 Point Program is a vicious attack on the miners and a white flag of surrender to the companies. While much of what's outlined in the 10 Points isn't new, it is a direct statement of the intent of the International officers to suppress the growing struggle and organization of the miners. After running down a list of causes of the wildcats blaming the men, they add "...it should also be noted that many wildcat strikes are caused by the coal companies themselves," when they violate the contract.

Point 2 calls for a "cooling-off period" whenever the men are ready to walk out. The International hopes that if the "mine communications committee" established in the '74 contract (made up of local union officials and company men) talks around the bush for a few days, the men will not strike.

In Point 4, the International orders the miners to



The wildcat strikes Arnold Miller is out to stop have won major victories. Above, miners vote at Drawdy Falls, W. Va., to continue the 1974 strike against the energy freeze.

end the "first shift out—first shift back" tradition. This practice was developed by the miners to help thwart company attempts to divide workers on different shifts. It strengthens the men's ability to force concessions from the company before returning to work. The International's attempt to outlaw "shift out—shift back" is a real attack on the unity of the men, saying in effect that whatever affects men on one shift is no concern of the others.

Points 3, 5 and 7 outline the tasks of local, district and International Union officers whenever rank and file miners walk out: the local president is supposed to call a special meeting; the district officers are told to notify the International Union of the strike and send an official to the special local meeting to order the strikers back to work immediately; and the International's Office of Contract Administration is to record the strike in a book and send a telegram to the striking local telling the local president to get the men back to work. *The issues in the strike aren't important, only getting the company's production and profits rolling again!*

Point 6 forbids International or District union funds to be used to defend miners charged with shutting down mines they don't work at, calling it "stranger picketing." They want to confine struggle to one mine, as if miners weren't brothers in one local, one union and one class. Workers organized unions in the first place to fight together for their common interests.

Point 6 also says District funds won't be used to pay fines or damages levied against locals for contempt of court injunctions or "unauthorized" work stoppages.

### Point 8: The Big Stick

The big stick in the UMW International Executive Board's (IEB) attack on the strike movement states they would bring to trial militant miners active in the anti-injunction/right-to-strike wildcat for willfully defying the orders of the International to end the strike. Rumors and threats of disciplinary action and "investigation" by union officials against miners have plagued the union membership in recent months. Instead of going by the union oath, "Never knowingly wrong a brother or see a brother wronged," the IEB is going all out to attack members who lead the men in struggle, and to divide the membership from one another along whatever grounds they can think of: where you work, what your job is, what your shift is, how old you are. However, despite all efforts of the union misleaders to scare the miners out of fighting the company and turn brother against brother, the men continue to unite in struggle. This was shown by all the recent wildcats with many locals still honoring first shift out—first shift back.

In their policy statement on wildcats, which includes the 10 Points, the International officers threaten to revoke autonomy for union locals or districts, one of the very reforms the rank and file won when they put Miller in office. They threaten to bring to trial local, district and International officers, and in special instances rank and file members when the International declares "martial law." They parrot company phrases about young men causing strikes, or ignorance and lack of faith, or "outsiders." *They see the miners as the problem, not the companies.*

### Contract Is No Truce

The IEB overwhelmingly adopted the new policies because, even though they constantly fight among themselves, they're united in trying to defend the companies from the struggles of the miners. With such an outright attack on the rank and file, the hacks have to put on a show of sounding like union men in order to be useful to the companies and that's what Point 1, the "contract education program" is all about. *The contract training is the only way the 10 Points proposes to deal with the companies—learn the contract, file a grievance.* It acts like the companies are "reasonable men" who want to do what's right. Miners are supposed to put their faith in the grievance procedure while the duty of local officers and committeemen is to be "at the front line in prevention of unauthorized work stoppages."

This whole strategy for defending the men is a phony deal: telling the miners to learn how to read a contract! Miners need to know the contract to help defend hard-won rights. But as one miner said, "It doesn't matter if you memorize the contract and can recite it like a tape recorder. The companies will still break it." This voices the feeling of thousands of miners who've learned from daily experience at the mines that the only talk com-

panies listen to is backed up by the determined struggle of the rank and file.

To put Point 1 into effect, a pilot project costing \$19,000 will begin in Charleston this month for District 17 local officers. \$19,000 of union dues being spent to train local officers to break strikes and to discourage the men from fighting the company!

Miller & Co. wave the contract around saying we must restore "labor peace" in the coalfields. But as one miner said recently, "The only time there's labor peace is when the companies are stepping on us; and none of us is about to put up with that!"

No contract, even the best, is any kind of cure-all to our problems. Sections of the present contract clearly reflect some of the gains miners have made through this struggle—gains like seniority rights. And sections of the contract presently strengthen the companies' hands in frustrating our struggle—for example all the restrictions on the right to strike. Even the best contract language will be ignored or turned around by the company—if they can get away with it. By the same token the working class is not bound by the rotten terms that may be in any contract, if we are strong enough to break through its restrictions. Black lung benefits were not provided for in the contract. The contract didn't provide gas during the shortage. Almost daily, miners are forced to strike, although the contract forbids striking during its duration.

A contract is not a truce—it doesn't represent an end to fighting in the constant war between the working class and the rich ownership class. But a contract is an indication of how much strength we have at the time it's signed. And for its duration it sets, to an extent, the terms of the struggle.

### Miners' Determination Grows

Miners learned a lot from the reform movement of the 60s and early 70s. They didn't let Tony Boyle's crew stop them from taking on the companies. It has also become clear in the past three years that top union officers, whether they were "reform candidates" or not, can't be relied on to act in the interests of the rank and file. Miller is running faster and faster to follow in the footsteps of George Meany, I.W. Abel (United Steelworkers of America), and others, as he desperately tries to turn the UMW into a machine to control the rank and file.

On the other hand, rank and file organization is growing across the coalfields as miners get more determined than ever to keep the initiative in their hands in the struggle against the companies. The wildcat strikes continue, and currently rank and file miners have launched a petition campaign against the 10 Points and for the Right to Strike to help build their movement. The fight against the 10 Point Program is part of this movement because workers cannot and will not allow the union they fought and died for to be used as a club against them. ■



## Steel...

### Continued from page 10

in support of particular struggles, like the fabrication locals' struggle at Beth and the fight against the "unemployed" bylaw.

At this point much of the struggle against the steel companies is still scattered and isolated. The key question for the rank and file still hinges on whether the steel companies can be fought and beaten. As the Bethlehem Steel examples point out, this struggle is growing in the face of vicious company attacks but there is a need for a common program of struggle to develop through the consultation and actions of the workers.

The beginnings of this program and unified action are being forged in battles like those at Bethlehem, in the fight for every job, and in the resistance to all forms of company attacks throughout the industry. And as these struggles become stronger and better organized and as lessons of these struggles are spread, they will deal sharper blows to the enemy. ■

## Teamster Sellout in the Works

# Fitz: "Strikes Are Bad for Business"

At midnight, March 31, the Teamster contract covering 400,000 over-the-road (long distance) truckers expires. This will be one of the largest contracts to be negotiated this year. But despite the importance of this contract for the Teamsters and the whole working class, and a rising militancy around current attacks on Teamster drivers, most of the rank and file has been kept in the dark about the negotiations. They are treated to an occasional publicity barrage about Fitzsimmons' high sounding demands, but are told nothing about the battle shaping up and their leadership's wheelings and dealings. The leadership of the Teamster union appears intent on selling out the contract without a national strike and then trying to clamp down if any local wildcats occur, before they spread across the country.

Many workers think the Teamsters union is very different from most other unions, although this has diminished somewhat in the last few years. Its leadership has a reputation, for many, of being fighters and even though some are crooks, they are thought of as crooks who take care of their own.

Actually this is not true. It is not true for the hundreds of thousands of Teamsters who are not truck drivers, many who work under "sweetheart" agreements worked out between the Teamster bureaucrats and management. Nor is it true for the over-the-road drivers, whose contract is considered the union's showpiece. Teamster drivers are up against the economic crisis too and their union officials practice the same class collaboration as the leaders of other unions.

Going into this contract working conditions for truck drivers have been deteriorating. This is due to the economic crisis and its effect on the trucking industry. There was once a high rate of profit in trucking and a huge number of trucking companies sprang up. This situation existed during the time that the overall economy was growing in the '50s and early '60s. The trucking industry grew especially fast, prying an ever increasing share of the nation's freight from the railroads. This growth was helped along by the whole ruling class which in essence subsidized trucking companies by spending billions to build the interstate highway system.

These high-profit conditions of the trucking industry, more than the "fighting leadership" of Hoffa and other Teamster leaders, help explain the relatively high wages of the over-the-road drivers. When there was a struggle the trucking companies were able to give up a little more, especially if in return the Teamster union officials would control the rank and file and provide them with a stable workforce. At the same time the Teamsters were able to throw some muscle around to win these concessions because of their powerful position with the ability to hurt much of the economy. But this heyday of the trucking industry, in which the Teamster leadership was able to build up an image of tough fighters who got things done, is now fading fast.

### Situation Changes

The present economic crisis has meant huge increases in the price for diesel fuel, tires, and oil. At the same time the fall in production, hitting especially auto and steel, has meant there is less freight to haul. Since the freight rate has not increased much, many companies have been suffering losses of profits.

The result is that competition between different trucking companies has greatly intensified and the trend towards monopolization has increased tremendously as thousands of smaller companies go bankrupt and larger companies buy them out.

What this means is that trucking companies have been trying to put the screws to their drivers, laying some off, trying to get more work out of those remaining, attempting in various ways to get around contract agreements or government regulations to keep their profits up.

Layoffs have always been a constant threat, given the instability of the trucking industry. But today thousands of experienced drivers who have been laid off cannot find work. And unlike workers in auto, rubber and other industries, Teamster drivers do not receive any kind of SUB pay while on layoff. This is an especially big threat to the owner-operators, who are faced with thousands of dollars in bills for their rigs every year, whether they work or not.

Trucking companies have used layoffs and buy-outs of smaller companies as an opportunity to attack

seniority. A man with 19 years seniority at one company, for instance, may find himself at the bottom of the list, below men with one year, at the company that bought out his previous company. This means older drivers may drive the worst routes and face a constant threat of layoffs.

Truck companies are also trying their best to get around certain work rules in the contract in order to drive conditions for truckers down. When one company buys out another it can simply change the operation so drivers might have to start at any hour, or work any day of the week—at the company's whim.

Owner operators, men who drive their own truck, have been especially under attack as competition intensifies. Although these drivers are small businessmen, many of them belong to the Teamsters union

and they make up about a third of the long-distance drivers. They are going bankrupt at a fast clip, despite certain minor concessions made by the government following the truckers' strikes two years ago. And contrary to the bourgeoisie's attempt to paint a rosy and romantic picture of the lives of these owner-operators as the "last American cowboys," it is estimated that only 10 to 30 per cent last in business.

This situation is being exploited by a number of trucking companies who hire these owner operators to truck for them at a lower rate than called for in the national Teamster contract. This not only saves the company money but helps foster conflict between owner operators and other Teamster drivers. The Teamster leadership is doing very little about this or other violations of the contract.

### Class Collaboration

This is in line with the way the Teamster bureaucrats operate. Despite the current attacks on truck drivers they are planning to sell out the upcoming contract to management without even staging a national strike. This is clear from the way they are talking. The President of the Teamsters, Frank Fitzsimmons, has made the statement that "We have never had a national strike in this union and I will do anything possible to ward off any work stoppage." On the company side, William McIntyre, President of

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## British Chrysler 'Saved' At Workers Expense

In January the British government announced a plan to "save" the Chrysler Corporation, which had threatened to close down all its plants in Britain. This would have resulted in 25,000 British auto workers being thrown into the streets and the layoff of 70,000 British workers in other industries.

In the U.S., the UAW, which has been urging its members to work hard to save Chrysler from collapse, made it clear that it welcomed Chrysler closing in Britain, since it might mean more jobs for American workers. How should the working class in this country view this threatened closing and the fact that Chrysler is nearly bankrupt?

Like other capitalist companies Chrysler operates for one purpose only—to make profit by exploiting the working class and pushed by this drive, they pursue their purpose everywhere they can. About ten years ago they bought seven plants in Britain hoping to get a cut of the British auto market. They milked these plants for all they were worth, investing almost nothing. Now faced with losses in profit and a shrinking share of the British market, they threatened to dump these plants and switch production to France.

Chrysler whipped out for the British the same "we've got to increase our productivity" line they give to U.S. workers. In France Chrysler has newer plants, producing 588,000 cars with 31,000 workers in 1973 compared to only 265,000 cars with 29,000 British workers.

Chrysler used the threat of its shutdown to blackmail the British government into agreeing to a scheme allegedly to "save British jobs." The British government will give Chrysler \$146 million in cash and several million more in loans and they guarantee to pick up the company's losses through 1979. In return Chrysler agrees, instead of closing in Britain, to invest \$20 million and begin manufacturing in Britain the car that it now makes in France.

### "New Industrial Strategy"

But this "plan" won't help British workers. It is part of the overall attack on the working class by the British capitalists. They call this attack the "new industrial strategy," which means a wage ceiling, a national speedup campaign, and a giveaway of government money to capitalist enterprises. In the name of "saving Britain," and saving British jobs, they aim to save one thing—their capitalist rule.

The heart of the plan for the Chrysler workers is

throwing one third of the workers into the street and forcing the rest to pick up the extra work. If the Chrysler workers didn't agree, the British government warned, it would withdraw its "offer" to Chrysler and the plants would be shut down immediately.

These kinds of attacks by the British government and companies like Chrysler have led to tremendous resistance by workers all over Britain. In the government owned steel plants, layoffs have been met by repeated job actions. Railroad workers have staged strikes and mass marches to defend their jobs. Auto workers have been among the most militant in the past.

An example of the kind of struggle being waged by British workers was a huge march of 20,000 held on November 26 under the slogan "No return to the '30s—defend the right to work." This march was held in the face of the opposition of the national trade union leadership.

Even though a majority of Chrysler workers voted to accept the "plan" at the unions urging, three plants voted to take "industrial action"—a strike or a sit-in—if they don't get better layoff benefits and a stretch-out of the layoffs.

This struggle of British workers, we are told by Chrysler and the UAW, is to be feared and opposed by American auto workers—as a threat to their jobs. But it is clear from the facts that workers in this country and workers in Britain face the same capitalist enemy and the same kind of plans to save their profits and their rule. In the case of Chrysler, which has over 46% of its production outside the U.S., workers in the U.S. and Britain are even up against the same company. And although Chrysler is not yet talking about closing all its U.S. plants, it is considering closing the Jefferson Ave. plant in Detroit and the Belvedere, Ill. assembly plant and pushing the same speedup, layoffs and other attacks on workers in both countries.

While it tries to increase its exploitation of the working class in different countries, Chrysler tells its workers they should help save the company by working harder. The worker's jobs, they say, are dependent upon the wealth of the company. At the same time they try to set American workers against British workers and British workers against French. The UAW leadership faithfully tails right along behind this telling American workers they should be glad if Chrysler did close in Britain and threw 95,000 workers into the street.

### International Struggle

But from its own experience the working class sees that increased profits for companies do not mean things get better. In auto right now the companies' efforts to recover their profits has meant a big increase in work loads and continued high unemployment. New capital becomes an even heavier chain around our neck as companies use it to invest in new machinery to push more speedup and layoffs.

The working class in Britain and the U.S. have no interest in common with companies like Chrysler. We face a common struggle against them. Any blow by British workers which helps weaken Chrysler helps strengthen American workers in their ability to deal with Chrysler and the entire monopoly capitalist class and vice versa. Contrary to what Chrysler and the leaders of the UAW say, the struggles of the British workers are an inspiration to American workers and are part of a battle shoulder to shoulder with us and workers worldwide. ■

# History Punches Holes in JFK Myth

For years the press and TV in this country built up the Kennedy legend. Now that legend is being torn apart piece by piece. Congressional investigating committees and the media are releasing a flood of stories about his role in CIA assassinations, bugging civil rights leaders, and his energetic personal life.

Kennedy was the last president who didn't end his term in office scorned and hated by a huge percentage of the American people. In part this is because he was in office so short a time, before the full consequences of his policies came home to roost. But more importantly, it was due to the objective conditions of U.S. capitalism at that time and the state of the mass movement that the bourgeoisie had some success in presenting Kennedy as a kind and noble "savior" of the people." Since then the capitalists have continued to promote his legend, in order to convince people that there's hope for capitalism yet if only another such man comes along.

The political infighting between the politicians and the various camps of capitalists they represent has now forced those who were covered with mud by Watergate to in turn show how Kennedy was as rotten as any who came after him. The deepening economic crisis and the political crisis developing from it have greatly reduced the maneuvering room enjoyed by the bourgeoisie in Kennedy's day. From Watergate to their Vietnam debacle and today's massive unemployment, there has been a more open show of the vicious character of imperialist rule. But these conditions also make it as important as ever to them that the masses of people be enslaved by the myth of a savior who can make the system work.

In 1961, when Kennedy became president, U.S. imperialism was still top dog in the capitalist world but it was faced with the same problems that have driven it deeper into crisis since.

The U.S. working class movement, which had grown into a mighty force in the 1930s and '40s, was badly beaten back in the 1950s. Its leadership, the old Communist Party, had become completely revisionist and isolated (in fact, it confined itself mostly to enthusiastic support for Kennedy). With most of the unions now safely in the hands of the capitalists' pet "labor statesmen," strikes hit a new low in 1961. Nevertheless, even through U.S. capitalism's best years, exploitation and oppression continued to breed resistance. The rising Black liberation struggle in the South was the tip of the

iceberg of a growing feeling among the masses of working people that somehow things in this country had to be changed. It was largely in relation to this movement that the "Kennedy image" was formed.

In comparison to the snarling racism of George Wallace and Strom Thurmond, Kennedy was put forward as the great liberal promoter of civil rights for Black people. He was portrayed as a great and powerful man "who understood." After all, as a Catholic he himself had known discrimination. (Of course, his family's millions had helped some.)

But the blunt fact is that Kennedy made concessions only because the capitalist class he was faithfully representing was forced by the powerful mass struggle of the time to grant certain rights or see things get out of hand for them. Nothing makes this clearer than the fact that it was under Lyndon Johnson—not Kennedy—that the largest concessions to this struggle were made. Under LBJ, the most sweeping civil rights legislation was passed. This, of course, doesn't mean that this much despised fool was a "finer man" than Kennedy. It just shows that independent of who was in office, the bourgeoisie had been forced to give in on certain points, while working to sabotage the struggle that had produced these victories.

## Source of the "Myth"

It is a much practiced method of the bourgeoisie when it has to grant concessions to rush to portray its spokesmen as the leaders of the struggle and the reason for its progress. They do this not just to "take credit" in the abstract, but to put themselves in a better position to sabotage the struggles to come. Taking credit for what the mass struggle has forced out of them, then using that credit as a weapon to attack the struggle—this is the method of the ruling class. It is the source of the Kennedy myth and the reason it was built. The same was done with Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was made out to be responsible for social security and unemployment insurance in the 1930s when he conceded some things as the working class had risen demanding jobs and was threatening to tear apart the capitalist system.

Kennedy used his fame and power to attack the mass struggles and to try to keep them within the limits the capitalists could tolerate. To do this he used dual tactics. He beckoned with the carrot and threatened openly and behind the scenes with the stick. He "supported" the 1963 civil rights march of hundreds of thousands only to promote leadership like King, A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin that would keep it within safe bounds, to remove more militant leaders, and to turn what had begun as a militant demonstration against oppression into a march for some legislation he was sponsoring.

Kennedy's wiretaps on Martin Luther King come as no surprise. He used the resources of the government to make sure that "responsible Negro leaders" moved into leadership of the civil rights movement. And he didn't hesitate to bug their phones and apply other pressures to make sure they remained "responsible." He declared that "a quick demonstration in the streets is not the immediate answer," because the problems of Black people "must, in the final analysis, be settled by Congress and the Executive Branch." And while the government put on a public show of "protection" for civil rights workers and Black people generally in the South, that somehow never did protect them from beatings and murder federal agents were trying to sabotage the movement and egg on and aid such forces as the Klan.

## Man of Peace?

Kennedy's image has also been that of a man of peace, firm in his defense of America but flexible and fair in his dealings with people around the world. Kennedy was the man who many think would have kept us out of Vietnam. He inaugurated the Peace Corps and the Alliance for Progress, which were called programs to help people "get on their own feet."

Kennedy's reputation for success in dealing with the Soviets—in combining firmness with being reasonable—was also the product of the world situation at the time. In the years after World War 2, U.S. foreign policy had been based on the "Cold War"—"containment" of the Soviet Union and consolidation of U.S. influence in Europe and the newly independent countries. But by the early sixties the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union had been consolidated and there was no so-

cialist country to contain there, just an imperialist rival to be checked. Since the U.S. capitalists were by far the stronger at that point, Kennedy had some success in calling Khrushchev's bluff and bullying the Russians into backing down on a couple of occasions. And the capitalists were very willing to cooperate with the Soviets when they began to push "peaceful transition to socialism"—meaning abandoning the struggle for revolution.

The U.S. had posed as an anti-colonialist force, only too happy to see the European countries lose their colonies, while the U.S. moved in to replace them. But now wars of national liberation aimed at the U.S. were breaking out in Africa and Southeast Asia. And in Latin America Cuba had been yanked from the U.S. grip. Trying to stop and control national liberation struggles quickly became the main problem for the U.S. ruling class. The very nature of imperialism forces the capitalist governments into military measures, wars of aggression and intervention to protect their markets and investments.

It was not different for Kennedy. He just left the scene before the major defeats that hit the U.S. under Johnson and Nixon began to unfold. It was only his assassination that shielded him from the hatred and opposition that developed for his successors and their massive military efforts to crush liberation struggles. He was actually the initiator of many of these efforts. He okayed the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, sent troops into the Congo and through the CIA he assassinated Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba. At the time of his death he had sent over 17,000 troops to Vietnam, the beginning of the direct U.S. troop involvement and a ten year attempt to defeat the Vietnamese people.

And it soon became obvious to thousands of Peace Corps volunteers and the people of the countries where they went, that these noble sounding programs were an attempt to win the American people to support imperialist expansion and a cover for sending CIA agents and other infiltrators to foreign countries.

On top of all this—as the icing on the cake—the bourgeoisie tried to warm our hearts with a picture of Kennedy as an honest and decent man. Too rich—and principled—to take a bribe; a good father and husband; the kind of a man many people were proud to hang a picture of on their wall.

Now the same media that helped create the Kennedy image tells us that this "martyred" president himself had many other men assassinated, that he shared a "close personal friend" with a Mafia chieftain and that his extra-marital activities made Don Juan look like a celibate monk. The picture of the Kennedys as the Holy Family has disappeared.

JFK's family life, too, was perfectly suited to the class he served. For the capitalist class, even their families are based, as the *Communist Manifesto* says "on capital, on private gain." Kennedy's wife didn't even bother to play the martyr's wife's role for long. She sold herself to the highest bidder, Aristotle Onassis, in a marriage that was a pure and open business deal—complete with a written contract. She got money and her own personal life; he got access to new and important business connections through her. And JFK promoted his public career by publicizing his family life, while he pursued his own pleasures.

Of course, Kennedy's crimes and degeneracy are matched only by the crimes and degeneracy of those of his class who are now exposing all this. The whole show from beginning to end has the stench of a rotting class of decaying and dying rulers.

## Still Trying to Promote Noble Saviors

As president, Kennedy was chief executive for U.S. monopoly capitalism. His actions were dictated by the necessities of the U.S. capitalist class at that time. The political tools he used, demagoguery and outright lies, combined with force and the threat of force when necessary, have long been the backbone of capitalist rule. All his "covert action" in politics and his personal life were well known to his ruling class associates, some of whom now think they can advance their own interest by these revelations.

But even as their crisis and their squabbles over it lead to more open revelations about Kennedy and other American presidents, the bourgeoisie needs as much as ever to promote the illusion that "a good man" can reform the country and give the masses of people what they demand and what capitalism is increasingly unable to deliver.

They will certainly send forth new "heroes," new condescending saviours to try to unite the people behind the ruling class and its promises and lies. As the working class' struggle moves forward, it is important to expose not only the hypocrisy of the politicians who do the capitalists' bidding, but also to expose and build struggle against the capitalists' class rule.

Today most people rate politicians lower than burglars and muggers for honesty and integrity. It is important to unite with that understanding and broaden it to expose the class rule of the capitalists whom they represent, and the fact that it is in the workers' own hands that the future lies, in order to prepare the working class to overthrow them. ■

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# Chou En-lai...

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aries. In addition, the ultra-"left" line led to fighting only fixed positional battles, and to political mistakes, including muddling the democratic and socialist stages of the Chinese revolution, thus failing to win allies for revolution. As a result of the consolidation of these wrong lines in the Party, the masses and the Party suffered serious setbacks including the loss of 90% of the Red Army.

## The Long March

In October, 1934, the Red Army embarked on the Long March, an accomplishment unparalleled in history, in which the Red Army travelled six thousand miles over incredibly difficult terrain, fighting continuously. The Long March was forced on the Party by the disastrous losses caused by the opportunist line. It was also necessary in order for the Party to reach northern China where it would be in a position to battle the Japanese imperialists who were stepping up their campaign to conquer China. The March was proposed by Mao and Chou.

During the Long March a conference of leading members of the Chinese Communist Party was called by Chou En-lai during a brief rest from the fighting at Tsunyi. The collapse of the base areas and the serious losses incurred in the early stages of the Long March required the Party to establish a correct political line. The establishment of a correct line at that crucial juncture was a life and death question on which the fate of the Chinese revolution for many years depended.

Mao Tse-tung led the struggle against the ultra-"left" line that had dominated the Party leadership. Chou En-lai vigorously supported Mao Tsetung and criticized the line of the leading group of the Party of which he was a part, showing the communist attitude of being willing to make self criticism to correct errors and always putting the interests of the masses of people and the success of the revolution in the first place. The Tsunyi Conference established Mao Tsetung as the leader of the Party. Chou En-lai was made political commissar of the army.

## Sian Incident

After the Red Army arrived in northern China and established its headquarters at Yenan, the Chinese revolution entered a new period. As Mao pointed out the main task confronting the Chinese people, after the Japanese invasion, was to struggle to defeat Japanese aggression against China. The vanguard role of the Party, the necessity to adjust tactics and strategy depending on the relationship of forces and the different tasks of the revolution at different stages, is clearly shown in the famous Sian incident, in which Chou En-lai played an important role.

The Sian Incident took place in 1936. Sian was headquarters of a KMT army under the leadership of the "Young Marshall" Chang Hsueh-liang. The CPC struggled to achieve an alliance with the Sian forces to jointly fight against Japan. Chou En-lai was sent to negotiate with the Young Marshall. Gradually the KMT army was won over to the united front against Japan. When Chiang Kai-shek, who was leading the war against the Red Army, made a personal inspection tour of Sian he was kidnapped by junior officers of



Chou En-lai always kept close ties to the masses of people. Above, Chou helps in the construction of the Ming Tombs Reservoir in 1958.

the KMT, who had every intention of executing him.

The Communist Party of China would, of course, have liked nothing better than to make Chiang pay for his crimes. Chou himself had an \$80,000 reward placed on his head by Chiang. But the Party leadership summed up that killing Chiang would be a political mistake, however much he deserved it. This was true even though the advanced section of the Chinese masses, especially the workers in the cities who remembered Chiang's bloody assaults and suffered under KMT tyranny, would have supported it.

The Party leadership correctly summed up that the broad masses of Chinese people wanted to fight Japanese aggression and would support the CPC call for a united front of all classes and parties opposed to Japan. Chou was sent to negotiate with the Young Marshall and with the rebelling officers who had seized Chiang. Chiang was released.

The policies of the Party and their successful implementation by Chou and others during the Sian incident led to great advances in the Chinese revolution, by galvanizing the broad masses to demand a united front against Japan. At the time of the Sian incident the Long March had been completed, but the forces of the CPC and the Red Army were still weak and small. By persevering in carrying out the Party's line of a war of resistance against Japan, the Party unleashed the revolutionary initiative of hundreds of millions, once again showing that when the Party boldly carries out the correct political line, and the masses come to grasp it as their own, the tremendous enthusiasm of the masses for revolution is released.

## Working to Isolate Chiang Kai-shek

From then until the surrender of Japan in 1945 the CPC directed its blows at the Japanese, winning great victories and liberating large sections of China. At the same time they had to struggle against Chiang Kai-shek who blockaded and attacked the base areas

even while professing unity against the Japanese. Chou En-lai was sent to the KMT capital at various times to negotiate and succeeded in winning many allies to the cause of the Chinese revolution and in further isolating the Chiang clique.

After the defeat of Japan the Chinese revolution faced another crucial turning point—should the CPC surrender its arms and base areas and submit to the mercy of Chiang Kai-shek or should the struggle continue for final victory in the new democratic revolution aimed at freeing China from feudalism and imperialism? Some leaders of the Party lost faith in the revolution and favored capitulation to Chiang and the KMT.

Once again Mao Tsetung and the Party leadership of which Chou was a part formulated the line necessary for the advance of the revolution: guard every bullet, fight for every inch of land. This line was based on correctly summing up the sentiments of the masses of people who had sacrificed greatly during the war against Japan, and having been roused to struggle, wanted to see the liberation of China, not simply the return to the semi-feudal, semi-colonial conditions under KMT rule.

But the masses of people also wanted peace, and it was necessary to show them that it was Chiang and the imperialists who forced civil war on China. Chou helped to carry out the line and policies of the CPC by fighting on many fronts, including once again representing the CPC in negotiations with the KMT, putting the blame for the civil war on Chiang, and carrying out the line of "talking while fighting and fighting while talking."

## Founding of the People's Republic of China—Working Class Rule

On October 1, 1949, Mao Tsetung with Chou En-lai and other leaders of the CPC stood on a platform overlooking Tien An Men square in Peking and declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

The countrywide victory marked the completion of the first stage in the Chinese revolution and the beginning of the socialist revolution—the step by step struggle led by the working class to end exploitation and move on to communism. Whole new questions faced the Party.

From 1949 until his death Chou En-lai served as Premier of the People's Republic of China, as a key leader in the government, that is, the proletarian state. Under socialism the state exists to exercise dictatorship over exploiters and would-be exploiters of the people, and to represent the interests of the proletariat and the great majority of the people.

The whole period of socialism is marked by a sharp class struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie (both the old overthrown exploiters and the new bourgeois elements that are generated from within socialist society itself). The heart of this struggle is whether to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat and march forward through stages toward communism, or whether the working class will lose its political power to the bourgeoisie.

While the Chinese working class was beginning to construct socialism in China, Khrushchev succeeded in capturing power in the Soviet Union and turning that country back onto the path of capitalism. Khrushchev tried to force China onto the same counter-revolutionary road through subversion and intrigue, military pressure, and economic blackmail. But the CPC stood firm and waged a tit for tat struggle against modern revisionism.

The loss of power in the Soviet Union was a big setback for workers worldwide. On the basis of summing up the Soviet experience and repeated clashes between the proletariat and bourgeoisie in socialist China, Mao Tsetung formulated the policy of "continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat" and Chou En-lai played a leading role in carrying it out step by step. This made a tremendous contribution to the international struggle of the working class.

In 1961 Chou En-lai headed up a Chinese delegation to the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Moscow. Chou En-lai stood up to Khrushchev's revisionism. While the revisionists attacked and slandered Stalin, Chou led the Chinese delegation in laying a wreath at Stalin's tomb. Later Chou led a walkout from the conference itself—exposing and advancing the struggle against these new capitalists.

## The Cultural Revolution—Fighting to Keep the Working Class in Power

The most important struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in China since 1949 was the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution, initiated and led by Mao, was the form that Mao developed for continuing the revolution under socialism and a method for training a new generation of revolutionary leaders in the course of class struggle.

In this great movement that swept China and in-

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volved hundreds of millions of people, Mao called on the Chinese people to rise up and attack those revisionists in the CPC who were trying to restore capitalism. The Cultural Revolution was completely unprecedented in the history of working class revolution. The actions and history of every leader of the Party were called into question, and for a while it seemed to those who lacked faith in the masses that chaos was reigning.

Chou En-lai played a crucial role in the tumultuous days of the Cultural Revolution. The course of the Cultural Revolution was exceedingly complex and marked by twists and turns. In addition to the masses and the revolutionary organizations, there were counter-revolutionaries who "raised the red flag to oppose the red flag"—posed as communists in order to confuse things and oppose communism. Only by going into the thick of the struggle and conducting deep and thoroughgoing investigations could the correct line and policies for advancing the Cultural Revolution be established.

Chou constantly met with delegations of the revolutionary masses, listening to their opinions and criticisms, learning from them, guiding and encouraging their initiative. On this basis Chou made important contributions in directing the movement at the target—the capitalist roaders within the Party and the state apparatus.

At various times Chou himself came under attack. One of the main objectives of Lin Piao's group of counter-revolutionaries was to try to misdirect the fury of the Cultural Revolution against Chou. But Chou never flinched in the face of these attacks and continued to plunge into the middle of the class struggle and when necessary, to "go against the tide" of incorrect lines that developed in the course of the Cultural Revolution.

During the Cultural Revolution the masses of people passed judgement on the leaders of the CPC. Chou once again proved himself a genuine revolutionary leader of the proletariat commanding the support of the masses of workers and peasants.

After the Cultural Revolution, Chou continued, together with Mao, to lead the class struggle of the Chinese working class. After Lin Piao's plot of murdering Mao and seizing power for himself and his handful of conspirators was exposed, the 10th Party Congress of the CPC was held.

In the main political report to this Congress, which Chou delivered, he points out that the history of Lin Piao and the whole history "of our Party and... the international communist movement since the time of Marx" is proof of Mao Tsetung's teaching that "the correctness or incorrectness of the ideologi-

cal and political line decides everything." Chou said, "If one's line is incorrect, one's downfall is inevitable, even with control of the central, local and army leadership. If one's line is correct, even if one has not a single soldier at first, there will be soldiers, and even if there is no political power, political power will be gained."

## Revolutionary All His Life

Chou En-lai remained a revolutionary his entire life. At each stage in the development of the revolution, when the struggle of the masses and the objective developments of society placed new contradictions before the Party, Chou fulfilled the role of a revolutionary leader. As part of the leadership of the Party, Chou summed up the experience of the masses and helped to formulate the correct line and policies to move the struggle forward. And he was a leader in persevering in carrying out the line among the masses, fighting together with them to change the world. This is both testimony to his strength and understanding and to the creative power of the revolutionary masses which brings forth revolutionary leaders as their representatives.

The bourgeoisie is hoping that as the first generation of China's revolutionaries leave the stage of history, revisionism will triumph and the system of capitalist exploitation will be restored. They long to see the accomplishments of the working class reversed in China, as in the Soviet Union.

But just as the struggle of the Chinese working class and masses produced Mao Tsetung, Chou En-lai and its other great representatives, the experience in the class struggle summed up by its leaders has produced the political line and understanding to move the struggle forward and has created and will continue to lead the struggle forward to the goal of communism.

Today even the bourgeoisie is forced to acknowledge Chou because of the great respect he has earned among workers and oppressed people all over the globe, and because of the great accomplishments of the Chinese people. In 1954 when Chou was heading up China's delegation to the Geneva conference on Vietnam, John Foster Dulles, a leading U.S. imperialist spokesman, refused to shake Chou's hand because he was a revolutionary. Yet today, even as they are forced to make reference to Chou, they try to present him as a "moderate" or a "pragmatist" as if his accomplishments were due to the fact that he was not really a communist when, in fact, the opposite is the truth.

Lenin wrote in *State and Revolution*, "During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes constantly hounded them, received their teachings with the most savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaigns of lies and slander. After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonize them, so to say, and to surround their names with a certain halo for the 'consolation' of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping the latter, while at the same time emasculating the essence of the revolutionary teaching, blunting its revolutionary edge and vulgarizing it."

The bourgeoisie tries to paint a picture of Chou as an administrator in the mold of their corporation executives, taking communism with a grain of salt, concerned only with "efficiency." They imply that he spouted communist theory, while in practice doing what he pleased to make things work. But there is a close relation between theory and practice—the purpose of revolutionary theory is to serve the practice of making revolution. The experience gained in the course of revolutionary practice, in turn, is the basis for the Party, through its democratic centralism and collective leadership, to enrich its understanding of the laws of revolution—revolutionary theory, which once again is used to advance still further the revolutionary struggle of the masses.

What the bourgeoisie slanders as "pragmatism" is precisely the step by step application of Marxism-Leninism to advancing the cause of the working class in China and throughout the world. For Chou, and all communists, "Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action," a tool in the hands of the oppressed to make revolution and build a new world.

Chou En-lai's lifetime as a revolutionary spanned a time of struggle of the working class worldwide—tearing away at the old system of capitalist exploitation; toppling the rule of the bourgeoisie first in Russia, then in China and other countries. Revolutionary leaders like Chou En-lai serve as a catalyst of history, stepping up the speed and tempo by which the masses are able to rip away the chains that bind them.

But the movement of history is not a straight road. The working class in every country faces a long and tortuous struggle. Chou En-lai stood firm with the masses in the bitter days of defeat and setback as well as during the celebration of victories. Chou, like Mao Tsetung and communists throughout the world, was confronted by the greatest single reversal of the working class struggle, when the Soviet Union, home of Lenin and the Bolshevik revolution, was captured from within by the bourgeoisie, and the system of capitalist exploitation restored.

Thus history posed the question: Is the triumph of

communism really inevitable, or is mankind wedded by its "nature" to exploitation and class society, and will every victory the working class wins eventually be snatched back?

But the Communist Party of China, its Chairman, Mao Tsetung, and its collective leadership of which Chou was a part, summed up the worldwide experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat and led the Cultural Revolution through to victory, proving that the restoration of capitalism is not inevitable. What the working class has won can be defended and strengthened by the conscious struggle of the masses themselves.

The advance of the working class comes only through hard struggle and sacrifice. Comrade Chou's life was dedicated to changing the world, to immersing himself in the revolutionary struggle of the masses and learning from them in the course of leading struggle forward.

The experience of the Chinese revolution, the lessons learned on the basis of the struggle and sacrifice of millions, are the property of the working class all over the world. Mao and Chou stressed training successors to the revolutionary cause. In the course of the mighty torrent of revolution in every country, new leaders will be propelled to the forefront of the struggle, who like Chou En-lai will dedicate their life to the cause of the masses, the cause of communism, and will steer the struggle forward to victory. ■

# July 4th...

Continued from page 1

society forward. They are worse than useless—they are parasites, bloodsuckers, who stand in the way of the development of society and the use of its great socially produced wealth for the benefit of all and not the profit of a few.

History demands, and the working class is capable of carrying out these demands, that society be freed of the cancer of exploitation and its running sores like unemployment and war. The capitalists whose revolution removed feudal obstacles to the development of society have themselves become an obstacle. It is the turn of the working class to make revolution, to overthrow the barriers and to move society into the bright future.

## Resist Their Attacks

Workers *have* to fight—the capitalists see to that with their unceasing attacks on us. As their economy comes apart at the seams, the American people have been fighting—not only big battles like the miners' wildcat, the Milwaukee meatcutters' strike, the farmworkers' union elections, but in countless smaller battles everyday for jobs, to meet the cost of living, for decent schools, against speedup, against police terror, against cutbacks and plenty more! Sometimes we get what we're fighting for, sometimes we lose, and even when we win, the bosses try to snatch our victories back.

But in the course of all these struggles the working class is starting to get itself organized, building not only for particular skirmishes but also broader organizations in different areas and industries to take up all the important battles of the class. Our battles are also rich in lessons and through them working people are getting a lot clearer on what this society is all about. All this adds up to one thing—the working class is on the rise.

The July 4th action in Philly will be an important step forward in building the workers movement and the unity of all those who face a common fight. The demonstration will pull together all our struggles—in the factories or in other jobs, in the union halls, in the communities and schools, in the unemployment centers, everywhere.

As the rulers parade their past military glories, veterans will be there—the guys they sent to fight their dirty war and turned their backs on when it ended. Veterans will be there to say to them, "We fought for you, but our real fight is here—against you." Unemployed workers will be there to put the lie to their rosy picture of how wonderfully everything is working for us. In their proudest moment, the high and mighty will be confronted by those they rule and rob, united in our common situation, and our growing common struggle against them.

This July 4th demonstration will be a powerful inspiration for those in it and the thousands more, especially in distant parts of the country, who support it but can't come. It will bring together fighters from dozens of different battlefronts, from different industries and parts of the country in a powerful demonstration that draws its strength from the fact it represents the daily struggles of millions of American working people and their allies. It will show people that they're not alone and isolated, as the capitalists try to make us think, but that in all these struggles more and more people are getting fed up with things and looking to move on the source of their misery. The Philadelphia demonstration will sum up the growing sentiments of all these people—"We've carried the rich for 200 years. Let's get them off our backs!" ■

# Publications

Programme and Constitution of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA. 175 pages. \$1.00.

(The following publications were originally published by the Revolutionary Union and were adopted by the RCP, USA, Oct. 1975)

- How Capitalism Has Been Restored in the Soviet Union and What This Means for the World Struggle. 156 pages. \$2.50.
- The Chicano Struggle and the Struggle for Socialism. 59 pages. \$1.50.
- Revolution: Only Road to Women's Liberation. Reprinted from *Revolution*, March 1974. In English and Spanish. 16 pages. 25 cents.
- Classes and Class Struggle. Reprinted from *Revolution*, April 1973. In English and Spanish. 8 pages. 10 cents.
- Proletarian Dictatorship vs. Bourgeois "Democracy." Reprinted from *Revolution*, May 1973. In English and Spanish. 12 pages. 10 cents.
- Correct Line Achieved Through Study, Struggle, Criticism. Reprinted from *Revolution*, January 1974. In English and Spanish. 12 pages. 10 cents.

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# Teamsters...

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the Teamsters and Trucking Employers, Inc. agrees saying, "The mood of the people [meaning the Teamster negotiators] is very conducive to a settlement, possibly before the expiration of the agreement."

This kind of sweet talk might come as a surprise to many, especially since the Teamsters have great power and could be talking tough. Actually, it's par for the course. Teamster "leaders" negotiate a contract in such a nice way because like the heads of the other unions they stand on the side of the capitalists.

Especially in this contract these sellouts want a quick settlement because their fat position and economic holdings are under attack from the federal government following the murder of Jimmy Hoffa.

Teamster officials are bold and open about their "business unionism." They boast about their funds and holdings as capitalists and even push the idea that the power of their capital is helpful to the strength of the workers in the union. But all this is nothing but stinking class collaboration and a big obstacle to the struggle of the Teamster rank and file.

Class collaboration in the Teamsters starts at the top with Fitzsimmons, who is out for a piece of the capitalist action at every level. The Teamsters have a contract with Bally Manufacturing Co., a company which makes pinball machines. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, recent stockholder of Bally include none other than Fitzsimmons himself!

Union-company cooperation to break the contract is also a common practice at the local level. This practice has become so widespread that it is estimated that 80% of the truck drivers in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area receive pay and benefits below the master freight standard! At Becker's Motor Transport of Woodbridge, N.J., Local 863 of the Teamsters worked out a separate agreement in which drivers get wages as low as \$4.11 an hour instead of the approximately \$7 an hour of the master agreement. Pension and health benefits have also been suitably reduced from \$56 to \$28 per week and vacation time changed from three weeks after one year to two weeks after two years.

## "Illegal" Capitalists

A particular aspect of the business unionism of the Teamster leaders is their connection with the Mafia. The Teamsters \$1.4 billion Central States Pension Fund, for example, has been described as the "Chase Manhattan Bank of organized crime." Money from this fund is regularly invested in hotels, real estate, and gambling joints controlled by the Mob. At the same time there are so many rules and regulations that it is estimated that 90% of all Teamster rank and file get cheated out of their retirement benefits.

A lot has been made of the Teamster's connection with the Mafia recently, but this does not prove other union leaders are better or different than Teamster officials. All the heads of the unions today side with the capitalists. It is just that the Teamster leaders (as well as the leaders of several other unions) have extended this cooperation to the "illegal" capitalists as well.

The federal government, in particular, has used the excuse of Mafia infiltration and the murder of Jimmy Hoffa to launch an attack on the Teamsters. The FBI and the Justice Department are already investigating and a full-scale Senate investigation may be in the works. However, it is clear that the purpose of these investigations is not to help strengthen the Teamsters by cleaning the crooks out, although they wouldn't mind weakening the Mafia businesses connected with the pension fund since there is sharp inter-capitalist competition.

The government's primary aim is to attack the union itself and the membership. They fear the organized power of the truckers, despite the sellout leadership of Fitzsimmons and Co. They also are trying to play up Teamster corruption in a way that will discourage other workers from joining unions at all.

## Protecting Their Position

The effect of the government's attacks has been to help the trucking companies in the upcoming contract. Fitzsimmons is ready to sell the contract out in record time if it will help take the heat off him. Instead of standing up to these attacks the Teamster leadership is obviously afraid the government will put them in jail if they call a strike and they would risk losing their cut in the pension fund action.

The deteriorating conditions in the industry and

the increasing exposure of the Teamster officials has led to a growing discontent among the Teamster rank and file. The owner-operators in particular have been talking about staging another shutdown as gasoline prices have continued to rise, driving many of them bankrupt.

One action by the Teamsters which is bound to stir up the anger of the rank and file, once it becomes more widely known is the recent cancellation of the mutual aid and no raiding pact between the Teamsters and the AFL-CIO. This was announced by Fitzsimmons in early November, and is an even more open and shameless proclamation of long standing policies of the Teamster and other union leaderships. Many Teamsters are already sick of being told by their union leaders to cross picket lines. This is a followup to the sweetheart agreements signed by the Teamsters and the growers to try to push the United Farm Workers out of the fields on the West Coast. These actions are definitely opposed by a large number of rank and file, when they learn of them. As one Teamster member said when he learned of the cancellation of the no-raiding pact, "It wouldn't be right. I would never cross a picket line. If I see a picket line I turn her right around and head home."

Many of the rank and file have become disgusted with Fitzsimmons for this kind of sell-out. Many of them say Hoffa would have been better if he was



# '76 Contracts...

Continued from page 4

crisis, yet as workers gained experience and stepped up their struggle, real victories were won. Unemployment insurance, unions in the basic mass production industries, and other gains were made during that period. And through all these struggles a common bond of solidarity against the capitalists and optimism about the future was forged, as workers stood up against the oppression of capital, refusing to be crushed either physically or spiritually.

And while it is true that as long as the capitalists are in power they will continually attack and erode the workers' standard of living, fighting every battle today is crucial to keep from being crushed down and to gain in strength, spirit and organization for the future struggle.

## Struggle Arises Constantly

But what is the basis for putting this understanding into action this year, when the hacks are tightening their stranglehold on the union structure? The basis is the class struggle itself, which breaks out constantly. Although during this crisis we face even sharper attacks from the capitalists, including even more flagrant efforts to clamp down on the rank and file in the unions, the most important fact is that all this is also giving rise to constant struggles. Every day literally thousands of big and small battles are being fought by workers around the country. Broader numbers of workers are being drawn into action.

And all this will effect the contract struggles, in spite of the capitalists attempts to squelch it. Contract struggles are important skirmishes between the working class and the capitalists. Each contract expiration leads to struggle in a thousand ways, as the desire of the workers to fight to improve their conditions rises to the surface. Even in situations where the workers are not yet strong enough to prevent a sellout or to force an official strike, wildcats, slowdowns, petition campaigns, or other acts or rebellion, often accompany the expiration of a contract.

Each of these battles in which the workers begin to exercise their power not only brings a sense of strength and common cause to the workers directly involved, but inspires others who learn of it. And all this spurs discussion among the workers, as the face of the enemy comes into sharper focus and the nature of the struggle against it becomes clearer.

Examples of the kind of spontaneous struggles that sometimes break out during contract negotiations,

still around. Hoffa was a fighter they say. When he was the head of the Teamsters wages and working conditions improved.

There is some truth in this. Wages and working conditions are still relatively better for Teamster drivers than many other workers. Also much of these improvements came when Hoffa was heading up the union. But it would be wrong to credit Hoffa with this. The main reason for these improving working conditions, as we said earlier, was the expansion and high profit within the industry during the time that Hoffa headed the union.

Hoffa was no golden boy. He was the one who originally set up the pension fund to finance Mafia businesses and not to benefit the rank and file. He vowed around the time of the first national contract that as long as he was around there would never be a national strike saying, "It isn't good business for the union." Neither was he above defrauding his own membership, like sinking Teamster funds into a bogus Florida retirement development, partly under water, in which Hoffa owned 45% of the stock. Hoffa was also convicted of taking a large kickback from one of the Teamster employers.

Today the nature of the industry is changing. This crisis in trucking is not explained by Hoffa not being president but by the growth of monopolies, increasing competition, and the general capitalist crisis. The need today is not to idolize one man or hope for another to come along but for the rank and file truckers to get organized *en masses* to take on these companies and the government attacks.

The battle around the upcoming contract is beginning to shape up. The ruling class is counting on their boys heading up the International Brotherhood of Teamsters to force a lousy contract down the throats of the truckers. At the same time they are intensifying their attacks on the union itself.

The struggle against the current series of attacks by the truck companies and the government is growing among the rank and file, and the class collaboration of the Teamster leadership is growing more and more exposed. The upcoming contract is a chance for the rank and file to strengthen its forces, and prepare to carry on the struggle after the contract is signed. ■

despite the sabotage of the hacks, were the wildcat strikes around the 1973 auto contract. Woodcock and the UAW International went all out to stifle struggle. They kept the rank and file in the dark during negotiations, then sold out the contract after a phony week long strike. Despite this, three big wildcats broke out before the contract at Chrysler's plants in Detroit: Jefferson Ave., Detroit Forge, and Mack Ave. And numerous local strikes continued far after the national contract was signed. These struggles inspired other struggles in auto and throughout the working class.

## Single Spark

The many battles that break out this year will include the struggles around the contract, and there will also be more. There will be battles of resistance to oppression in every form it takes in this society, and broader numbers of workers will be drawn into action. By taking part in these actual struggles, by helping to build them as far as possible, by spreading the battles and spreading their lessons to guide other battles, the class struggle can be advanced this year in the face of the obstacles.

The Revolutionary Communist Party calls this the "single spark method," learning from Mao Tsetung who showed how "a single spark can start a prairie fire." As it says in the Programme of the RCP: "The method of the proletariat and its Party is to mobilize the masses of workers to take matters into their own hands and wage a blow for blow struggle against the enemy, inside and outside the unions. To seize on every spark of struggle, fan and spread it as broadly as possible throughout the working class and among its allies. To build every possible struggle and build off of it to launch new struggles. And through the course of this to fan every spark of consciousness, to identify and isolate the bourgeoisie and its agents, and unite all struggles against this enemy."

The miners wildcat strike last summer, started as a strike at one mine around the violation of seniority and the firing of a local union president. It spread across the coalfields to a fight for the right to strike and an end to injunctions, and is one example of what it means "to seize on every spark of struggle, fan and spread it as broadly as possible throughout the working class and among its allies."

Every struggle does not take place in the same way, and every one will not be equally broad. But the situation workers face in common and the resistance that constantly rises against this creates the conditions to spread the struggle and join our forces.

None of this will happen by itself, and the capitalists will be going all out to make this "Labors' Year of Setbacks." But if the struggle this year is taken on in an organized and bold way, battles can be won now and organization and class consciousness can be strengthened for the battles ahead. ■