

Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions:

Part 3: Political Economy, Economic Policy and Socialist Construction



REVOLUTION

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Bakke Ruling

Legal Seal For Reactionary Onslaught

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in favor of Allan Bakke has given the judicial stamp of approval to the infamous lie of "reverse discrimination" and signals and lends "legal authority" to the intensification of real discrimination and national oppression on the part of the bourgeoisie.

Almost before the ink was dry on the lengthy decision, bourgeois commentators were calling it a "middle of the road" ruling—one that "reaffirms" the need for affirmative action programs but at the same time insures that such programs will not be "discriminatory."

This talk of "reverse discrimination" would be a bitter joke if it wasn't such a criminal line of attack. What it amounts to is saying that Black people and other minorities, especially since the Civil Rights movement (indeed, because of it), are given all the breaks when it comes to hiring, admission into college, etc., and that now they have more than their fair share of everything.

Is it true that Black people and other minorities have more than their "fair share" of some things? Yes, it is. They have more unemployment, more malnutrition, more rotten housing, more lousy schools, more deaths at the hands of the police, even higher blood pressure!

Open admissions, preferential hiring, affirmative action programs and the like were among the important victories won by Blacks and other minorities during the high tide of struggle against national oppression in the late '60s and early '70s. But from the very beginning the ruling class has hammered away at these gains, and long before the Bakke decision it had rendered many of these victories ineffectual, or token at best.

In some cases, such as the University of California at Davis (which denied admission to Allan Bakke, then encouraged him to file his suit against this denial) affirmative action took the form of quotas which insured that a certain number of minority applicants would benefit from the program. While in almost every case the quotas were pathetically low (for example, 16 out of 100 at Davis) and didn't begin to meet the needs of minorities, they were an important part of keeping affirmative action from being just one more broken promise.

Quotas

By knocking down the use of quotas based on nationality, the Bakke ruling effectively destroys the few teeth affirmative action ever had. Far from being "middle of the road," the Bakke decision is an open attempt to provide legalistic justifications for the bourgeoisie's growing wave of attacks on minority nationalities.

For Allan Bakke, it was a case of being in the right place at the right time. A ruling along the lines of the Bakke decision was important to the bourgeoisie in its drive to step up its special oppression of minorities and perpetuate and intensify

divisions among the masses based on nationality. If Allan Bakke hadn't been there, they would have dug up someone else. In fact, Bakke himself is nothing but a hapless jerk.

Bakke had already been turned down at more medical schools than you could shake a stick at when he applied at UC Davis. To suggest, as the Supreme Court does, that Bakke was the victim of "racial discrimination" not only ignores the facts, but shamelessly whitewashes the very real discrimination that permeates capitalist society. It is a disgusting and brazen appeal to chauvinism.

The NAACP and tired reformists like Coretta King have surrendered without

a fight before the delicate nuances and courteous assurances of the Bakke decision that "race is a legitimate factor" in determining college admissions. King says she's "satisfied" with the decision, which "came down on the side of affirmative action." Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP, called the ruling "a clear-cut victory for voluntary affirmative action"! Lester Maddox couldn't have said it better.

This dimwitted view of the Bakke decision is precisely what the bourgeoisie would have the people believe, and completely ignores the realities of national oppression in the U.S. It took a tidal wave of rebellion and mass action for Black people and

other minorities to wrest from the bourgeoisie the few concessions they now have in the area of affirmative action, and the Bakke decision paves the way for the floodgates of reaction to open up and spew forth challenges to minority admissions and hiring programs. No amount of pious promises of affirmative action or legal ambiguities in the Court's decision can change this fact.

"Interpreting" the Law

The so-called "constitutional questions" involved in the case have never been anything more than a ruse used by the bourgeoisie to hide behind as they adopt different policies according to changing conditions. The constitution was used to sanctify legal segregation following Reconstruction, then used to knock it down in the '50s when changing social conditions and the struggle of the masses demanded it.

Affirmative action itself was given the OK by the courts when the mass struggles won it in the '60s, only to have

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2nd Convention of RCYB

Firm Ground For New Advances

"Youth of America Dare to Say, Revolution Is the Only Way!" The chant rang out amidst thunderous applause as the second national convention of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) in Austin, Texas, officially came to a close. This Austin location had historic significance. It was in Austin nearly 10 years ago that the Revolutionary Union (which played a major role in the formation of the RCP) first played a decisive part in the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in combating the reactionary line of Progressive Labor Party (PL) with Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought.

This 1978 Austin meeting was one of consolidation and celebration over the defeat and ouster of a reformist and counterrevolutionary clique in the Brigade. It was a meeting of building off this victory to achieve new advances in leading revolutionary struggle among youth. Within the past six months this clique, part of the Menshevik Jarvis-Bergman gang in the Party, had attempted to turn the RCYB, the youth organization of the Revolutionary Communist Party, against the RCP—after being defeated in their attempt to turn the Party itself from red to white.

The founding convention of the RCYB in November 1977 represented a great advance for the revolutionary movement in this country. The proletariat now has a bold and open communist organization among the youth in the neighborhoods, campuses and plants. But the Mensheviks sought from the beginning to make this organization over into its opposite—a John Travolta-style social welfare club. In

their view, American youth, especially working class youth, were too backward and brainwashed to ever be won to fighting for communist revolution. So what the hell, hold a reformist extravaganza or two around a current issue—say, jobs—then get down on the dance floor with the masses, and call that making revolution.

This revisionist line and the Menshevik leaders themselves were first repudiated by the RCYB at a critical meeting in Cincinnati in January 1978. At that time, plans were laid for the next few months to go deeply into this two-line struggle throughout the ranks of the Brigade.

This Communist Consolidation Campaign bore fruit at the recent Austin convention where far more was achieved than simply rejecting the Mensheviks' philistine reformism. Plans were made to translate these victories into revolutionary practice. And in the course of this the RCYB took new steps in functioning as a communist organization with all its members struggling to apply Marxism-Leninism on the convention floor, the working class youth making particularly important contributions.

This was not some kind of "performance," but testimony to the fact that people saw the life and death character of the questions being grappled with—whose underlying common theme was revolution vs. reformism—and the absolute necessity of struggling to achieve a correct understanding of them.

All of this was in stark contrast to the methods of the Mensheviks who sought to leave the important questions to a few hotshot "experts," while trying to rob the initiative from rank and file Brigade members who they considered



Austin RCYB Convention takes to the streets in support of the struggle in Houston.

capable only of carrying out the line. It must be said, however, that these "leaders" were unable to stamp out the revolutionary thrust of the Brigade nationwide. In spite of their interference, much good work has been done in the last several years, with the RCYB, and the Revolutionary Student Brigade which preceded it, rooting itself on many campuses and, more recently, in the neighborhoods, and leading important struggles.

Important Resolutions Passed

Delegates were chosen for the Austin meeting by all 43 chapters of the RCYB at six regional conferences held before the convention. The RCP had five delegates and the staff of the RCYB newspaper, REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST YOUTH (RCY) had one. A large number of other RCYB members also made the trip to be (non-voting) par-

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Members of the African Liberation Support Committee head the march at this year's African Liberation Day in Detroit, hitting at imperialism and national oppression both in Africa and the U.S.

"Get the Home Fires Burning"

ALD: Support African Peoples' Struggles

On Saturday, May 27th, the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) and the African Liberation Day Coalition (including besides ALSC the National United Workers Organization, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, the Iranian Student Association, the Revolutionary Communist Party and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade) held African Liberation Day demonstrations in Detroit and three cities on the West Coast. The Association of Eritrean Students in North America and members of the Ethiopian Students Union of North America, including the Chicago chapter, together with other forces around the country, also worked to build these demonstrations.

The main slogan for ALD was "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from USA (Union of South Africa) to USA (United States of America)!" The others were: "Victory to the African

Peoples' Just Struggles!"; "Down With White Minority Rule!"; "U.S. Out of Africa; Superpowers Hands Off!"

In Detroit, the site of the main ALD demonstration and the headquarters of some of the biggest exploiters of the African and U.S. people, the Big Three auto companies, 750 people marched and rallied on May 27. At the same time, the ALD march through Los Angeles' westside Black community was greeted by enthusiastic support, and grew to 250 people as it entered a local park for a rally. In East Oakland, up to 200 marched and 100 or so more gathered around in San Antonio Park for the rally. 125 demonstrated in Seat-

Detroit March

The marchers began forming up at Grand Circus Park in downtown

Detroit. The ALSC contingent took its place at the front of the march. Autoworkers, steel workers, coal miners, garment workers of the National United Workers Organization contingent lined up right behind. Indeed, the organized presence of workers at the demonstration stood out sharply as an important feature of this ALD march. Next were contingents of Vietnam vets, foreign students, members of the Medical Committee for Human Rights and the RCYB. One participant in past African Liberation Days said, "While this might not be the biggest ALD march ever, it sure as hell is the most powerful."

The demonstration began to move down Detroit's main street, stretching for blocks. Chants of "Ghettos here, Bantustans there, Fight Imperialism Everywhere!" and "African People Fighting to be Free, Striking Blows at our Common Enemy!" rang off the

buildings. Many shoppers and bystanders stopped to check out the march. A number of people who saw the march came to the rally later.

The power of the march was first and foremost its political line—sharply pinpointing the imperialist ruling class as the common enemy of the African and U.S. people. It targeted imperialism as the source of national oppression, from the Sowetos and bantustans of Azania to the oppressed Black communities of the USA. And it called on the American people to support the African peoples' slave revolt against these same slavemasters.

Reflecting this line, the strong multinational character of the march caught people up sharp. It reflected both the desire and potential for multinational unity among the masses. Like one ALSC member said, "Seeing people of all nationalities united to fight the common enemy was a hell of a thing. I think that's what people on the street noticed."

The march headed toward the Renaissance Center, a luxury complex of hotel and office buildings, which stand as an ugly monument to the tremendous wealth and power accumulated by the capitalist class in the midst of ever worsening conditions for the masses. The biggest single investor in the Center was Henry Ford II, who recently swore Ford Motor Co. would never leave South Africa.

Constructed like a fortress, with bunkers and machine gun turrets, the capitalists billed it as the "rebirth" of Detroit—an outrage to the people of Detroit. Targeting the Center as a symbol of the imperialist system, ALSC put out its call to "March on the Renaissance Center." This target was very unpopular with the capitalists and their Detroit city government, who were hell bent on protecting their "image of rebirth."

As the march neared the Renaissance Center the police scurried to put on riot gear and mounted police suddenly appeared. As the march went by 750 strong on the one side and the police readied themselves on the other, the lines were clearly drawn between the masses of people fighting from Africa to the USA and the small handful of imperialists. After marching through the downtown area for another mile the march poured into Kennedy Square as loud and powerful as when it started.

Rally

It was clear from the revolutionary thrust of the march and rally why Detroit's rulers were so uptight. The first speaker, from the African Liberation Support Committee, put it straight when he said, "Africa 1978 is an Africa in flames. What we are saying today is that we hope these flames continue to spread and we're gonna do all we can to get the home fires burning!"

Speakers from struggles against national oppression like the fight to Free the Wilmington 10 in North Carolina, and the Cinco de Mayo Moody Park rebellion in Houston, as well as representatives from the Auto Workers United to Fight (AWUF) and the National United Workers Organization (NUWO), brought out how the masses of people in the U.S. are learning a rich lesson from the revolutionary struggle of the African peoples—that the only way to get these imperialist thieves off our backs is to stand up and fight them to the bitter end.

The daughter of the late Fred Ahmed Evans, who fought all his life for the liberation of Black people, gave a moving speech to the crowd. And letters of support for ALD signed by hundreds of workers were read off, including from several UAW plants in Southwest Ohio, Buffalo Ford Stamping, and from steel workers at Bethlehem's Sparrows Point shipyards in Maryland.

A member of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) spoke about the armed struggle in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) to liberate the country, and there were powerful statements of solidarity and internationalism from the Iranian Students Association, the Association of Eritrean Students in North America, and the Chicago chapter of the Ethiopian Students Union of North America.

Houston Fight Continues

Support Grows For Moody Park 3

The fight in support of those arrested in the May 7th rebellion at Moody Park is developing into a struggle of national significance. The bourgeoisie in Houston, shaken by the most important uprising of the Chicano people in a number of years, has arrested over 50 people who now face heavy charges ranging from assault to "attempted capital murder on a police officer." The struggle to free those arrested is aimed straight at the heart of the bourgeois system of "justice" which the capitalists use to enforce their rule over the masses of working and oppressed people.

Three of those arrested in connection with the rebellion are members of People United to Fight Police Brutality, an organization which has consistently led the fight against police repression in Houston. The capitalists have singled out these fighters for special attack in an attempt to crush the political leadership of the movement in Houston against police brutality and murder. The Houston-Moody Park 3—Travis

Morales, Tom Hirschi and Mara Youngdahl—are being blamed with responsibility for the rebellion, charged with "felony riot"—a law aimed against any mass protests or demonstrations. Anyone present in a "riot" situation can be picked out and charged with any crimes committed whether they participated in them or not!

Arraignments Protested

But despite the heavy charges they face (and a possible 20 years in prison), the Moody Park 3 and People United have continued to lead the fight against police violence, helping to build support for others arrested in the rebellion. On June 12, seven defendants arrested in the rebellion were arraigned on charges of assault on a police officer to felony riot. People United was there, holding a militant picket line in front of the County Courthouse to demand that charges be dropped against all those arrested during the rebellion. The picket line pointed sharply to the nature of

capitalist "justice"—where the pigs who murdered Joe Torres, a Chicano vet, were tried twice (once in state court and again in federal court) and still remain free while those who fought back against the invading police in Moody Park during Cinco de Mayo face years in prison. (See June issue of *Revolution*)

A small group calling itself the "Coalition to Defend the Barrio" has recently entered the scene. Composed largely of various movement groups, it has behaved in a very sectarian fashion. They have tried to spin the obvious fairy tale that People United is not interested in defending any others arrested. In the meantime, spokespeople for this group have made statements to the press saying they will have nothing to do with the Moody Park 3—only the other people arrested. This, of course, is much to the ruling class' liking.

On June 19, the Moody Park 3 were arraigned as another picket line march-

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“Center of Gravity” Repudiated

Economic Struggle & Revolutionary Tasks

At the Founding Congress of the Revolutionary Communist Party in 1975, a formulation was adopted which said that “The Party’s main concentration—its ‘center of gravity’—must now be in the day to day struggle of the workers around wages, working conditions, layoffs, jobs, etc...” This formulation and the policy it represented was wrong. It was formally repudiated by the Second Congress of the RCP in early 1978.

This formulation was an error which ran counter to the overall revolutionary line adopted by the Founding Congress and reaffirmed by the Second Congress. But far worse than the formulation itself was what was done with it by M. Jarvis and L. Bergman, two former leading members of the RCP, who did their best to defend and develop incorrect tendencies which existed within the Party and use them to whip up a whole consolidated opportunist line in direct opposition to the line of the Party. The struggle against the economism peddled by Jarvis and Bergman under the “center of gravity” label became increasingly acute within the Party as a key component of the overall two line struggle between the revolutionary line of the Party and its Central Committee and the eclecticism, pragmatism and factionalism of the Jarvis-Bergman clique.

It is fitting that the Second Congress, which expelled Jarvis and Bergman from the Party for trying first to capture and then destroy the Party, also criticized and got rid of the “center of gravity” formulation as part of clearing out the Jarvis-Bergman line and digging out the roots that nourished it.

This does not mean that the Party has decided to abandon the economic struggle of the workers, or that it no longer considers it very important. But it does mean that today the Party has a much deeper understanding of the correct relationship between the sometimes furious battle of defense around wages and

working conditions which capitalism’s attacks constantly generate among the workers, and the working class’ overall goal of doing away with this state of affairs and eliminating exploitation, and eventually classes, altogether.

What is the significance of the economic battles to the final goal of working class struggle, proletarian revolution? How can these battles be built as part of a revolutionary workers’ movement, and not as a reformist end in themselves? And why must a communist party wage persistent struggle against economism, the tendency to elevate these battles above the revolutionary political tasks of the proletariat? These questions remain critical, not only for more thoroughly repudiating the influence of the Jarvis-Bergman clique but for insuring that the Party continues to fulfill its role as the vanguard of the working class in its revolutionary struggle.

Proletariat Fights to Initiate Larger Movement

In *Wages, Price and Profit* Marx insisted that if workers were to abandon their battles around wages and working conditions, then “they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation... By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement.”

But these battles are not ends in themselves. In the very next paragraph Marx also warned against exaggerating the importance of such battles and becoming “exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ending encroachments of capital...”

Thus while this struggle is necessary if the proletariat is to resist everyday attacks and still more to develop its fitness for revolutionary combat, such

struggle is *not* itself revolutionary struggle. Moreover, unless the economic struggle is linked to building a consciously revolutionary movement—unless, as Marx puts it, it is waged not from the view of “fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work” but under the banner of “abolition of the wages system”—then such struggle turns into its opposite, from a blow against the bourgeoisie to a treadmill for the proletariat.

Diverting the Spontaneous Movement

The pull on communists to become “exclusively absorbed” in the economic struggle is a powerful one indeed. History shows that parties must wage relentless struggle against that almost gravitational force if they are to avoid the quagmire of reformism. The ideological struggle against economism was waged most sharply by V.I. Lenin in the Marxist classic *What Is To Be Done?* “Our task,” he wrote, “is to combat spontaneity, to divert the working class movement from this spontaneous, trade-unionist striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy [communism].” (emphasis Lenin’s)

As the PROGRAMME of the RCP, adopted at the Founding Congress, put it,

“...in building its revolutionary struggle, the proletariat breaks the hold of trade unionist ideology—the bourgeois line that the limit of the workers’ movement must be the struggle for better wages and working conditions—better terms of the sale of the workers’ labor power, a slight loosening of the slave chain, only to have it tightened again. The struggle of the working class, within and outside the unions, must become the struggle to smash this chain, to abolish wage-slavery and the capitalist class that lives by it.” (pp. 110-111)

A Special Stage?

The economists of Lenin’s time and now answered this by saying that, of course, they wanted revolution too—but being “realists” they understood that first the workers must pass through a stage of economic struggle before larger questions could be broached. “Political demands,” they said, “should... correspond to the experience gained by the given stratum of workers in the economic struggle... Political agitation [must] follow in the wake of” economic struggle.

Lenin fought the creation of such special stages as confining the movement to whatever its level was at the given time. This stagist view began by cautioning against ignoring the objective situation and by “championing the cause of the working class in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle.” It inevitably led to negating political agitation in the working class, degrading the level of the party to that of a trade union, and *strengthening* the grip of the bourgeois ideology on the working class.

The bottom line of economism, Lenin showed, is the bourgeois view that workers care only for “palpable results”—bread-and-butter issues, so to speak. The cardinal issues of society, according to this wretched outlook, are beyond the interest, let alone the grasp, of the proletariat.

Lenin made clear that by political struggle he meant struggle conducted in an all-round way against the capitalist system and its government. He specifically polemicized against the kind of economist line recently promoted by the Jarvis-Bergman gang that intentionally confused fights against the government for economic benefits (e.g., unemployment compensation) with real political struggle that aims at influencing affairs of state; and he vigorously denounced the substitution of economic reforms from the government for the historic goal of overthrowing the bourgeois state and establishing the proletarian state as the objective of the working class movement.

History has proven that Lenin was right—that the proletariat must and will fight fundamentally not for the narrow and short-term interests of a few but to wipe out exploitation, carry through the struggle against all oppression and its source, remake society and emancipate all mankind from the shackles of capitalism and class society altogether. And this truth is beyond the grasp not of the workers, but of the economists and condescending saviors from Martynov of Lenin’s time down to lesser types like Jarvis and Bergman in the U.S. today.

Making Tremendous Progress

Although conditions in our country today are quite different from those in Russia when Lenin was just beginning his revolutionary activity and Marxists were just beginning to establish a deep influence in the working class, some important similarities apply. In 1896 Lenin wrote that the “transition of the workers to the steadfast struggle for their vital needs, the fight for concessions, for improved living conditions, wages and working hours, now begun all over Russia, means that Russian workers are making tremendous progress...” (“Draft and Explanation of a Programme for the Social Democratic Party,” *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 114) Although Lenin was speaking of a young working class just coming into its full development whereas ours is a working class whose

MAO TSETUNG MEMORIAL

Hold high the banner of Mao Tsetung’s immortal contributions and the achievements and lessons of the Cultural Revolution

Mao Tsetung was the greatest revolutionary of our time. People all over the world remember him with deepest respect, hold him in highest regard, and love him from the bottom of their hearts.

The Revolutionary Communist Party announces Memorial Meetings to be held this fall. Information or contributions: Mao Tsetung Memorial Committee, c/o RCP, Box 3486, Chgo. 60654



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The Hand that Lurks Behind the Nazis

As we go to press, a group of Nazis, with the blessings and protection of the federal courts, are planning a rally on July 9 in Chicago's Marquette Park. Large numbers of people are planning to be there to combat them.

This situation, centering on the Nazis, has been developing over a period of months and more. On Saturday, June 24, thousands of angry, militant people jammed the plaza and sidewalk in front of Chicago's Kluczynski Federal Building, in the heart of the downtown loop. Police had the area cordoned off since early morning. Around 4 PM, in a massive display of force, nearly 2000 uniformed cops were marched in, with the innermost ring of their formation composed of a special unit of 125 police sergeants. Police Chief O'Grady personally directed the force, while Mayor Bilandic observed the operation from a window of another federal building across the street.

The hours ticked by. It was clear the police hoped the crowd might dwindle away if they waited long enough, but it only got bigger. The city fathers sent a police van to secretly pick up the objects of their elaborate police security operation: twenty-five filthy scum of the Nazi Party. They were driven into the basement of another federal build-

ing and led through an underground corridor and then upstairs by another cordon of cops.

Finally at 6:10 PM the doors of the federal building opened and the band of jack booted jerks were escorted past the seething crowd into the middle of the police security ring. They were met with a barrage of rocks and eggs while chants of "Death to the Nazis!" and "Cops Protect the Nazis!" filled the air. After ten minutes the Nazis hastily gave their Sieg Heil salute and scurried back into the even greater safety of the federal building.

Rarely has there been such an overt display of cooperation between the Nazis and federal and local authorities. The scene was reminiscent of police protected Nazi rallies in Germany during the 1920s. And although this little band of "brownshirts" could barely be called a demonstration, the incident capped months of unprecedented national and international publicity given the Nazis by the bourgeois media.

A closer similarity between the Chicago Nazis and the European fascists of the '20s and '30s they try so hard to emulate is that the whole show was built up, financed and orchestrated by the same class forces: the capitalists.

Skokie

For 15 months this puny pack of sewer rats have been given a long leash by the bourgeoisie to spout off about their proposed march through Skokie, Illinois, a suburb north of Chicago with a large Jewish population. Just in case the Nazis didn't have a megaphone that would magnify their ravings, all the major networks and newspapers have provided them with ample time to spew out their poison that Jews run the country and that Jews, Blacks, other oppressed nationalities and communists are responsible for inflation, crime, layoffs, dope and the threat of a new world war.

When the people of Skokie, 7000 of whom are survivors of Hitler's concentration camps, united to make it clear they weren't going to allow the Nazis to traipse through their streets, the American Civil Liberties Union sprang into action to protect the Nazis' "First Amendment rights" to demonstrate.

In early June the Supreme Court gave the Nazis its blessing to go ahead and spit on the residents of Skokie. First Amendment rights? Very selective rights, applied when they serve the interests of the bourgeoisie. These are the same "impartial jurists" who only a few months before outlawed the miners' right to strike on the grounds of the Taft-Hartley Act, and who, a few

met them with a hail of bullets, gunning down 15,000 Iranian patriots.

With this brutal massacre, many illusions of "peaceful change" through gradual reforms were drowned in blood. June 5, 1963 marked the birth of a new revolutionary movement in Iran, dedicated to the overthrow and total destruction of imperialist rule and the Shah's fascist regime.

June 5, 1978—General Strike

Wave upon wave of protests, strikes, and mass uprisings have swept through Iran in recent months, drawing millions of people into political activity. As June 5 approached, revolutionary forces put out a call for a general strike and new uprisings. Even though the government had declared martial law and sent tanks and heavily armed troops out into the streets with orders of "shoot to kill," an overwhelmingly successful general strike in the main cities went ahead on June 5.

However, the Shah's fascist regime was given some breathing room due to the call put out by traditional Shiite Moslem leaders for the masses to stay at

weeks later, slashed away at the affirmative action programs won by the struggles of the masses of Black people in '60s and '70s.

Why the big promo for the Nazis from the bourgeoisie and their government agencies and press? Especially in the face of growing crisis, they are anxious to promote any sort of reactionary garbage which points the finger of blame away from their class and lousy profit system and spreads division and hatred among the masses.

Letting the Nazis run their anti-Jewish lies around the Skokie developments was also a good chance for the capitalists to whip up some support for the Zionist state of Israel. It gave the Zionists and their hoodlums, the Jewish Defense League (JDL) the opportunity to jump out and try to promote their reactionary politics and careers by using the suffering of the Jewish people during World War II as a stepping stone.

Meir Kahane, leader of the JDL, stated that: "The Jew rejects any effort to melt or integrate into non-Jewish society which is foreign to Judaism. The Jew is a proud, separate and exclusive entity with a separate destiny and direction." "[The Jews are] a special people with a special heritage and teaching whose destiny is to live in and create within the land of Israel a society of holiness and greatness that will be an inspiration and example to the world."

If you substitute the word "Aryan" for "Jew" and the "Greater German Reich" for "Land of Israel," you can see a fine example of how Nazis and Zionists are two sides of the same coin.

But having gotten their "right" to march in Skokie, the Nazis announced

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June 5 General Strike in Iran

On June 5, thousands of Iranian students converged on Washington D.C. and San Francisco to support the current revolutionary upsurge of the Iranian masses, who are dealing powerful blows to the Shah's fascist regime and to U.S. imperialist domination of Iran. Called by an ad hoc committee of progressive Iranian student organizations, including the ISA, these nationwide demonstrations also commemorated the mass uprisings that rocked Iran 15 years earlier on June 5, 1963.

While 700 demonstrated in downtown San Francisco in front of the consulate, over 2000 Iranian students—joined by a contingent of American supporters organized by the RCP, NUWO, RCYB, and ALSC—picketed across from the White House in Washington D.C. Chants of "U.S. Advisers, CIA Agents Out of Iran!" and "Long Live the New Revolutionary Movement in Iran!" rolled onto the White House lawn. Special attention was given to exposing the 30,000 U.S. military "advisors" and technicians stationed in Iran to protect the Shah's regime, and to the possibility of more direct U.S. military intervention in the face of the growing revolutionary struggle of the Iranian people.

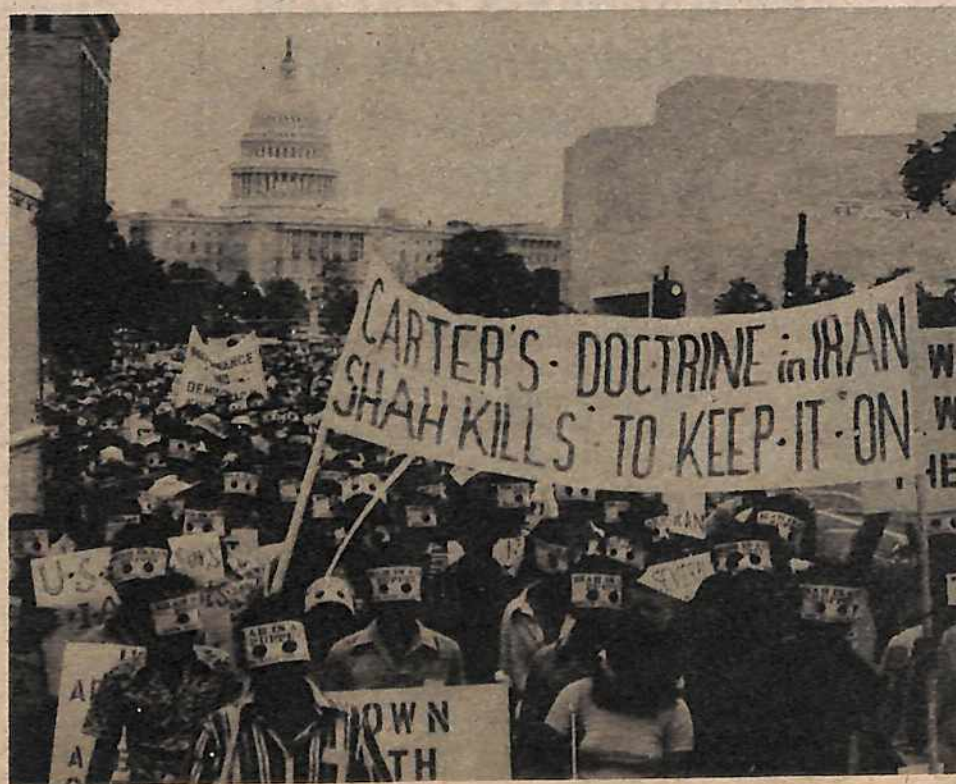
Forming neat and well-disciplined lines that filled up the whole street, the Iranian students marched through Washington D.C. Two blocks short of the Iranian embassy hundreds of riot-equipped police blocked the street. Refusing to be intimidated or provoked into a fight, the Iranian students marched right up to the police lines, shouting, "Shah is a U.S. puppet, Down with the Shah!"

Unnerved by this powerful display of unity (and no doubt by the memory of the drubbing they received during the Shah's visit to the White House last November, when a similar demonstration of Iranian students took place) the cops were left muttering to themselves as the marchers headed back towards the White House.

Uprising in 1963

In the early 1960s, the Iranian people's living conditions had deteriorated rapidly, especially with the implementation of the Shah's so called "White Revolution"—a U.S.-devised plan, with a phony land reform program at its center, that opened up Iran more than ever for intensified imperialist exploitation.

The mass struggles of the people reached their climax on June 5, 1963, when hundreds of thousands of workers, peasants, students and progressive religious leaders and shopkeepers poured into the streets to protest the deepening economic crisis and the Shah's repressive measures. The masses' demands for reforms were drowned in blood, as the Shah's U.S.-armed and trained troops



Iranian students demonstrate on June 5, commemorating the mass uprisings of June 5, 1963 in Iran, and supporting the current upsurge which is rocking the rule of the Shah and the U.S. imperialists in Iran.

home, stay off the streets and turn June 5 into a day of "glorious silence." Particularly after the massacre of 500 people in the religious city of Qum in January, openly reformist leaders such as Ayatollah Shariat Madari—who calls for greater "liberalization" within the Shah's fascist regime and for giving the Islamic Church a direct role in running the government—made a strong bid to seize leadership of the mass movement from the top.

The reactionary stands taken by these self-proclaimed leaders have given the regime and U.S. imperialism ammunition to slander the people's movement as "religious fanatics opposed to the Shah's modernization policies." More than that, the regime has given a great deal of publicity to Shariat Madari and others in order to blunt the revolutionary thrust of the mass uprisings that have rocked Iran, as well as to combat the growing influence of revolutionaries and Marxist-Leninist forces among the masses.

While large and growing sections of the masses have moved far beyond the reformist political outlook of the conservative Moslem leaders, their influence among the masses is still considerable—as demonstrated by their ability (assisted, of course, by the presence of heavy tanks and machine guns on major street corners) to keep the general strike from going over to mass uprisings in Tehran, Qum, Tabriz and other cities on June 5.

Still, in a large number of cities and towns, the Moslem "leaders" calls for a day of "glorious silence" were ignored, and tens of thousands staged demonstrations. New uprisings took place in a number of northern cities bordering on the Caspian Sea, and in Nadjafabad, a small city near the steel center of Isfahan, thousands of townspeople fought the Shah's troops for hours in the streets.

Recently the Shah blustered (with an unmistakable undertone of worry), "No one can overthrow me—I have the power." But while a number of obstacles remain in the way of the final overthrow of the Shah's fascist regime and imperialism, including massive U.S. military backing, the deep economic and political crisis gripping Iranian society is and will continue to propel the masses of people forward. And this, together with the further development of genuine communist leadership in the heat of the revolutionary struggle of the Iranian masses is increasingly threatening to shatter the Shah's claim. ■

"Tax Revolt" Won't Ease Masses' Burden

Billed as the 2nd American Revolution, the passage of the Jarvis-Gann property tax limitation initiative in California's June 6th election has been splashed all over the front pages of every newspaper in the country. Mad as hell and unwilling to take it anymore, so the line goes, California voters sent a by heavy inflation, has meant the decreased profitability of the construction of new housing units. And, of course, without the possibility of an acceptable rate of profit, new housing simply isn't built.

But what events prior to and following the election have obscured is the fact that under capitalism there can be no real relief for the masses, because it is a system based on the exploitation and oppression of the vast majority of the people by a handful of parasites whose robbery only grows more intense in periods of economic crisis.

Deepening Crisis

In fact, it is exactly the crisis which gave rise to both the support for and objections to Proposition 13. People in California faced the choices that are similarly being offered to the people, particularly in this country's urban areas. These are choices of poison which amount to the freedom to choose between increased taxation or drastic cut-backs in services. And as subsequent events in California are beginning to show, even this is a deceit. The reality of the situation is that, far from providing relief in any fashion for the masses of people, the needs of capital in crisis can only mean further attacks on both fronts.

In recent years, there has been a wave of anger at climbing property taxes in California. This, in the main, was the basis of the support for Proposition 13 which, if completely implemented, will

limit by law the tax on property to 1% of the market value of the property, as well as freezing assessments on some property at the 1975 level.

California relies much more heavily on property taxes as a key source of revenue than many other states. County assessors assess the value of houses based on what the potential selling price is. These prices have doubled and tripled in recent years.

Presently, the average price of a new house in Southern California looms at \$65,000. Typically, in one suburb of L.A., a house which sold for \$20,000 in 1960 now has a market value of over \$80,000.

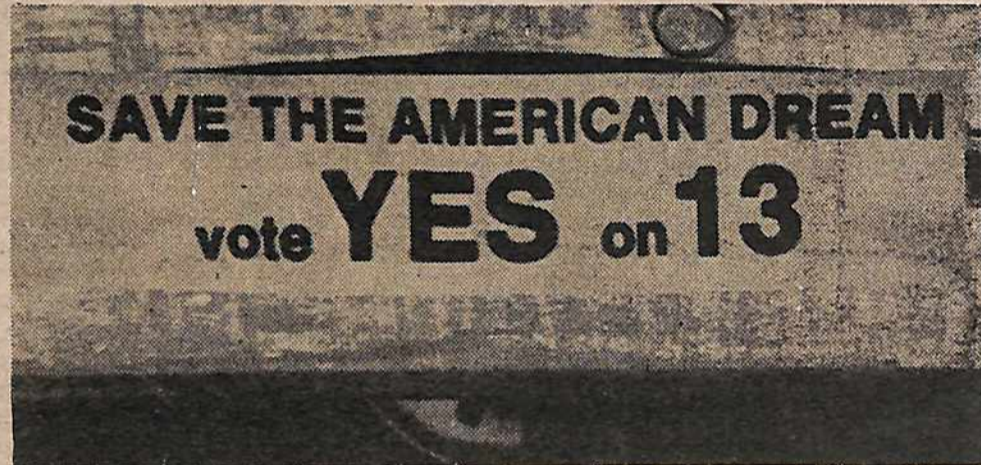
People have been hard hit. The press abounds with stories of elderly people living on fixed incomes, forced out of their homes by high taxes. Rents have gone up. Many workers, after paying off the bank for 20 or 30 years, are now compelled to sell their places under the burden of outrageous tax bills. Also squeezed particularly hard have been sections of the petty bourgeoisie as their neighborhoods have experienced an

even more dramatic increase in home values.

These soaring values have roots in the anarchy of capitalism, a system under which production ceases when incapable of producing an adequate profit. As the economy sputters and lunges into deeper crisis, the construction industry has been unable to escape the fate of capitalism generally. Sharp drops in the rate of profit, spurred on especially by heavy inflation, has meant the decreased profitability of the construction of new housing units. And, of course, without the possibility of an acceptable rate of profit, new housing simply isn't built.

New housing starts in L.A. County fell from over 40,000 in 1971 to under 15,000 in 1976. All this has led to a housing shortage with, for example, 2,000 people recently drawing straws in a lottery for 40 available new units in one Black community in L.A. The housing shortage, which in turn has given rise to heavy speculation, has fueled the soaring costs.

This heavy burden of high property



Bumper sticker for the Jarvis-Gann "tax relief" referendum, whose backers demagogically promised to "save the American dream" of a house of your own.

taxes due to increased values as it has developed in the last couple of years, is primarily what gave Howard Jarvis some following in the last election—a following, it's important to note, that he hasn't had before even though he's been pushing the same program since the early 1960's.

Ideological Poison

But also, no small part of the "debate" over Proposition 13 were the heavy bourgeois ideological trappings that surrounded the initiative.

"We want government for the people, not the welfare recipients," Jarvis would state again and again during the campaign, "it's time that government trimmed the fat." Jarvis also went on to stress that the American dream of owning one's own house was becoming a thing of the past, not stressing that people wouldn't have a decent place to live so much as that they wouldn't be able to acquire property.

This demagoguery is the classic appeal to the petty bourgeoisie, which is being crushed by the further concentration of capital and which dreams the impossible dream of having capitalism without the inevitable concentration of capital into monopoly.

In addition to the overall promotion of a petty bourgeois outlook, Jarvis' "trim the fat" nonsense has served to promote among the masses the mistaken notion that society is not divided into classes, with the antagonism between workers and capitalists at the center, but is divided into various "constituencies" with each group out for itself and the others to blame for the problem. One section of the masses must suffer if the other is to prosper. Homeowners vs. renters, private vs. public workers, taxpayers vs. welfare recipients—and so on.

One politician who rode the crest of pro-13 sentiment used as part of his campaign propaganda the fact that there were many people living in Europe on L.A. County welfare checks!

But the fact is that the needs of capital to expand determine fundamentally what happens (or doesn't) in cap-

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NATO, Zaire Meetings

U.S. Talks Tough, Sharpens Knives

"A New Cold War?" asked the headline in *Time* magazine as the U.S. cracked the whip at a high-level NATO meeting in Washington, against the background of U.S.-orchestrated military intervention in Zaire. "The Soviets have broken the code of detente," complained Carter's National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, speaking of the invasion of Zaire by Soviet-sponsored mercenaries. "The opening of a new phase in U.S.-Soviet relations," declared *Newsweek* after Carter's speech at the U.S. Naval Academy, his rhetoric a notch below Brzezinski's. And for the rest of the month of June the U.S. press was filled with speculation about the future of detente.

The Soviet Union, for its part, warned in a major statement of June 17 that "changes dangerous to the cause of peace are taking place in the policy of the U.S.A." The Soviets insist that they have not violated detente. Rather, they say, "representatives of groupings that would like to undermine detente" are gaining the upper hand in the U.S., and influencing Jimmy Carter.

Carter replied in Fort Worth that "I am President, and I make the final decision." Further, he trumpeted: "We are not going to let the Soviet Union push us around."

Of course U.S.-Soviet contention (highlighted so graphically by the events in Zaire) is nothing new. From the first, "detente" has been used by Washington to mean that the Soviets had better

not interfere with the U.S. empire, while Moscow has meant by it that the U.S. had better not try to stop them.

But while there has not been a qualitative change in this situation, there has been a quantitative one. The last few weeks have seen an intensification of superpower conflict. The U.S., especially, has moved to more openly confront the Soviets. These weeks have also seen the U.S. take action to tighten up its bloc of fellow Western imperialists and hired Third World flunkies. These moves all have one object: they are preparations for an inter-imperialist world war between blocs headed by the two superpowers.

Thus, while Zaire was being invaded, first by pro-Soviet forces and then by the French Foreign Legion and Belgian paratroopers, Washington was also pushing NATO to make further practical preparations for fighting a war against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations in Europe.

NATO Meeting

The heads of the governments of the 15 member nations of NATO met on the last two days of May. The majority of time was devoted to U.S. proposals for building up NATO in Europe. President Carter opened the closed-door talks by saying that "The Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries pose a military threat to our alliance which far exceeds their legitimate security needs.

For more than a decade, the military power of the Soviet Union has steadily expanded, and it has grown consistently more sophisticated. In significant areas, the military lead we once enjoyed has been reduced."

This was followed by concrete proposals to strengthen NATO militarily—and to iron out secondary conflicts within NATO that have undermined its role as the core of the U.S.-backed war bloc against the Soviet Union.

Carter went on to say, "Our alliance centers on Europe, but our vigilance cannot be limited just to that continent." He was speaking of the U.S.-backed invasion of Zaire by France and Belgium, and calling for more of the same, (Although France is not formally a member of NATO, in substance it more and more might as well be.)

What all this reflected was both the U.S. domination of NATO and the relation between Europe as the focus of superpower contention and the conflicts such as those in Africa, where the people are struggling for national liberation and the superpowers are jockeying for position to prepare for a global war focused in Europe.

Carter's program, described as the most "far-reaching" since the establishment of NATO in 1949, was approved without much debate. It included measures to bring other NATO countries into line behind the U.S. as well as to facilitate more direct U.S. military action in Europe.

The European imperialist powers in the U.S. bloc agreed to increase their military spending by 3% a year for the next ten to fifteen years over and above the rise of inflation. Some of the weaker NATO countries had been reluctant to do this in the past because of their already precarious economic position, which the U.S. has used to make further economic inroads across the Atlantic.

These countries also agreed to double the number of NATO anti-tank weapons in Europe, jointly produce fifteen new kinds of missiles and to make other

huge armament increases. Exactly which imperialists are to make which weapons—and reap the profits from doing so—has been a sharp bone of contention within NATO in the past few years. The U.S. has been forced to allow its smaller partners to share in the bonanza, but under this program the fact that the European imperialists buy far more weapons from the U.S. than the U.S. buys from them has become even more pronounced. The European countries also agreed to common supply dumps and an increase in ammunition stocks for U.S. troops to pick up when they land in Europe.

The U.S., for its part, will "contribute" half of the \$60-\$80 billion all this will cost. It is also making arrangements to be able to double the number of American troops in Europe within two weeks of any outbreak. Part of this involves a plan under which U.S. civilian aircraft would immediately become part of the U.S. armed forces, with pilots and crews simply changing uniforms before taking off for Europe loaded with troops and equipment. American and Canadian air force exercises have already been altered so as to focus on training for European combat and supply missions. And along with this the U.S. is planning to increase the number and equipment of the several hundred thousand servicemen now stationed in Europe.

But despite the fact that the U.S. is the only imperialist power capable of heading up the Western bloc—and the other Western imperialists have to pay the devil his due—still there is conflict and contradiction within this bloc. The NATO meeting for instance, was not able to come to agreement on Zaire. This was in part due to the Scandinavian and other smaller powers who have little direct investment of their own in Zaire and feel that this is not a particularly advantageous place to make a stand against the USSR. So a week later

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Mensheviks in the Slag Heap

Forging Correct Line In Steel

Summing up work in the steel industry in light of the two-line struggle against the Menshevik, Jarvis-Bergman headquarters formerly in the RCP has important lessons and implications for the Party's work overall. The struggle over how the Party should carry out its tasks among steel workers, while not so sharp or open in this industry as it was in a few other areas of work, reflected the overall two-line struggle in the Party. Although the Mensheviks did not have hegemony in the Party's steel work, their line and their influence was widespread and corrosive. The road down which they would have dragged the whole Party had their line won out becomes clearer in some of their hare-brained schemes and revisionist formulations for the Party's activity in steel. Today as the Party implements its PROGRAMME free from the interference and sabotage of these Mensheviks, and with a deeper understanding resulting from the struggle against and defeat of their line, it becomes possible and necessary to examine these influences.

The basic approach of the Mensheviks to work in steel had its origins in the syndicalism and economism which had been a hallmark of this clique from its very beginnings. Essentially, they saw the struggle of steel workers as being a self-contained one—defined and determined by the boundaries of the steel industry and the perimeters of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA). It was—according to their outlook—a struggle of steel workers against the steel companies, of dissidents within the union against the hacks.

It was a struggle whose first stage (but in reality whose highest aim) was to reclaim the union, with Party members and the activists grouped around them the "biggest and baddest" dissidents of all. Increasingly, they saw their task as coaxing and cajoling hacks or would-be hacks and opportunists of various stripes into action, while they themselves would jockey and maneuver for position. Anything that stood in the way of this or detracted from their petty careerism was poison. Accordingly, one of their current luminaries opposed the Party's campaign to expose and hit back at the Presidential election of 1976 declaring that "steel workers are only interested in steel, sex and sports."

Struggle Over Role of Steelworker

These Mensheviks tried to stamp their vision on THE STEELWORKER newspaper which had been established in late 1975 by Party members and rank and file activists from the steel industry. Much of the impetus for the paper came from a successful demonstration held at the USWA Convention in Atlantic City the year before.

The main purpose of the paper was to spread the word and lessons of important struggles within the steel industry, as well as other sections of the working class, and to build these struggles, since the hacks

would inevitably pour cold water on them and spread defeatism. The need for such a rank and file voice and center of resistance was demonstrated by way of negative example in early 1975 when workers at Youngstown Sheet and Tube wildcatted for three days over the elimination of several jobs in defiance of the no-strike agreement. Word of this major struggle was blacked out by the hacks and they were able to isolate and contain it.

On the other hand, with such a paper it became possible, for instance, to develop a national campaign out of the struggle of Local 3059 (a small fabricating local which had been put into receivership because of its militant strike activity), culminating in a powerful demonstration in Pittsburgh and the eventual freeing of the local.

This struggle illustrates the use of the single spark method called for in the Party's PROGRAMME. The militant fight of Local 3059 against the sabotage of the International concentrated the feelings and determination of tens of thousands of steel workers who daily experience the jackboot of the International officials. What started as a small, isolated battle was turned into a question for steel workers across the country, exactly because it spoke to their hatred for this treachery, and important strides forward in struggle and organization throughout the industry were made.

THE STEELWORKER had other important functions as well. It was necessary to expose the collaboration of the International and their lower level flunkies with the capitalists, the doctrine of common interests they preached, and the multitude of ways they try to keep workers chained to this whole rotten system. When particular ideological assaults were launched against the rank and file, like the recent imports hysteria, THE STEELWORKER could play an important role combating them. In addition, it could put forward a clear and proletarian stand on questions around which there was much struggle and controversy, such as the Consent Decree (an agreement by which minority workers would be given a cash bonus if they dropped charges of past discrimination.)

THE STEELWORKER in short, could help link up and coordinate struggle within the steel industry, help clarify the important questions and issues faced by steel workers, and promote more solid organization. But, fundamentally, the task of THE STEELWORKER was to help build the fight of steel workers as part of the fight of the whole working class, and to help steel workers see their struggle in this light.

From the start, however, there was a sharp struggle over the role and content of THE STEELWORKER. Would it simply become a hodge-podge of what's happening in the steel industry, or would it identify the pressing questions and struggles faced by steel workers and their key tasks, so that their strength could be concentrated? Would THE STEELWORKER wall off the struggles of steel workers from the rest of the working

class, or would it show the common fight of the whole working class and draw the links between these struggles and all those resisting the rule of capital? Would it approach particular struggles from the standpoint of narrow interests alone—particularly from the standpoint of the struggle against the company men now in control of the steel union—or would it take up these struggles from the standpoint of developing a conscious movement of the working class fighting the capitalists on every front?

In its coverage, THE STEELWORKER was at best uneven. It did not always bring home in a living way the experiences and lessons of battles outside the steel industry, like the rubber workers' and coal miners' strikes. These things got thrown in with articles simply describing, here is what's happening here and what's happening there. Furthermore, it did not always situate the important battles and questions of steel within the context of the whole working class. Often, attacks like the Experimental Negotiations Agreement (ENA, which takes away the right to strike) and productivity committees or the more recent layoffs and shutdowns were treated as matters purely internal to the steel industry.

This was especially pronounced with attempts to explain the crisis which, more often than not, became a "steel industry crisis." In the final issue of THE STEELWORKER under the Mensheviks editorial direction, the front page was emblazoned with the headline "Industry Closing Down—Mills Closing Everywhere." Apart from the "sky is falling" level of analysis there was no attempt made to talk about how this effort by the steel capitalists to reorganize the industry was linked with the overall capitalist crisis nor how these shutdowns represented a challenge to the whole working class requiring more advanced forms of struggle to marshal the strength of the whole class.

In the regularly appearing editorial statement of THE STEELWORKER, called "Where We Stand," the Mensheviks expressed their orientation this way: "We as workers have no interest in taking the company attacks like layoffs, low wages, job combinations, speed-up, bad working conditions and discrimination on the chin. Our only salvation is to fight the steel companies tooth and nail, to resist these attacks, to formulate and fight for our demands and in the course of each struggle to unite our ranks tighter while constantly building a bigger and still bigger movement to win our just demands. As a big part of this fight we also have to fight the company interests in our union. We have to make our union truly our organization, an organization that actively fights in the interests of the rank and file. . . This newspaper can serve its function to communicate what is going on in our fight to push the steel companies off our backs." (our emphasis)

While the idea of resisting the company attacks can certainly be united with, this statement contained in embryo much of the subsequent reformism and syndicalism of these Mensheviks, the view they promoted being basically to build a bigger and bigger steel workers movement which would be capable of winning more and more demands and pushing the steel companies off the backs of steel workers.

There was no sense of an enemy that was larger than the management of one mill or the barons of one industry nor, as is correctly expressed in the editorial of the most recent issue of THE STEELWORKER, now out of the hands of the Mensheviks, that the fight is "alongside the rest of the working class. We're fighting the whole damn system, and if we are serious about fighting for our freedom, we've got to build the kind

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One Year Later

Humboldt Park Still Smolders

One year after the flames of rebellion exploded, Chicago's Puerto Rican Humboldt Park/West Town community is still smoldering. In open, proud and joyful defiance of the capitalists' efforts, many thousands of Puerto Ricans filled Humboldt Park on June 24, the anniversary of last year's mass uprising which swept this community after the police murder of two Puerto Rican youths.

Ever since the "riot," and especially as the annual Puerto Rican Day Parade approached this year, the Chicago press and some plump Puerto Rican frontmen on the federal and city "anti-poverty" payroll have been carrying on about how what the people need is a Puerto Rican alderman so that they can have some "clout." They quote one Puerto Rican saying, "The riot was like going on a drunk—you feel worse afterward." And the press gave special attention to "the

gang problem" in and around Humboldt Park in the weeks before the anniversary, laying the basis for explaining away any new uprising that might occur and justifying police attacks in advance.

This year's Puerto Rican Day Parade, a traditional celebration of the patron saint of Puerto Rico, reflected the bourgeoisie's efforts. In addition to the mayor and the usual local dignitaries, they even flew in the governor of Puerto Rico, whose presence in Chicago for the first time this year showed how concerned the capitalists were to have a Puerto Rican bigshot on the reviewing stand.

Some local corporations, such as Jewel Foodstores, also put big money into the parade to show how much Chicago's "business community" loves Puerto Ricans and to make the parade a safe outlet for Puerto Ricans' national pride and anger at oppression. The rest of the floats were mainly put up by church groups. But still, both because of the heavy-handed top-down character of the parade and because of fears of clashes with police, fewer Puerto Ricans attended the downtown event this year than last.

The National United Workers Organization, together with the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade and others took part in the parade, marching behind a float and giant banners proclaiming (in Spanish), "Moody Park, Humboldt Park—It's Right to Rebel Against Oppression! Down with Discrimination and Inequality! Free Puerto Rico!" The banners, chants and leaflets linking the rebellion against national oppression to the working class' fight against all oppression were very warmly received by many people all along the parade route. This was especially true when the contingent stopped to chant "It's Right to Rebel" in front of the reviewing stand, to the mayor's obvious embarrassment.

Traditionally families go to picnic in Humboldt

Park after the downtown parade. This year the capitalists were clearly uncomfortable about so many oppressed gathering together on the site of last year's rebellion. They used the dual tactics of intimidation and diversion. They worked through church groups to organize a late afternoon mass for "peace in the Park." But not relying on this entirely, huge numbers of riot-equipped police and National Guardsmen, especially MPs, massed in the park in an early morning show of force.

Their initial efforts failed to keep everyone out of the park as it became apparent that this would provoke strong resistance from people who weren't about to let the only park in the area be taken away from them, especially on this day. Thereafter the capitalists kept their uniformed cops and soldiers back, confining themselves to sending in plainclothesmen to talk to gang members and some church people to talk to others to "prevent trouble." When some uniformed cops did appear, much to the embarrassment of the "peace in the Park" people who'd promised that the cops wouldn't come in, they were driven off by the crowd.

Throughout the afternoon, people who'd been in the parade contingent circulated through the park, talking to people and giving out a WORKER leaflet summing up last year's uprising, the continuing and worsening conditions in the community, and the oppression of Puerto Ricans and its source in capitalist rule. The giant red banner with the three demands was raised. The result was much heated discussion and a great deal of interest and support.

The thousands of people who gathered to picnic on the spot where the uprising had begun considered the afternoon a real victory and a real slap in the face to the powers that be, a fact which added greatly to everyone's enjoyment.■

Auto Elections Used to Hit Two-Headed Monster

This spring, Auto Workers United to Fight (AWUF) took on a campaign around the elections in the UAW. AWUF ran candidates for local union office in 12 Big 3 locals around the country. In addition, candidates were run in a couple other UAW shops, and in cases where AWUF didn't run, it carried out agitation and exposures around the elections, drawing out the real questions facing the rank and file. AWUF made a respectable showing, with vote totals mainly ranging between 200 to 500. Of course the significance of the numbers vary from local to local, with respect to how many voted overall, whether the office was plant-wide or a subdivision, and so forth. But these votes did represent significant numbers of workers making a strong statement in agreement with AWUF's line. And in a couple of plants, AWUF candidates won alternate committeeman positions.

To prepare for this battle meant first and foremost getting prepared politically—why were AWUF, and Party members within AWUF, taking on this election struggle.

To begin with, it meant recognizing that the practical, political and ideological chains of the union leadership get concentrated in many ways around the elections. And the line they preach of class collaboration, painless progress through the grievance procedure, look out for No. 1 (your job, your plant, your industry), and "don't interfere with production, leave your problems to us" still has a considerable hold among many workers.

The bourgeoisification of the unions didn't start yesterday, and while the overall experience of the rank and file in auto and other industries shows clearly the stupidity and treachery of such a line, these lessons are not automatically summed up by the broad masses. There is a strong tendency to see problems with the union as being the fault of individuals in power, with the solution being to simply replace the individuals.

This view also gives rise to a bourgeois view on how to conduct election campaigns. There is a pull to go the "safe" route, avoid controversy, make friends and cut deals. "Don't get too political just make sure everyone's got your name and ballot" is the conventional wisdom. All this is reinforced by the complete political prostitution of the hacks, and would-be hacks, at election time. While for many workers the example they set is disgusting, for a long time this has been the *only* example. Also the fact that many would-be reformers, sometimes starting out with honest intentions, end up in the same bag, adds to the cynicism among workers.

A Conscious Break

All this experience serves as excellent raw material to learn from, to make a more conscious radical break with the various bourgeois deadends of the past. At the same time, all this represents a tradition that weighs heavily on the backs of the workers. And it takes a real struggle to make this conscious break. This holds true for communists as well.

A sharp question among the masses was "It's easy to see how the present leadership represents obstacles to the workers. And it's good to get them out of the workers' path. But what's to keep you from being any different if you get into office?" Answering this question in the course of the campaign sharpened up among comrades and the masses what it meant to rely on the masses politically, on what basis the campaign was being carried out, and just what it meant to "win" or "lose" in the elections.

It was essential to reject any notion that saw getting elected as the main objective, which would limit the political freedom in carrying out the campaign to whatever would serve this objective.

Such an outlook leads to seeking the "lowest common denominator" among the workers and making the decisive difference between communists and other politically advanced workers on the one hand, and the hacks on the other, mainly a question of militancy and good intentions.

The dividing line had to be clearly established as a political one. AWUF's stand of basing itself on the antagonistic contradiction between labor and capital, of fighting for the real needs and interests of the workers had to be contrasted sharply with the class collaborationism of the hacks, which handcuffs the rank and file in the face of inevitable attacks by the companies and tries to shackle the workers with the myth of "common interests" bet-

ween the capitalist class and the working class. The question of who makes history—the masses or a handful of slick talking "leaders"—also had to be recognized and brought out in the campaign. And beyond this, communists had the special task of making clear that, in the final analysis, it was a question of whether the working class will smash the chains of wage slavery, or be forever doomed to the terms of this system.

It would not do to cover up these differences in the elections—using "militant trade unionism" as a "third ideology." These questions had to be sharpened up among the broad masses of workers. To conduct the campaign by steering clear of political controversy over the real nature of the class struggle and the role of union leadership in relationship to it would not help the masses break from this rut.

This was the basic perspective developed among Party members who belong to AWUF. A meeting of the Detroit AWUF steering committee was held in February 1978. (With chapters in about 20 UAW locals nationwide, AWUF is headquartered in Detroit.) Through discussion and struggle and on the basis of summing up AWUF's expe-

rience nationwide since its formation in the struggle around the 1976 contract, steering committee members arrived at a unified line to take out to AWUF as a whole.

AWUF Letter

A letter was sent out to chapters around the country. It was distributed fairly broadly—in the hundreds—among active and advanced workers, and was a helpful tool in putting the elections in a broader perspective, and it sparked a lot of lively discussion on what it meant to build this campaign.

The letter characterized what the workers were up against—not just a few hacks, but a two-headed monster of the companies and the union leadership. It brought out that the key to the hacks' treachery wasn't their self-serving careerism, but their class collaborationism—concentrated particularly at the top levels of the union and extending down through the lower levels. The letter characterized "the social relationship between the two-headed monster and the workers themselves. The workers are told to be passive and obedient slaves. If

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Auto Workers United to Fight in the NUWO contingent at African Liberation Day march in Detroit. The NUWO and its industrial sections like AWUF take up key battles on every front against the ruling class.

Steering Committee Meets NUWO Sums Up, Plots Advance

Only nine months after its Founding Convention in Chicago, the National United Workers Organization held its 2nd National Steering Committee meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to sum up past work, consolidate its victory over the recently defeated gang of misleaders (see "NUWO Defeats Wreckers," *Revolution* March, 1978), and set the stage for new advances.

The meeting, held in Detroit over the Memorial Day weekend, was attended by representatives from 27 chapters and cities across the country, and was characterized by lively struggle over many questions of political importance to the working class.

It was a sharp contrast to the first NSC meeting last November which was burdened by the dead weight of the former self-proclaimed "NUWO President" and his cronies, who saw the NUWO as their personal property and stifled any efforts to develop it into a political organization of the working class with a real life of its own.

After a lot of discussion, the NSC united on and passed a resolution describing the role and stand of the

NUWO. The resolution affirmed that the NUWO unites workers of all nationalities from plants and industries all across the country into one organization, with industrial and area sections, and that it takes up key battles and struggles of the working class and other sections of the people and seeks to develop them into campaigns of the whole working class.

In doing this the NUWO utilizes the "single spark" method of concentrating the forces of the working class around, and popularizing, the most important battles going on in society. In keeping with this stand and outlook, the NSC reaffirmed the crucial importance of the NUWO's two main slogans: "The Working Class And The Capitalist Class Have Nothing in Common," and "Workers Unite To Lead The Fight Against All Oppression."

The delegates heard reports from representatives involved in the various campaigns the NUWO has taken up in the past nine months, including the miners' strike, the mass rebellion of the Chicano people in Houston, May Day and African Liberation Day.

The delegates from the Miners Right To Strike Committee (MRTSC) pointed out that the recent miners' strike was a victory for the whole working class, despite the fact that the miners eventually returned to work with a rotten contract. The capitalists had used phony pleas to "patriotism" and "the national interest" to oppose the miners. When that failed, they used cops and court injunctions, mass arrests and red-baiting in an all-out effort to smash the wildcat movement and demoralize the miners. But they did not meet with success.

The NSC summed up that, despite the sabotage of the gang of misleaders, the NUWO was able to take up the miners' strike and build it as a major campaign involving many workers across the country in a relatively short period of time, and it was built as a front-line battle of the class. This was reflected in the slogan "A Victory For The Miners Is A Victory For The Working Class!"

The demonstration in Charleston, West Virginia, called by the MRTSC and the NUWO, had a powerful effect throughout the coalfields, breaking through the capitalists' lies that other workers did not and would not support the strike, and it was a big advance for the NUWO. Indeed, the steering committee summed up that the work of the MRTSC and the NUWO in this strike confirmed the need for and the great potential of the NUWO.

Reports were heard concerning recent NUWO activity around ALD and the fight against police terror and national

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"Promote Revolutionary Struggles"

Party Speech At RCYB Convention

At the recent convention of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, Comrade William Klingel, a leading member of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, gave an important address on behalf of the Central Committee. His speech concentrated on the tasks of the RCYB in promoting revolutionary struggles in the period ahead. Comrade Klingel began his speech by reviewing the history of the two-line struggle in the Revolutionary Communist Party and the Revolutionary Union that was the core in forming the Party. The excerpts printed below follow from this point in the speech. Edited text.

These people [the Jarvis-Bergman clique] never really united with the earlier struggles led by the Revolutionary Union and the consistent revolutionary line that was a part of it. How could they? These people hold the current U.S. national record for narrowness and they're striving to achieve advanced world levels. Lenin summed up their position quite well, "gazing with awe on the posterior of the proletariat." [laughter]

And what's the heart of the difference with them? Why do we say that their line is a counterrevolutionary line, whereas ours is a revolutionary line? They're not just moving slowly forward in their squatted down position, they're moving to counterrevolution. Their line of tailing behind the events of the day, of dismissing questions of principle as idealism, leads to serving up the masses to be smashed. And particularly that will be true with the outbreak of an imperialist war, when the war propaganda gets pitched up, when maybe there's some temporary increase in the economic and political strength of the bourgeoisie, perhaps a little economic pick-up—there'll be people like Jarvis around, even if Jarvis himself has choked on his Twinkies and died, [laughter] and they will jump to defend the U.S. bourgeoisie in a minute, and all in the name of the masses.

... There is a very basic question that came up among ourselves. What is our struggle for anyway? Is it really a struggle to move society and history to a whole new stage, to eliminate the oppression and exploitation of man by man? Or is it just an opportunity for some new would-be big shots and exploiters to run things, and maybe get a little revenge on the old guys who they replace? The first was the sweeping revolutionary world view and the fighting stand of Mao Tsetung. The second was and is the revisionist world view. Our Mensheviks hated Mao's sweeping view. What a frightening thought, what if socialism isn't really your chance to get over, if it isn't your chance to settle down and feather your nest, and instead there is a never-ending struggle, even after communism, to keep on moving forward, to keep on transforming the world and yourself in the process? Then they didn't want a damn thing to do with it if that's what it was. But for the masses of people, this view and this view alone corresponds to their real interests and their real needs...

Now through all this, this history, through every struggle runs a common thread, a common theme, a theme the Mensheviks cursed and cursed, and one that we have to cherish as a gain of the struggle. That gain is an ever deepening grasp on the sweeping revolutionary view of society and our tasks, which the science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought brings out. This viewpoint exactly raises our sights, and not to Cloud 9 like the Mensheviks would say, but as Mao Tsetung put it, it is like a telescope and a microscope that enables us to see beyond the immediate and apparent features of what's happening right before our eyes. Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought gives

us a sweeping view that enables us to see the main, the forward-running stream of history. But—and here's the more important point, so that we don't sit up in the clouds—seeing this mainstream we're able to see how every little current of struggle, no matter how twisted it is by meanderings or counter-currents, can be brought forward by the work of revolutionaries to contribute to building that mainstream of revolution.

It's like Lenin said, and he said it powerfully, "Communism springs from positively every sphere of public life." Without this sweeping view, when we're in the midst of daily happenings and struggles we can't see the pattern. But armed with it, it is as if we have climbed a mountain top and yet not lost contact with what lies below and leads up to it. This view, this weapon, enables us to be in the thick of mass struggle, and at the same time see the larger picture that any struggle is a part of. This is why Marxism is in fact like a magic weapon. But it is not any witches' concoction at all, it's a science based on the objective laws of nature and society. And it's not a weapon to be admired or stroked, it's a weapon to be fired.

By grasping this sweeping view, we're not driven to dwell in the clouds. In fact we're more inspired than ever, and have more clarity than ever, to go out into the thick of the mass struggles. Not just as bringers of truth and light, but as active revolutionaries, fighters against the bourgeoisie, agitating, exposing, and leading the masses in the fight.

We can see more our real role, which is not just as some sort of passive truth bearers, although we do have truths of Marxism-Leninism to bring to the struggle and we should bring them, but more it's like seeds, or (if you're into chemistry) catalysts, which make various broad and diverse elements come together in forward revolutionary motion. That's the real role of communists, and something we should be able to see, if we get this sweeping view.

All this speaks very directly to the tasks facing the RCYB today, at this meeting and beyond. Victories have been won, but no one can rest content with their laurels. That's very dangerous. Laurels were rewards they gave heroes in ancient times, wreaths they wore in their hair. But laurels can get heavy, they can become a burden. These victories, this line, can and must be made into a real material force among the masses, so as to "transform the world through class struggle," as our Party's *Programme* says.

This means carrying out all three tasks that Comrade Bob Avakian, the Chairman of the Central Committee of our Party, laid out at the founding convention of the RCYB: leading the struggles of youth, uniting youth with broad sections of the American people and fighting at the side of the working class against the imperialist system, and struggling widely and openly in the realm of ideas with people, propagating communism. And I also should say, and I know Comrade Avakian agrees with me, that these refer to three external tasks that the Brigade has to take up. There's also the internal task of building up the Brigade, in both numbers and in revolutionary understanding, and finding the ways to do that in a way that's lively and broad and, like we talked about, in a way that learns from the Panthers and Young Lords with their mass study of Marxism-Leninism, bringing it out in a way that the masses of youth can grasp.

Promote Revolutionary Struggles

But of all these tasks, the main thing for the RCYB overall is going out broadly and deeply among the masses of youth and promoting revolutionary

struggles, mass struggles that attack and expose the system. And this is especially important given the situation in the United States and the world today, which as we have said is not a revolutionary situation. Nor is it a situation where things are going in a straight line down. But, more importantly, our understanding is that in fact things are leading to the potential for great upsurges in a revolutionary direction. In fact, that's not just some distant dream, that's not just something we know about because "it's inevitable" in some general sense. We can see the shape of things to come in a lot of the things that are going on today before our very eyes. Hell, we saw it in Houston in Moody Park. How about Humboldt Park a year ago? How about the miners?

At the same time the thing was going down in Houston, out near Los Angeles—I read in *THE WORKER* for the L.A. area—there was a rebellion on Cinco de Mayo in Ontario, California. A few days later some youth called the police for "assistance" and when the cops arrived they got a little dose of something from the top of a building—rocks and bottles. The cops said, "They just don't seem to like us around here." [Applause]

So we can see the shape of things to come, and that this is going to be a period not of straight ahead stuff but of growing big storms, and we should grasp this clearly and base our actions on it.

Now what do we mean in promoting revolutionary struggles? Well I suggest you ask the Houston pig department about that. [applause] Since we're here in Texas, and even if we weren't we would say it, the comrades in Houston have been doing an excellent job in going deep and broad among the masses, in doggedly pursuing and persisting in agitation, in exposing the bourgeoisie, in exposing and fighting the pigs, and in combatting all sorts of agents of the bourgeoisie, in exposing them concretely in the course of struggle and delivering bold and revolutionary blows to the bourgeoisie in Houston. This is what we mean by promoting revolutionary struggles. And this didn't happen in just one flare-up. This has been the result of some work over a long period of time, revolutionary work.

All this is a far cry from what the Mensheviks used to call, laughingly enough, "waging big battles," and in this connection let's be clear that the banner of waging big battles does not belong to these Mensheviks. True they used this phrase to wipe out a most important point, that communists aren't just mindless fight-fight-fighters, but do work on all fronts to build for revolution. But their idea of big battles was also governed by their same point of view and it was *reformist*. Their idea of a big battle was the demo they planned, the buses they rented, and the stage play gimmicks they carried out...

The Mensheviks said they couldn't take up the struggle at Kent State because of the Wall Street "jobs for youth" action. The Kent State struggle, this tremendously important political struggle which concentrated many of the abuses of the imperialist system, was only taken up by these great heroes of big battles when they were forced to by the Party. And even then they constantly backed off, they even developed a strategy for giving up on this struggle—"throwing a punch [so called] while backing away." That was what they called it. And now, this year, when they took it up but under different conditions, free from the revolutionary line of the Revolutionary Communist Party, their big idea for uniting with the masses and building the battle was raising the slogan "Eight Years Is Long Enough, Kent State Administration

Admit the Injustice."

Promoting revolutionary struggles—mass struggles that attack and expose the system—is the farthest thing in the world from these peoples' line...

Correct Line Brings Soldiers

Now the last point I want to make on the correct understanding of waging big battles relates to this question of numbers. As we have said and should continue to say, numbers aren't everything. But Mao also said that the correct line brings soldiers. And while there may be today larger rightist-led demonstrations than the RCYB or the Party is going to lead, we must never concede to the idea that the revolutionary line will mobilize fewer people, we must never concede to that...

We must promote revolutionary struggles as our main task even though it's not our only task. What does that mean? Does that mean that there's an admission ticket to revolutionary struggles, that you have to be a revolutionary to join a revolutionary struggle? That would be a great mistake. People are going to be involved in these struggles for a lot of different reasons. Anybody can think back in their own personal history, about how they got involved in the revolutionary movement. I know when I did I was full of all kinds of crazy ideas, all kinds of idealism, a little adventurism, and a few other things.

But I came into the struggle and I got my head turned around not only by readings from the Communist Manifesto, but more importantly, by the experience in the mass struggles and by the leadership that revolutionary communists gave to that struggle at that time. So it would be a great mistake when we're promoting revolutionary struggles to demand that people submit admission tickets saying "I'm a revolutionary" to be involved.

And do we mean by promoting revolutionary struggles that every leaflet that the RCYB puts out has to call for revolution? No, we don't mean that, although a lot of them should. The key question is motion forward, ever more consciously pushing forward the struggle against the enemy. This definitely includes propaganda about revolution and communism, but that isn't the main thing. The main thing is constantly exposing the enemy, mobilizing the masses, identifying real friends and real enemies in the course of struggle. Lenin said something pretty powerful about this idea that I want to read.

"To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc.—to imagine all this is to *repudiate social revolution*. So one army lines up in one place and says, 'We are for socialism,' and another, somewhere else and says, 'We are for imperialism,' and that will be a social revolution!"

"Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 22, "The Discussion of Self-Determination Summed Up," p.355-56)

I think there's a lot to learn from that. Of course it would be giving the Mensheviks far too much credit to say that this version of two armies—"we're for socialism" and "we're for imperialism"—was their vision of the two armies. They had a two army vision all right, one banner goes up and says, "I'm for the center of gravity" and the other one says, "I'm for cutbacks and takeaways." [laughter] But we must

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ticipants in this historic meeting. Several members of the Iranian Students Association (ISA) attended and a rousing solidarity message was delivered by the ISA on the struggle of the Iranian people against the Shah's fascist regime and U.S. imperialism, and the world-wide struggle against imperialism.

Lively discussion and struggle on the most serious question facing the international communist movement brought the passage of several important resolutions on the international situation. In addition, the convention united unanimously on the need to expose and explain to the American people, especially youth, the growing contention between the two superpowers, the U.S. and the USSR, and their inevitable drives toward war. This was in the context of recognizing that the main enemy of the American people is the U.S. imperialist ruling class, and our own greatest contribution to the revolution is to overthrow these parasites.

The RCYB pledged its active and revolutionary support for all peoples struggling against imperialism, including both the working class worldwide and the national liberation movements in the imperialist dominated countries. In particular, in the coming months the Brigade will be building support for the African and Iranian peoples who are today hitting hard at the U.S. imperialists.

Base of RCYB—Working Class Youth

Though this convention was attended largely by students, reflecting the present development of the organization, the necessity of the RCYB to be based mainly on working class youth was reaffirmed. This was set as a major task in the period ahead. Again, deepening of this line developed in direct opposition to the revisionist line of the Mensheviks who held that youth in America, particularly working class youth, could not grasp Marxism, and in fact universally hated communism because as they said the bourgeoisie "has been beating the s--- out of socialism and communism for the past 20-30 years," as they put it in their "Appeal to the Party Leadership on the Name of the Young Communist League" (p. 30 in the pamphlet, "Communism and Revolution Vs. Revisionism and Reformism").

For the Mensheviks, this one-sided and distorted assessment of the "con-

crete conditions" meant communist work couldn't, as they would say, "spin"—and would in fact fall flat on its face and isolate the organization. Their "resolution" to the "problem," as they saw it, was to promote reformist community groups, engaging in periodic work around particular needs of youth—and consolidating almost nobody as communists. In the months since they've been "freed" from the communist organization and line of the RCYB, these low roaders have rushed back in time, renaming themselves the Revolutionary Student Brigade and have for the present largely abandoned even their reformist organizing in the neighborhoods.

Building communist organization among working class youth, though difficult, is made necessary and possible by the whole system of imperialism. The experience of the Brigade where communist youth work has been done, as well as the militant participation of working class youth at this convention, testified to this truth.

The convention moved on to a good and lively debate as to why working class youth must be the base of the RCYB. Is it because these youth are more oppressed and therefore, potentially more revolutionary? Discussion brought out that this is not the heart of the question. While it is true that youth from the proletariat face more oppression than those from the petty bourgeoisie, the essence of the question lies not in a simple measurement of who's better off and who's worse off, e.g., the relative difficulty in finding a job, getting into school, and so on. Rather it is the totality of the life of a youth from the working class that is key here. This refers not only to where these youth have been, but where they are headed.

Most grow up seeing their parents slave their lives away in some capitalist's factory, ending up with nothing to show for it all. They go to schools which are more like prisons, live in neighborhoods which are crumbling down around them, and face the continual tyranny of the landlord or the bill collector. And what future stares them in the face under this system? More of the same and worse—including being cannon fodder in imperialist war. All of this provides the material basis for working class youth to grasp more quickly and firmly the need not just for revolution in some vague sense, but for proletarian revolution, the rule of the working class over the capitalist class and for the goal of communism. In addition, the direct ties these working class youth have with the proletariat as a whole can give added impact to and help spread the flames and lessons of the revolutionary strug-

gles of youth and students which have historically rocked this country.

Plans Set

In accordance with affirming that the base of the organization must be working class youth, plans were set to develop more work in the neighborhoods, as well as workplaces where youth are concentrated. At this time the main campaign of this section of the RCYB will center on a major running sore of the capitalist system—the criminally high unemployment among youth in the cities.

This work must start from the understanding that capitalism cannot provide jobs for everyone—even the government administrators admit that most youth growing up today will be employed for only *one-third* of their working life. But the chapters must build a revolutionary struggle demanding jobs, exposing the local Jobs for Youth deceptions, fighting rip-offs like nonpayment for the few jobs that do result, agitating at the so-called "employment" agencies where youth are lined up every summer, and building a real fight through neighborhood rallies, forums and other means.

It was also decided that the Brigade's newspaper, REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST YOUTH, should be aimed primarily at working class youth, with more emphasis on agitational articles which "draw blood" by sharply exposing the outrages and contradictions of capitalism behind one particular abuse or event in society. Secondarily, the paper must put out articles with a fuller Marxist stand on broad social questions like religion, drugs, crime, the "youth culture," for example. And the paper

as a whole should help organize the Brigade to carry out all its tasks.

There was general discussion at the meeting about the RCYB's tasks in doing agitation and propaganda. This work must be taken on in the context of seeing that the battle with the bourgeoisie over public opinion, including how to sum up events in the world, goes on unceasingly—and it is a *battle*.

A workshop on agitation and propaganda spoke to these tasks in the light of the need for the Brigade to exert a steady communist influence on the masses of youth. While such influence will mainly be developed in the course of leading struggle, propaganda—and especially agitation—play a crucial role. People in the workshop pointed out that around some burning questions it may be more effective to do a sharp exposure through an agitational leaflet or the newspaper, than to try to build a demonstration. For example, the student section of the RCYB has a long tradition and good experience in setting up "big character posters" on the campuses, covering everything from the execution of Gary Gilmore to the story behind the crimes of Idi Amin.

There is also the related task of bringing Marxism to the masses of youth. There must be organized study of Marxism for the youth around the Brigade if they are to make a leap to joining the organization. In this task, much can be learned from the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords Party of the late '60s who went a long way towards tapping "the boundless enthusiasm of youth for socialism." Despite many errors, these organizations set up mass sessions for the study of Marx-

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Speech...

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have a much broader political view. We have to widen our revolutionary vision to see the coming storms of mass struggle and our potential broad-reaching role in them. We should check out too what the RCP *Programme* says about this and how it ties into the united front strategy for proletarian revolution, the strategy which we upheld in opposition to the Mensheviks and which we must continue to uphold today and learn to apply better. I want to read that too.

"Millions of people have become involved in these struggles, entering them for different reasons, with conflicting class viewpoints, and with varying degrees of understanding of the source of the problems and the links between the struggles. Millions more will continue to do so." (p.98)

... We have to grasp our own crucial role in this struggle, the role of communists. It is fundamentally a political role, no matter what these puffed up so-called genius organizers say—and they are overrated organizers to say the least. When Lenin said that communism springs from positively every sphere of public life like I talked about earlier, he didn't mean consciously, spontaneously communism would emerge. You don't go around to a struggle around schools, for example, and find communism erupting—Oh there it is, communism—or even twenty communists, just on their own.

[laughter] He meant just the opposite. He meant these struggles emerge from the conditions and contradictions of capitalist society, which can only be resolved by socialist revolution and ultimately communism.

This system with its vicious oppression breeds constant struggle on many fronts. The people who fight in these struggles are not spontaneously conscious of the source of their misery and especially not of the need to overthrow it. It is this contradiction—between the fact that these struggles arise out of the contradictions of capitalism which can only be resolved through the overthrow and elimination of capitalism, and on the other hand, the fact that people who are drawn into these struggles and actively take them up are not conscious of that goal—it's this contradiction that we have to resolve in our revolutionary work.

So that means two things. On the one hand we have to broadly unite with people in key struggles as they erupt and move each struggle forward. And on the other, we have to make the struggling masses conscious of the goal of their struggle. The more clearly we see the big picture, the revolutionary goal of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, the more clearly emerges the tremendous urgency of broad-ranging revolutionary work right now and the possibility of doing it. Through this struggle we are in a better position than ever before to seize the time. So comrades: Our vision is clear; We've sharpened our arrow; It will definitely draw blood; Let's fire on the target! ■



Cops Attack Atlanta Students' Struggle

On June 14, Georgia state troopers viciously attacked a group of about 40 students, teachers and supporters who were demonstrating outside a Georgia Board of Regents meeting. The Board had just decided to deep-six the demonstrators' charges of discrimination against Blacks in education, and political repression against five Atlanta Junior College (AJC) instructors who have been denied summer contracts for taking a stand with the activist students at the predominantly Black school.

In what was obviously a planned assault, exits were sealed shut, a five minute ultimatum was given for the protestors to leave, then after waiting only a few seconds, troopers charged into the hallway, arresting 17 people and sending seven to the hospital with injuries. Blacks were particularly brutalized, and only Blacks were handcuffed. But these state goons also took some lumps from outraged demonstrators, including the women who militantly defended themselves and their brothers.

Only a week earlier similar tactics were used to break up another demonstration by the same group protesting at AJC graduation exercises.

These attacks were ordered by Georgia Governor George Busbee to clamp down on the year-long struggle waged by students, teachers and supporters against the oppression of Black people in the Georgia educational system; this struggle has exposed the Board of Regents as the "educational overseers" of the capitalists, doing their best to prevent desegregation of the university system in that state. Students have focussed specifically on the standardized procedures which discriminate against Blacks by, for example, insisting that "correct English" different from common Black usage be used or else students don't pass. The results of these tests have been that in the almost five years AJC has existed, only a handful of students have been graduated.

A coalition of students, teachers and a broad range of supporters, presently called the "Coalition to Save AJC Students & Faculty," includes many different political tendencies.

The Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade has been working in the coalition to connect this case with the overall national oppression suffered by Blacks in this country, and to show the roots of this oppression in the system of imperialism. In this context, the RCYB has raised the demands: **End the Standardized Testing! Contracts for the 5 Instructors! Drop All Charges Against Those Arrested on Both Days! Down with Discrimination! Stop Police Attacks and Intimidation!** ■

18,000 Hit Seabrook Nuclear Plant

On the weekend of June 24th, more than 18,000 people poured into Seabrook, New Hampshire to protest the construction of the \$2.3 billion nuclear plant. The three day demonstration was called by the Clamshell Alliance, a loose coalition of more than 50 anti-nuclear groups. The demonstrators, mostly young people, students and professionals, came from up and down the Eastern Seaboard and some from as far away as California. Doctor Spock, Dick Gregory and Arlo Guthrie were there to do the honors, but many people were sorely disappointed and angry about the demonstration and what they consider betrayal by the leadership of Clamshell.

Last year, in Seabrook, 1,800 occupied the construction site of the nuclear plant to demand that the Public Service Co. of New Hampshire halt construction of the nuclear plant and abandon the project. (See *Revolution* June 1977) More than 1,400 demonstrators were arrested, refusing to post bail and demanding that all the demonstrators be released on their own recognizance or all would stay. They cost the State of New Hampshire \$50,000 a day and no end of embarrassment and put the capitalists' plans for these dangerous nuclear plants in the newspapers across the country. This year the capitalists were determined not to have another embarrassing incident at Seabrook, which might disrupt their plans for the development of the nuclear power plants.

Compromise

The state of New Hampshire pressured and harassed the local leaders of

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ism—popularizing the science of revolution. This was done at a time when many student radicals and activists of the Black liberation movement considered Marxism out of date, dogmatic or just for "honkies." Such study brought to life the lessons paid for in the blood of the class struggle, including getting Mao Tsetung's Red Book out to the masses in literally tens of thousands of copies. This is what the RCYB must aim for—and more.

Going along with taking Marxism to the broad masses is the training of the Brigade members in the science. The convention united around carrying on this theoretical struggle among the members off the great advances made during the Communist Consolidation Campaign.

Basic Tasks

This convention reflected a deeper grasp on the three tasks among the broad masses of youth that were laid out by Comrade Avakian, Chairman of the RCP Central Committee, in his speech to the founding convention of the RCYB last November: leading the masses of youth in the struggle against the attacks and abuses they face; fighting at the side of the working class under the leadership of the Party; and broadly and boldly



18,000 people showed up to demonstrate against the nuclear power plant at Seabrook. A great many were disgusted by what they considered a carnival atmosphere and betrayal by some Clamshell leaders.

the Clamshell Alliance in Seabrook, and according to Harvey Wasserman, a leader of the movement, "They made us a middle ground offer that became very hard to refuse." The leaders of the Clamshell made a deal with New Hampshire Governor Meldrim Thomson and the Public Service Company of New Hampshire that they be allowed to use an 18 acre campsite—complete with tree stumps, mud and mosquitos—in exchange for a guarantee that there would be no resistance, no disruption of the construction site, not even civil disobedience.

The Public Service Company even went so far as to bulldoze a road to the campsite for the demonstrators. Of course, just in case, the capitalists had several hundred state troopers, as well as local policemen and troopers on loan from the five other New England states, laying low in the bushes.

The capitalists got their desired headlines—of a peaceful and ineffectual protest, and many people in the Clamshell Alliance who wanted to take militant action against the power plant construction were very angry with their leadership.

The counter-demonstration which

propagating communism among the masses, especially youth.

Although emphasis has been placed in the recent period on the task of propagating Marxism, this is not the main task of the RCYB. The emphasis has been necessary because of the Mensheviks' sabotage of ideological work generally, both in the Brigade and in the RCP, and to combat the spontaneous tendency to leave all around political work and study for "later," while building the mass struggle today.

As the article in the January 1978 *REVOLUTION* said, "Here we stress ideological tasks because there has been confusion and not enough emphasis given to them in the recent period. Overall, of course, leading the mass struggle of youth is the RCYB's main task." This point was brought home strongly by the speaker from the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party. (See accompanying article on p. 8.)

The Brigade must, as this speech brought out, seek to promote revolutionary struggle among the masses. This is possible and necessary in this, a non-revolutionary period, exactly because imperialism can never provide a decent life for the masses. And particularly at this time, as the economic crisis of the capitalists deepens, things will not be quiet. We can expect more mass upsurges such as the miners' struggle and the rebellion of the Chicano people in Houston on Cinco de Mayo.

How the science of Marxism-Lenin-

was billed in the bourgeois press as workers demonstrating in favor of the construction plant was mainly a collection of union hacks and the like trying to put over their line. The top leadership of the AFL-CIO have been going right along with the capitalists' plans for nuclear power plants, claiming that construction will mean more jobs, and echoing the doomsday line of the bourgeoisie that the country is running out of fuel. In the name of progress, the reactionaries argue that they must expand nuclear energy production to avoid a national disaster, even if it means disaster for the masses of people and the destruction of the natural environment.

The movement against the construction of nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons (which, although different questions, have been linked together by many forces in the movement) is significant, involving a broad spectrum of people. It is particularly important in the light of the capitalists' moves toward a new world war. But there is a great deal of confusion among the people in the movement about the nature of the enemy, and what is at the root of the capitalists' unbridled dis-

ism is used to turn the rage of the masses at its rightful target, the imperialists and their system, including its armed thugs, will determine whether the RCYB is able to make the big advances possible even in this period of relative "calm."

The example of Houston is an especially good one in this regard, as the RCYB and other revolutionary forces helped build this battle as a revolutionary fight against the bourgeoisie, thereby strengthening the people's forces and bringing forward more conscious fighters. For this three activists were rewarded with possible 20 year sentences by the Houston capitalists and many others were arrested during the rebellion.

Plans were made at the convention to continue this communist work around the country in defense of the Houston rebellion and particularly the Moody Park 3. In fact, the Brigade launched this work with a spirited march through Austin, chanting "Moody Park—It's Right to Rebel, Imperialist System—Go to Hell!"

Enthusiasm and determination ran high as people left this convention—enthusiasm over the fact that the RCYB had persevered on the high road to revolution, refusing to be dragged into the Mensheviks' swamp. Determination to stretch to the limits the advances that the proletariat can make in today's situation to rouse the youth of America to fight for the bright future of socialism and communism. ■

regard for the safety of the masses of the people in constructing these plants.

RCYB Leaflet

Members of the RCYB and the staff of *THE WORKER* for the New England area passed out a leaflet at the Seabrook demonstration, sold copies of *THE WORKER* and *REVOLUTION* and received a good response from many of the people they spoke with. The leaflet pointed out that it is the capitalists' drive for profit which is pushing them to develop these nuclear plants at any cost to the masses of people—whether it means raising the price of electricity for the people of Seabrook 50% or exposing the plant workers and the masses of people in the area to dangerous radiation.

Nuclear power would be a cheap

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Bakke...

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the constitution used to knock it down now as the economic crisis and the political situation has led to a new bourgeois offensive against the oppressed nationalities.

All this only underscores the criminal absurdity of those who, claiming to speak on behalf of the masses, are hailing the decision or calling for the struggle to be carried out in the courts. College administrators, public agencies and private employers have got the meaning of the Bakke decision loud and clear: a green light to step up their slashing away at any affirmative action programs that presently exist. Only relying on militant mass struggle—and not on any amount of legal briefs—will beat back these attacks or force the courts to once again "reinterpret" their reactionary constitution.

The mass outrage over the Bakke decision is growing daily, and the working class and masses of people must unite in ever greater numbers to fight this reactionary ruling and every attack on minority nationalities. The fight against discrimination in education and hiring must push ahead, and new affirmative action programs, with real content, must be demanded. Existing programs—already under attack—must be defended and expanded.

Within hours of the announcement of the Bakke ruling, people began organizing actions against it across the country. Demonstrations at federal buildings, sidewalk rallies, car caravans through college communities and other actions have taken place and are sure to continue. ■

Executed 25 Years Ago

Rosenbergs: Martyred By Imperialist Offensive

In September 1949 the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb. In July 1950 Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were arrested, charged with "conspiracy to commit espionage"—of having conspired with others in 1944 to transmit secret information to the Soviet Union about atomic fission. Along with Morton Sobell they were tried in March 1951 and convicted. The Rosenbergs were sentenced to death the next month. A mass movement against the sentences sprung up in this country and around the world. On June 19, 1953, twenty five years ago, they were electrocuted.

In recent years the case against the Rosenbergs and Sobell has been widely exposed as a frame-up. It has been shown that the government manufactured evidence, that the FBI coached its two key witnesses, that the trial judge, Irving Kaufman, conspired with the prosecution and the FBI, and so forth.

But even at the time it was apparent to anyone who investigated the case, even to the extent of reading the trial transcript carefully, that the

Rosenbergs had been framed. In fact their attorney, Emanuel Bloch, spent months during the summer of 1951 vainly trying to persuade the news media to investigate the trial and the case. Not one daily newspaper would agree to assign a reporter to read the record of the trial.

Part of Capitalist Offensive

In fact the bourgeois press had good reason (from their point of view) to studiously avoid casting doubt on the verdict. For the Rosenberg frame-up and murder was part of a massive campaign by the U.S. bourgeoisie after World War II to wipe out all opposition to their position as top imperialist dog. Abroad, this involved the Marshall Plan in Europe, armed aggression in Korea, and attempting to take over from the British, French and German imperialists in Asia and Africa. Domestically, the ruling class launched a big offensive against the working class, its leaders and its Party. This involved the

Taft-Hartley "slave labor act" (as it was called at the time), the expulsion of communists from unions as well as from other positions in society, and the tremendous "anti-red" campaign for which the 1950's is infamous. In this context, the wanton official murder of this obscure couple served several purposes for the ruling class.

On the one hand, it served to help drum up anti-communist hysteria by painting communists and those associated with them as "Russian spies," alien subversives in the pay of a foreign power. On the other hand, it showed to just what lengths the bourgeoisie was ready and willing to go in its domestic offensive—that they were quite ready to take a man and wife hitherto known only to friends and political associates locally where they lived, lift them into the national spotlight and make them the center of a reactionary propaganda campaign for three years, and then viciously murder them. The Hearst press certainly understood what the objectives were. An editorial in the chain's newspapers commented: "The importance of the trial cannot be minimized. Its findings disclosed in shuddering detail the Red cancer in the American body politic—a cancer which the government is now forced to obliterate in self-defense. The sentences indicate the scalpel which prosecutors can be expected to use in that operation."

In other words, communists and any others who would militantly fight for the interests of the international working class should expect to be murdered if they did not get out of political life.

Rosenbergs' Heroic Stand

The U.S. government did not expect to have to actually kill the Rosenbergs. It was expected that they could be forced to give false confessions implicating people of prominence in the Communist Party, giving the ruling class the material to "prove" that the CP was simply an instrument of the Soviet government. Great pressure was exerted on them to "confess" in exchange for their lives—including tormenting them about their two young children. In the last

practices (rather than in the area of representation). This has meant increasing delay, which invariably works to the benefit of the boss. In the present situation, according to an impeccable ruling class source (Vice President Mondale), "Any employer who cares to, and has enough money, can totally frustrate the law of the land..."

Most workers who file a complaint have it thrown out by the NLRB bureaucracy before it even gets to a hearing. For those who do get to a hearing, it is common to have to wait from one to three years before getting a decision from the Board. By this time the company will have had time to get rid of many of the workers involved, to intimidate or buy off other workers, etc. This is particularly effective, of course, when workers have been misled by union hacks into putting their primary reliance upon legal procedures rather than upon their own militant action.

Workers Have No Stake in Bill

Does this mean that it is in the interest of the working class to bend its efforts toward the passage of this bill?

No, it does not. To begin with, there are provisions in the bill which are actually attacks upon the interests of workers. A glaring instance is walk-outs and picketing. The Senate bill, as reported out of committee, provides for automatic injunctions against wildcat strikes and against refusals to cross an unauthorized (in other words, wildcat) picket line. The House bill authorizes

weeks before their execution, an open telephone line from Sing Sing was installed in the White House for their special use. But to their great credit, the Rosenbergs went to their deaths refusing to capitulate.

With or without a "confession," though, the case was fabricated to serve the ruling class. Besides the ways already mentioned, the bourgeoisie also wanted to claim that the Soviet Union, as a socialist and supposedly backward society, could not have built the atom bomb without having been given its "secret" by spies in the United States.

However not only were Soviet scientists fully capable of mastering atomic fission by themselves, but also the pretense that someone could steal the "secret" of the bomb on a few sheets of paper is ludicrous. In 1966 the government admitted that the A-bomb sketches introduced at the trial had no value.

And of course the underlying premise of the whole case—that the U.S. should enjoy a nuclear monopoly—was not only ludicrous but criminal. That U.S. imperialism should have the exclusive prerogative of trying to terrorize the peoples of the world by wildly waving the A-bomb—that was the view of the American bourgeoisie, but it is not a view that anyone else has reason to accept. As long as the Soviet Union was a socialist country, its possession of the atomic bomb was not a threat to peace, but rather a roadblock to imperialist war and nuclear blackmail, and thus served the interests of mankind.

Whipping Up Hysteria

The Rosenbergs were arrested just three weeks after the U.S. had launched its military aggression in Korea. Judge Kaufman, in sentencing them, actually blamed the Rosenbergs for the Korean War—implying that after the Soviet Union had supposedly gotten the atomic bomb through the Rosenbergs, it had been emboldened to launch aggression in Korea. As usual, the imperialists were reversing the facts, attributing their own crimes to socialism.

The U.S. rulers did try to use this case to justify and whip up public support for their actions in Korea. But although they enjoyed some success here, they ultimately failed. The American people were not enthused with their rulers' Korean aggression, and more and more demanded an end to the war. Meanwhile the Korean people, with the aid of Chinese volunteers, repulsed the U.S. invaders. Thus, even at the apex of its power, U.S. imperialism revealed that in reality it was a "paper tiger," due to its totally reactionary character.

The Rosenbergs died victims of U.S. imperialism's march for world domination. A great many people in the U.S. resisted both the frameup of the Rosenbergs and the overall assault on the people by the ruling class.

But, unfortunately, this resistance was greatly hindered by the revisionism that had never been thoroughly rooted out of the CP, even after the expulsion of Browder and the repudiation of some of his most notorious counter-revolutionary theses in 1945. Although the working class and revolutionaries were in a weak position vis-a-vis the U.S. imperialists due to their top dog position after WW 2 and could not have repulsed the bourgeoisie's reactionary offensive, the struggle could have been much more powerful and, especially, laid a revolutionary basis for the future had the CP played a more revolutionary role.

As the *Programme* of the RCP puts it, "The Communist Party shrank in size under the blows of the ruling class anti-communist offensive of the late '40s and '50s. The general response of the CP was to apologize for its ideas and try to prove that they didn't really threaten the bourgeoisie. This laid the final groundwork for the destruction of the CP as an organization of the working class." (page 70)

Communists are determined not to commit again the mistakes which had such disastrous consequences to the workers' cause. At the same time, revolutionary communists and class conscious workers claim as their heritage the struggles waged against the imperialist enemy in earlier decades, and cherish the memory of those like the Rosenbergs whose lives have been taken by that enemy.



Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, whose vicious frame-up 25 years ago was part of the drive of U.S. imperialism to consolidate its postwar position.

Want Workers Mired in Legal Bog

Hacks Tout Labor Law "Reform"

In union halls across the country, workers are being told to focus their attention on a new piece of legislation pending in Congress. Last October the Labor Law Reform Bill easily passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 257 to 163. As late as February, BUSINESS WEEK was predicting that "Senate approval now appears to be a good bet, despite determined business opposition." (2/27/78) At present, however, a filibuster in the Senate has succeeded in throwing it back into committee.

The bill essentially makes certain changes in the Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act). This is one of the laws which resulted from the struggle of the U.S. working class in the 1930s, and is the bill which set up the National Labor Relations Board (the NLRB) to hear accusations of "unfair labor practices." The Wagner Act provided for the certification of unions as collective bargaining agents for workers by means of setting up procedures for elections where workers would vote for union representation.

make several reforms in the Wagner Act, the main ones being the following: (1) quicker elections after the majority of workers have signed union authorization cards; (2) expanding the NLRB from five members (the number specified in the 1947 Taft-Hartley amendments) to seven; (3) if the boss campaigns against the union on company time or property, union organizers are to have an equal opportunity; (4) a company which violates a final NLRB order can be barred from getting government contracts for up to three years.

These reforms are supposed to stop the ways in which the employers have been getting around the provisions of the original act. There is no denying that the way in which the NLRB actually operates has become a total mess and a logjam. The number of cases filed has increased tremendously. In 1959, the year of the last major amendments to the law, 21,633 cases were filed with the NLRB; by 1976 the number had increased by 130% to 49,335.

The great majority of this increase has come in the area of unfair labor

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Postal Crisis is Capitalist Crisis

Strike Weapon Needed As Contract Nears

On July 20, the battle lines will be drawn as the national contract for 570,000 postal workers expires. It has been three long years since the notorious "sellout of '75" where the U.S. Postal Service management, along with the close cooperation of the top leadership of the big three postal unions (Letter Carriers, American Postal Workers Union and Mailhandlers), pushed through a contract that paved the way for massive attacks on the jobs and working conditions of postal workers nationwide. The present contract being negotiated is shaping up as an important battle between the working class and the capitalists.

The Carter administration is taking a hard line on the negotiations, fearing that postal workers may set a precedent for other workers by daring to hold out for a wage increase that keeps up with inflation which has recently soared to an annual rate of 10%. Inflation counsellor Robert Strauss said recently, "If we don't come out with a reasonable agreement, it will be an outrage." For the capitalists "reasonable" means that postal workers should bow their heads and accept Carter's proposal that they "lead the fight against inflation" by voluntarily holding their wage demands to 5 to 7% a year. And of course if this moral injunction doesn't work, Carter has made it clear he will use government troops to break a strike if necessary.

In the past few months, the capitalists have launched a propaganda campaign designed to muster public opinion against the possibility of a postal strike. Articles in the newspapers and business journals trumpet how postal workers are "under worked and over paid," and occasionally there is an "expose" of how postal workers are basically lazy and falling down drunk on the job, a vicious slander in view of the fact the P.O. has one of the highest death rates from heart attacks caused by overwork. One university economist was even hired to write a bogus "study" purporting to show how postal workers are "33% overpaid!"

The aim of all this is to divide postal workers off from the "public," as if most of the public were not workers

themselves. In the event of a strike they hope to use this as a wedge against postal workers, pointing to a "public outcry" as a reason they should be forced to return to work and "save the service."

Growing Attacks

Postal workers, on the other hand, are fed up with the postal bosses attempt to export the economic crisis onto their backs. Since the '75 sellout was signed, sealed and delivered by the union hacks, postal workers have seen their real wages decline with a COLA formula that only gives them 55% of inflation. But wages are not the only issue. In the last 3 years over 60,000 jobs have been eliminated even with a no-layoff clause, slashed away through such schemes as abolishing and reposting jobs, forced retirement, absentee crackdowns, and forced transfer provisions in the contract which require workers to move a hundred miles or more to keep the job.

The eight hour day is becoming a thing of the past as the USPS has resorted to massive use of forced overtime, finding it more economically feasible than hiring the millions of unemployed. And increasingly the postal service has employed casuals—temporary workers with no job security or union rights—to fill in the gaps as they reshuffle and cut back regular jobs.

At the same time, thousands of smaller POs have been closed down and their operations concentrated in larger offices where the work of two jobs is combined into one. This is especially true for the new Bulk Mail Centers, giant automated hellholes where skeleton crews are worked to the bone and the rate of injuries can go as high as 30 to 40% a year. In a callous attempt to cut the astronomical costs of this sharp increase in on the job injuries, the PS has begun to deny legitimate compensation claims and has instituted a nationwide policy of harassing and firing "non-productive" light duty workers.

In the present contract, management is seeking even greater flexibility to

squeeze more production out of less and less workers. As a result of all these moves, the public has seen this so-called "service" going down the drain as the price of a letter continues to skyrocket.

PO in Crisis

But contrary to what the capitalists would like us to think, the Postal Service has never been mainly a service to the public. In fact, it exists to serve business—a vital link for the capitalist class to realize their profits from various enterprises. Eighty-five percent of the mail volume is business related, although business gets the cheapest rates and the public pays through the nose. Without the PO, the gas and phone companies could not collect their bills, Sears Roebuck could not realize sales from their catalogues and a vast array of goods produced by various industries could not find their way onto the market.

The USPS is like a business itself, locked in cutthroat competition with other companies like United Parcel Service (UPS) to see who can provide this service to the capitalists most profitably and efficiently. But unlike UPS, who can pick and choose only mail that is profitable, the Postal Service is obligated to deliver anywhere to maintain service to the capitalists as a whole whether it is profitable or not.

In an attempt to solve this contradiction between making profit and providing extensive service to the capitalists, the PO has been guaranteed against failure by billions of dollars in government subsidies. But by 1970, with the whole economy in crisis and beginning to spiral downward, the capitalists could no longer afford these massive outlays. Despite some differences, the PO, like other businesses, is governed by the laws of capitalism, including its maxim "expand or die." In recognition of this, right after the postal strike of 1970 Congress relinquished direct control of the PO and the capitalists created the Postal Corporation (USPS) with the goal of making it completely self-sufficient by 1985. A Postal Board of Governors made up of representatives of the biggest corporations in the country was set up to administer the new Postal Service along more profitable lines. And it was clear that the only way for the capitalists to do this was by using more traditional business methods—mechanization, speed-ups, lay-offs, etc.—to increase the exploitation of postal workers' labor.

Since moving the mail is a labor-intensive industry, a big thrust has been to reduce the workforce as much as possible. Eighty percent of the Postal Service's budget goes to pay postal workers' wages. As a result, the USPS has taken out huge loans in a frantic attempt to mechanize its way out of debt by cutting its main cost—postal workers' labor. The USPS is borrowing an estimated 10 billion dollars from 1970 to 1980, much of which has gone into sophisticated LSM-ZMT (letter sorting) machines and into building the much heralded Bulk Mail Centers.

But this has only made it all the more impossible for the Postal Service to escape its dilemma as the laws of capitalism assert themselves. The gigantic loans have only helped to put them deeper in the hole (4 billion in long-term debt) as they must now pay millions in interest each year to the banks and wealthy bondholders who loaned them the money in the first place.

Despite all their efforts to mechanize, the PO has actually lost ground instead of gaining on the competition. The Bulk Mail System has turned into a massive white elephant, increasing in cost as it lumbers along tearing packages to shreds. The Government Accounting Agency (GAO) just issued a report that despite a billion dollar investment in the BMCs, the USPS parcel post delivery is slower than it used to be. And rising inflation has put a severe limit on the amount of new machinery the Postal Service can afford to invest in.

The recent rate hikes have only aggravated the situation. As delivery standards worsen and the price of a stamp goes up, USPS mail volume is declining as mailers switch to UPS, cutting deeply into Postal Service revenues. This year

the Postal Service lost another 800 million dollars which will have to be subsidized. In desperation, postal management is being driven to launch yet another vicious cycle of job cut-backs while they hack away at public service and postal workers' working conditions.

Contract A Battle Line

In the face of these growing attacks, the mood of postal workers has become increasingly angry. Scattered but sharp struggles have broken out around the country as resistance has grown, like the walkout in March at the Chicago BMC when management refused to improve safety conditions after a woman was injured by a package full of chemicals that exploded in her face. At many different facilities there have been sick-ins, slowdowns, and picket lines against firings and deteriorating working conditions. But often struggles have flared up only to die down just as quickly. The potential of hundreds of thousands of postal workers has not really been unleashed since the 1970 strike.

Helping to organize many of these struggles have been postal workers who are members of the National United Workers Organization. On the initiative of the Postal Workers section of the Bay Area NUWO, a contract program has been drawn up which puts forward the most urgent demands of postal workers and points to the necessity of waging the contract battle not as an end in itself, but as part of the overall struggle of the working class against the capitalists who are responsible for the attacks that postal workers face. This program is being distributed by NUWO members and other workers in PO facilities around the country. The basic demands are:

1. Boost the wages, keep and raise the COLA!
2. The no-layoff clause is not a bargaining item—we need more protection against job eliminations and productivity attacks!
3. No more forced overtime!
4. Stop attacks on the compensation program—no punishment for injuries!
5. Protection against disciplinary crackdowns—especially around sick leave.
6. An all regular workforce.
7. A shorter contract life.

But key to making this contract a battle against the Postal Service's attacks will be the role of NUWO members and other active fighters among the postal workers in breaking through the widespread confusion that exists and raising the consciousness of fellow workers about who the enemy is and what it takes to really fight it.

On the one hand there is USPS management with the government behind them, pumping out endless explanations why postal workers should sacrifice to "save the service." On the other, there is the capitalist monster's second head, the top union officials who refuse to lead any militant struggle and who regard the unions as their private businesses to be run in close connection with the postal bosses.

Role of the Hacks

In '75 postal workers got a taste of the treachery of these union officials, who proved they will go to any lengths to preserve their peaceful relations with the Postal Service on which they base their petty careers. And to many the present negotiations already seem to be a replay of that sordid affair. Once again, the talks are being conducted in secret so as not to "jeopardize the negotiations." Once again, they are opposing keeping the no layoff clause to winning higher wages, the same trade-off logic that left postal workers with a paltry 4% wage increase in '75.

They have also dangled arbitration as a possible solution, a course of action that would put the fate of postal workers in the hands of a bunch of lawyers and arbitrators who represent the interests of the capitalist class. And, in a fitting prelude to a sellout, the APWU leadership has already warned postal workers in their national magazine that "many of our demands



1970 Post Office strike. Today postal workers need strike weapon even more.

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Covers for the Capitalists

OSHA Fiddles While Workers Burn

Joe Banvich was once a brawny guy who could heft a 20 pound jackhammer 16 hours a day.

Today, at 56, Banvich is an invalid whose chest heaves with the mere effort of speaking. In 1941 he went to work at U.S. Steel's South Works in Chicago. For the next 30 years he worked in a cloud of dust as a chipper, knocking stray lumps of iron and foundry sand from metal moulds. The dust contained billions of deadly microscopic silica particles. The silica was daily destroying the delicate tissue of his lungs. Silicosis has left him with only 24% of his lung capacity. He cannot move more than a few feet from the oxygen tank next to his bed.

On April 27, 1978 fifty-one workers plunged 170 feet to their deaths, buried in tons of tangled steel when the scaffolding around the cooling tower of a power project in Willow Island, West Virginia tore loose from its moorings.

A month later OSHA came down with a ruling that Research-Cottrell Inc., the construction company, was guilty of negligence in constructing the scaffolding, of seven other "willful" violations and six other "unknowing" ones. OSHA recommended a \$105,100 fine—a little more than \$2000 for each worker killed. The company announced it would appeal.

Just two stories taken from the bourgeois press in recent months, two more indictments of the criminal activities of the capitalists.

Black lung, brown lung, mine cave-ins and explosions, chemical plant eruptions, limbs ripped off by malfunctioning, unrepaired machines running at top speed. By slow or sudden murder, tens of thousands of workers die every year. It is estimated that 100,000 deaths each year result from occupational diseases. Nearly 5 million workers were injured in industrial accidents last year. Four thousand five hundred died.

This is just part of the toll taken on workers driven by the system of wage slavery to produce the profits and vast wealth of the capitalist class.

In 1970 Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act which established the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the Department of Labor (OSHA). The Act sets minimum standards for working conditions. The standards are "enforced" by OSHA workplace inspectors and fines of up to \$1000 for each violation, up to \$10,000 for a willful or repeated violation of OSHA standards. Companies can appeal violations, fines and compliance deadlines.

OSHA—A Lousy Sham

OSHA is supposed to be the worker's



At the Interlake Steel mill in Chicago, workers often are forced to close the lids on the changing holes atop coke oven when the flame is 10 feet high.

"wait for OSHA to take care of it."

The system of OSHA inspectors is a joke. A pitiful handful of inspectors are charged with insuring the safety of workers in America's 4 million workplaces. Five years after it was set up OSHA inspectors had checked out exactly 17 of the 124 textile factories of South Carolina, where thousands of workers inhale the suffocating dust of the mills. Fourteen of these were found to have dust levels which exceeded federal standards. The cost of this non-compliance was negligible. The average fine for all industrial safety and health violations in the state in 1975 was \$34! In North Carolina no fines at all were assessed for 79% of all violations.

Speaking of the puny penalties im-

posed generally by OSHA, a study published by the Labor Department even admitted that "... the fines are so low as to almost invite the employer to violate the law."

But these so-called "standards" that the capitalists are supposed to meet are designed to cater to the profit drives of the capitalists and are continually relaxed or completely ignored when there are too many complaints. After a yank from some of the capitalists who pull the strings, the administration of Jimmy (Human Rights) Carter announced on June 19 the watering down of already weak proposed OSHA regulations to cut down on brown lung disease

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Chinese CP Message to Yugoslavia

The following is a message sent on June 19, 1978 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. It appeared in PEKING REVIEW #25, June 23, 1978. It is reprinted here because we believe it is important and worthy of study.

Greeting 11th Congress of Yugoslav League of Communists

The 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia

Dear Comrades:

On behalf of all members of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China sends its warmest greetings to the 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and, through it, to all members of the League and the Yugoslav people.

The League of Communists of Yugoslavia headed by Comrade Tito, outstanding leader of the people of all nationalities in Yugoslavia, has applied the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete practice of Yugoslavia. Unswervingly leading the people of the whole country in a persistent revolutionary struggle over the decades, it has won continuous victories in the cause of socialism.

In World War II, the Yugoslav Communist Party mobilized the masses, organized an armed force to fight heroically and strenuously against the German and Italian fascist aggressors and founded a people's Yugoslavia after making heavy sacrifices. After liberation, by developing the glorious revolu-

tionary tradition, persevering in independence and maintaining initiative, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia has established a socialist self-management system suited to the conditions at home, roused the socialist initiative of the working class and other working people, and promoted the rapid development of the national economy. The League immensely treasures and gallantly defends Yugoslavia's independence and sovereignty. Acting on the proposal of Comrade Tito and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia has built an all-people defence system and is prepared at all times to repulse any aggressors. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia firmly adheres to the foreign policy of non-alignment, resolutely combats imperialism and hegemonism, safeguards unity among the non-aligned and other developing nations and supports the people of various countries in their struggle to strive for and defend national independence and oppose aggression. It has thus won appreciation and acclaim from the people of various countries.

We are convinced that the 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia will set its future policy and

tasks on the basis of summing up experience and successes gained since the 10th Congress, and will certainly further mobilize the people of all nationalities in Yugoslavia to win new victories in the cause of socialist construction and in the struggle against imperialism and hegemonism.

China and Yugoslavia shared a common experience in history. After victory in revolution, both persevered in the policy of building socialism independently. In recent years, the relations of friendship and co-operation between the two countries have grown steadily. President Tito's successful visit to our country last year and the talks held between Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and President Tito have brought the relations of friendship and co-operation between China and Yugoslavia to a new stage of all-round development. We are deeply convinced that the revolutionary friendship and co-operation between our two Parties, two countries and two peoples in their future joint struggle will definitely develop further and be strengthened.

May the 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia be crowned with every success!

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China

June 19, 1978

Seabrook

Continued from page 10

source of energy for the capitalists, and the necessary safety steps to develop precautions which would eliminate much of the danger would cut into their profits.

Nuclear power is potentially a useful form of energy, but in the hands of the capitalists it is a menace. The RCYB leaflet pointed out that unless the anti-nuclear movement aims its fire at the capitalists and their system as the source of all oppression, they will continue to battle one abuse after another, and be led into all sorts of reformist blind alleys—like trying to figure out alternate sources of energy for the capitalists or putting forward a back-to-the-stone-age line of "split wood, not atoms," raised by some in last year's Seabrook occupation.

The position of the working class must be to unite with the main thrust of the anti-nuclear movement, and at the same time to clarify the enemy and the way forward. Through struggle, there are many in the anti-nuclear movement who can be won to see that it is the capitalist system which is the cause of the problem and not nuclear power in the abstract or simply the "greed" of individual capitalist concerns or particular ruling class politicians.

NATO...

Continued from page 5

there was a separate meeting in Paris on this question, involving the powers most directly threatened in the pocket-book—the U.S., Belgium, France, West Germany and Britain.

This meeting got much less publicity, because it could hardly hide its sinister nature. Here were almost all the old colonial powers in Africa—and the neocolonialist U.S.—sitting down to a joint meeting over what to do in that continent and they didn't even have a single African face to hide behind. It was definitely an imperialist-powers-only meeting, with the "help" not invited. (Of course their public statements called for protecting the "freedom" and "sovereignty" of Africa from "foreign intervention.")

When the Soviet-sponsored mercenaries moved into Zaire's copper and cobalt-rich Shaba province in May, the French immediately sent the French Foreign Legion and the Belgians sent paratroopers to protect their own and their allies' property. The U.S. backed them in this, and a week later when the public outcry against this imperialist action began to make it very hard for France and Belgium to continue there, the U.S. arranged a deal to replace them with troops from Morocco and other reactionary pro-U.S. countries. France proposed the establishment of a permanent "all-African" armed task force to protect Western imperialist interests.

The U.S. readily agreed to come up with \$50 million to pay for dirty work in Zaire, but it demanded that Belgium and France, which have even more investments in Zaire than the U.S., come up with their "share." France and Belgium, meanwhile, had their own falling out because the French capitalists have been trying to edge out the Belgians in Zaire for years, which is probably why the French were so eager to get their troops in first. The Belgians, for their part, decided to keep their troops in Zaire for the indefinite future. Since the mercenaries who invaded Shaba originally worked for the Belgians, France and others are suspicious that Belgium might try to make some sort of deal.

All this required yet a third high-level imperialist conference to sort it out. This time Iran and Saudi Arabia were invited to the confab, in Brussels, since these reactionary regimes have long shown their willingness to work for and with U.S. imperialism, feathering their own nests while protecting U.S. interests. Here the U.S. tried to get a broader group of countries, as well as the International Monetary Fund, to pay the cost of helping Zaire meet its \$3 billion debt (largely owed to U.S. banks) and supply the troops to keep anyone else from snatching the debtor away. Although the results of this meeting are not yet known, it seems that here too the U.S. played its role as chief of its bloc and tax collector from all the lesser reactionaries.

In the midst of all this diplomatic hagglng and military planning, the U.S. imperialists made some important moves in the sphere of public opinion as well. The TV and newspapers played their part by giving these moves the greatest attention. For weeks and months now, these paid prostitutes have filled the air and newsprint with speculation about a so-called conflict between Carter's Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, a supposed "soft-liner" on detente, and Brzezinski, an alleged "hawk."

Of course this good-guy/bad-guy routine involving diplomats and military counselors has been a standard feature of American governments for at least 20 years. This routine enables the President to speak of peace and rattle sabers at the same time without being accused of being a hypocrite. The recent period has seen what the press calls "The Rise of Zbig"—in other words, the hand holding the sword extended while the hand holding the olive branches moves back. But this reflects more a change in how the play is being presented than a change in the plot.

One of the most significant things about Carter's June 7 speech at Annapolis was that he spoke to the naval graduates there as commander in chief

and a former fellow officer. He boasted about U.S. military and economic power and the "superiority of the American system," condemning the Soviets not only for their role in Zaire but also for nearly everything else imaginable, from "human rights" to their need to import wheat. He called for "a stronger NATO" and "more mobile forces" in Europe, "an undiminished presence in the Pacific" and so on. Finally, while emphasizing the importance of the SALT "arms control" talks—since the illusion of detente still has some use—he declared, "The Soviet Union can choose either confrontation or cooperation. The United States is adequately prepared to meet either choice."

This was the most open threat of world war publically spoken by an American president since the Cuban missile crisis of 1961. It was a threat aimed at stirring up war sentiment among the American people and preparing public opinion for more open war moves—more than at threatening the Soviets. For the Soviet Union, as an imperialist power, has no more choice than does the U.S. Both are being impelled on a collision course by the very nature of capitalism, and even the talk of "choosing" war or peace is no more than a necessary part of gearing up for war. ■

ALD...

Continued from page 2

Speaking for the NUWO, a member of the Miners Right to Strike Committee said: "We must not be caught off guard by the lure of some smiling peanut vendor from Plains, Georgia, when he talks about unity between working people—Black, brown, yellow and white—with the leeches of the capitalist class... We must not lift one finger to help them salvage even one piece of the fortunes they've stolen. No. We raise our fists as the African people raise their guns."

In a powerful statement the speaker from the Revolutionary Communist Party pointed out the African peoples are not fighting to replace one oppressor with another; but in kicking the imperialists out of their countries, they are taking the first step toward the final goal of eliminating the exploitation of man by man—communism. He said, "Why do we bring up socialism and communism on African Liberation Day? Because we're talking about freedom... Because there is only one way scientifically to eliminate all exploitation and oppression... All our lives the ruling class has constantly told us that

socialism and communism are bad. But the reason they hate it so much is because it's the one system, the one ideology—Marxism-Leninism—the world over, that is standing up and stomping out capitalism thoroughly and wholly, and wiping it off the face of the earth."

As the rally ended, the shouts of "U.S. Out of Africa, Superpowers Hands Off!" and "Africa is Rising Up!" echoed throughout downtown Detroit. People left for home to continue the struggle with a renewed sense of confidence that even though the imperialist system seems strong and the road ahead is a difficult one, in reality it is a system in decay which can only bring more misery down on the people and which cannot withstand the rising storm of struggle of the working class and oppressed people all over the world.

Building for ALD

The march and rally were a powerful climax to months of work nationwide building support for the revolutionary struggle of the African peoples against our common enemy. From Chicago's West Side Black community, to housing projects in North Carolina, street corner agitation brought the message of African Liberation Day '78 directly out

Opportunists Flaunt Reformism in ALD Actions

In sharp contrast to the African Liberation Day marches and rallies sponsored by ALSC and the African Liberation Day Coalition, were several opportunist-led rallies. Although the turnout for two of these rallies held in Washington D.C. were testimony to widespread support for the struggles of the people in Africa, all of them shared in common a heavy dose of bourgeois liberalism and nationalism, overlaid with a thin veneer of pseudo-revolutionary posturing.

In Washington, Stokely Carmichael and his All African Peoples Revolutionary Party (AAPRP) reran his usual rap to a smaller-than-usual audience of 3000. Carmichael's line is that all Blacks anywhere in the world constitute one nation, whose single goal is a socialist society in their African homeland. It is a line that can only draw Black people away from the struggle against oppression in the U.S. and away from the actual struggle against imperialism. And his vision of "socialism" is clouded to say the least.

More significant than this tired replay was another rally in Washington which managed to rival Carmichael's in numbers, sponsored by the "National Coalition to Support African Liberation," initiated by the Workers Viewpoint Organization (WVO). Just a year ago, WVO was testing the limits of pseudo-revolutionary ultra-"left" phrase-mongering. Apparently they reached those limits and have bounced back to a get-rich-quick form of comfortable rightism combined with heavy appeals to narrow nationalism.

The focus for these opportunists was entirely on the particular personalities and policies of the imperialists, with no emphasis at all on either the system of imperialism or the contention of the two imperialist superpowers. WVO specifically dropped a slogan on the two superpowers to facilitate their tailing behind certain nationalist forces. Thus their main slogans were "Death to Apartheid—Support the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front" and "Carter, Vorster at it Again—Can't Silence Biko or the Wilmington 10."

Besides showing the exclusive emphasis on persons and policies, these slogans also illustrate the single-minded focus on apartheid, with WVO taking the struggle in South Africa out to the masses as essentially a civil rights fight against the "discrimination" of the apartheid system, rather than as the revolutionary anti-imperialist national liberation struggle which it really is.

All this is connected with the view, put forward in their newspaper, that "the cutting edge in the support movement is the question of breaking state-to-state relations with South Africa" (May, 1978 issue). The liberal reformist nature of this analysis speaks for itself.

With this as their line, it comes as no surprise to find the platform at WVO's companion rally in Oakland, California crowded with speakers like Ron Dellums, Congressman from Berkeley, and Wilson Riles, Jr., Superintendent of Schools for California and a thoroughly bourgeois politician.

In Chicago, meanwhile, a group at least equally rightist and equally opportunist in character managed to attract a few people for a rally. This African Liberation Day event was sponsored by a coalition including the "Revolutionary Workers Headquarters," perhaps better known to readers of these pages as the Mensheviks who attempted to capture the RCP and

use it for their own reactionary purposes. This coalition who included the New Chicago African Liberation Support Committee, closely allied with the "R.W.H." and the CP(ML), which just recently endorsed the French Foreign Legion's excursion into Zaire. The back-slapping and mutual embraces among these groups were a fine example of where a revisionist line leads.

With such a collection as this in the driver's seat, it is no wonder that their truck was steered straight into the same mire that we just observed in Washington.

A leaflet put out by the "New Chicago ALSC" to build for their ALD action purports to draw the links between the struggle in South Africa and in the U.S. by drawing up a list of "charges." These include such telling indictments as, "Jimmy Carter has failed to make proposals that will solve the problems of cities like Chicago!" (to which we will add our own!); "Jimmy Carter has failed to fight the attacks against Black people!" and "Jimmy Carter is escalating the U.S. policy [!] of ripping off the natural wealth and labor of the African Peoples!" Here we see the line of the Mensheviks of attributing all of the wrongs in the world to the evil genius of Carter carried from the ridiculous to the sublime.

Another feature of the Menshevik-CP(ML) action in Chicago was the shameless trailing behind Black churches, which were also praised to the skies in yet another gem put out by the "New Chicago ALSC". The same leaflet praises Martin Luther King's role. Apparently yet another hat has been thrown into the ring where the CP(ML) and WVO compete for the title of True Inheritors of King's counter-revolutionary mantle.

In Philadelphia the Mensheviks sponsored another ALD march, this one under the slogan, "Hey, Rizzo [Philadelphia's mayor], have you heard? Philly ain't Johannesburg!" What's the matter, Rizzo, didn't you know that we live in the land of democracy over here, not like that fascist South African state? If you hadn't heard about the wonders of bourgeois democracy, Mr. Mayor, the "Revolutionary Workers Headquarters" will be glad to tell you!

In Philadelphia these parasites on the revolutionary movement claimed an attendance of 350, and in Chicago the *Call*, organ of the CP(ML), said that 300 attended. Both claims were much inflated, and only show that combination of self-glorification, wild ambition and deliberate distortion which both the Mensheviks and the CP(ML) share so abundantly.

The Mensheviks in particular consider themselves hot-shot organizers without whom no demonstration can succeed and with whom none can fail—that is, fail to be a big show. When they were still in the RCP they could not grasp that demonstrations which they played a part in building and which were successful in mobilizing masses in struggle against the imperialists were due not to their gimmicks and their role as "great organizers" but to the overall correct line and work of the Party as a whole. Now that they have fully broken with the Party and its correct line this truth is being rudely taught to them by reality.

However, the fact that few came to their rallies is not as significant as the fact that their line is one which negates the building of conscious, broad and strong support for the struggle of the African people, as well as the goal of revolution in this country. ■

to thousands of people. In the course of taking ALD into several predominantly Black communities in the West Virginia coalfields, the people in one disco joint stopped the music and put on Prairie Fire's new record, "Got to Fight It" and "The Krugerrand."

At Brookpark Ford outside Cleveland, as members of Auto Workers United To Fight (AWUF) were passing out a national ALD leaflet for auto-workers, a pack of reactionary union officials tried to run them down with their new Lincoln Continental, and then started to provoke a fight in front of the plant gates. All of this kicked off tremendous discussion inside about Ford's assembly plants in South Africa, about the new "solution" of the UAW to build "stronger unions" in racist South Africa, and about the ALD march itself.

Since Detroit was the site of the main national demonstration, as well as the home of some of the biggest exploiters of the U.S. and African people (GM, Chrysler, Ford), the struggle to build for African Liberation Day was particularly sharp there.

The Detroit ALSC chapter began taking ALD out to the masses in the Black community and the major plants consistently in mid-April. The chapter aimed its work at a number of community colleges, neighborhoods and factories. At the Dodge Main Plant, with a long history of militant struggle, ALSC set up a banner, parked a sound car and began rapping. When the police tried to harass the car, second shift workers going in began to boo and the police backed down.

The National United Workers Organization put out a national leaflet about ALD for the plants. At the Ford Rouge plant and others in Detroit the AWUF chapter was joined by ALSC members agitating over bullhorns.

African Liberation Day began to become a significant social question in Detroit when ALSC and the Coalition began to wage some sharp struggle right up against the imperialists and their flunkies.

On April 29, Vice President Mondale was speaking at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) graduation. ALSC and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) led demonstrators past the security guards into the arena where Mondale was talking about how the U.S. stands for equality, majority rule and human rights. He got stopped short with "Hey Mondale, you can't hide; we know you're on Vorster's side." While opposed by many in the hall, the action created tremendous controversy across the campus, with literally thousands of people arguing about the action—whether the demonstrators should have gone so far in their opposition to the U.S. role in Africa, whether Mondale was an appropriate target, etc.

Increasingly, as the word of ALD began to get out to the masses, the May

27 march on the Renaissance Center was becoming a topic of discussion. The city officials, along with their imperialist masters, began to see that ALD was a force to be dealt with.

ALSC and the ALD Coalition had to wage sharp struggle with the city to even get a permit for the march. The city tried to cut the strength out of the demonstration by insisting people march on the sidewalk and stay away from residential areas. Finally ALSC and the Coalition walked into a city council meeting to put the issue right on the agenda, insisting on the permit for the street. Amidst screams and curses from angry council members, ALSC and the Coalition held its ground, and went tit for tat with them and won the permit.

In the course of the battle so-called radical and liberal council members showed their true nature. The so-called "Marxist" council member Ken Cockral, a former leading figure in the Detroit revolutionary movement, led the council in a "be cool, follow the rules" routine and then let it all hang-out when he said "F--- you" to ALSC/ALDC.

GM Stockholders Action

The struggle to build ALD took a big leap after 50 demonstrators busted into the GM annual stockholders meeting in Detroit on May 19. As a leaflet put it, ALSC mobilized to confront "the top dog exploiters who will be taking stock of the profits they have squeezed from the labor of working people worldwide, from Black South African auto-workers to U.S. autoworkers."

The demonstrators stormed into the gilded halls of Detroit's Fisher Building chanting "GM get the hell out of Africa." The cops were caught thoroughly off guard. The demonstrators battled at the doors of the meeting and broke through for a moment. The look on the faces of these coupon clipping parasites was pure terror. It was like their worst nightmare had come true—the slaves marching on them in their sacred halls. With the cops running to catch up, the demonstrators moved back outside, marched across the street and set up a picketline at GM world headquarters.

After the GM action the battle between ALSC/ALDC and the bourgeoisie sharpened. Three RCYB members and four ALSC members were arrested for leafletting at a high school. An emergency picket line was called at the police precinct to turn this attack around.

The next day five squad cars pulled up to the ALSC office. They delivered a special letter from the Detroit city council threatening to revoke the permit. ALSC continued to go on the offensive politically, exposing the city at every step for protecting GM, Ford, and the rest of the rich rulers of Detroit. This was the setting for the May 27th demonstration.



ALD demonstration passes the "Renaissance Center," recently built by the Detroit bourgeoisie expressing their vain hopes of a rebirth and their contempt for the masses. The plan to march on this symbolic structure generated sharp controversy and conflict with the local rulers.

The effect of the different actions contained an important lesson. The basis for advancing ALD was fleshing out and deepening the line of "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from the U.S.A. to the U.S.A.," and boldly propagating this stand through extensive agitation in Detroit's Black community and major plants. The demonstrations in Ann Arbor, at the City Council, and at the GM meeting were important in making ALD a big social question.

By going straight up against the imperialists, each action served to further expose the role of the U.S. imperialists in Africa, and sharpened up the connection between the revolutionary struggle of the African people and the struggle in the U.S. for tens of thousands of people. At the same time these demonstrations helped to bring forward activists to join the ranks of ALSC.

Sharp Questions

In the course of building for African Liberation Day nationwide, many sharp questions came up from among the masses. For instance, in certain departments of the Ford Rouge plant in Detroit, ALD leaflets became almost big character posters, with workers writing all kinds of comments back and forth on them. Many asked, "What about the Russians?" There is a wide awareness, of course, that the Soviet Union is not a friend of the world's people, and often the question on people's minds is, if the U.S. pulls out, won't the Soviets and the Cubans come pouring in?

Besides stressing the correct slogan—"Superpowers Hands Off!"—it must be pointed out that the American people have the main task and opportunity of opposing "our own" imperialist ruling class. The African people, for their part, are fighting for total liberation from imperialism and of course have no interest in having the social-imperialists step in and take over. At the same time, superpower contention on the African continent is part of their jockeying for position in preparation for a world war, and it is important to arm the masses with this understanding.

The other commonly heard question was often expressed as follows: Why worry about what's happening on another continent when there's so much that's wrong here at home? The key to resolving this contradiction is a scientific analysis of imperialism, which

reveals its character as a "worldwide system," keeping down the masses of people both at home and around the world. Down to earth and lively agitation around many particulars both here and in Africa is essential to bringing this alive.

There is a particular link between the national oppression faced by Black people in this country and the oppression by imperialism of the nations of Africa, the continent from which the forefathers of American Blacks were forcibly removed. This link is not the same as the wrong view put forward by Pan Africanists like Stokely Carmichael who say all Blacks are an African people with one goal—freeing Africa. The forms of national oppression are very different and the immediate tasks—in the U.S. socialist revolution led by the working class, and in Africa national liberation—are also different. But there are real links. There is a common enemy. And these connections are certainly felt on a perceptual level by Black people in this country. This, of course, helps make it possible for ALSC—and the Party—to mobilize the masses against imperialism on both fronts.

In doing this, one of the tasks of ALSC is to raise this perceptual understanding to a higher level, showing how the underlying link between the oppression of Blacks in the U.S. and the oppression of nations in Africa is the system of imperialism, the common enemy which faces people both here and there. This deeper understanding is concentrated in the slogan, "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression From U.S.A. to U.S.A."

Following this line has enabled ALSC to make progress in developing a clear revolutionary thrust to its work and in uniting masses of people around itself—progress illustrated by this year's ALD.

This year's African Liberation Day and the work leading up to it did much to advance the task of building a united front against imperialism under the leadership of the working class—the strategy for revolution in this country. In particular, ALD took further steps in forging the solid core of the united front, the revolutionary alliance between the struggle of the multi-national working class and the struggle of the oppressed nationalities. New fighters came forward, and the question of imperialism as the common enemy of the people in this country and in Africa was raised among many thousands of people. ■



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Tasks...

Continued from page 3

struggle is beginning to revive, his characterization has importance for the struggle today in the U.S.

Lenin went on to say, "that is why the attention of the Social-Democratic Party and all class-conscious workers should be concentrated mainly on this struggle." But *this* is not applicable to our situation today. This is because the movement of the U.S. working class is not just now going over from machine-smashing to organized strikes and because trade unionism is far more developed and has a much stronger hold on the working class today.

U.S. imperialism finds itself at the beginning of a downward spiral after a generation during which there has been a *relatively* high standard of living for a large part of the working class and the lack of a genuine communist party.

The Second Party Congress, while repudiating the formulation of "center of gravity," examined the above statement of Lenin in light of the conditions in the U.S. today. The Congress noted that in the past several years the U.S. workers in their strike struggles have been "making tremendous progress" in the sense that, while still fighting within the confines of trade unionism, they have increasingly broken through the bonds that the capitalists and their agents have placed on the trade union (economic) struggle.

Some examples of this are the miners' struggle, the periodic flare-ups in auto characterized by wildcats and open struggle against the UAW International and its agents, the Farah strike several years back and the broad support movement around it, and so on. The growing phenomenon of the rank and file taking matters into their own hands and fighting it out blow for blow with the companies and the company men in union leadership is something different from the general character of shop struggles in the 1950s and early 1960s, which were much more easily controlled by the capitalists and their labor lieutenants and largely kept a part of "business as usual."

Correctly understanding this situation and formulating Party policy accordingly was of course an important task of the Founding Congress. In this situation the economist "center of gravity of our Party's work in the economic struggle" formulation gained more credibility. Now Jarvis takes credit for that formulation and he's welcome to it. The Party is well rid of it as well as him. But it is important to understand why this formulation was accepted, what was right and wrong in what it reflected and how the struggle around it developed.

There had been a certain tendency among communists before the founding of the Party to downplay the importance of—and still more the task of maximizing the revolutionary gains in—the economic struggle, in favor of more political struggles such as that against the police repression of oppressed minorities. This was a hangover from the period of Bundism, a deviation among communists which held that the Black and other national liberation struggles were the really important struggles and everything else had to be subordinated to that.

Such a petty bourgeois orientation failed to recognize the working class as the revolutionary class and neglected the importance of taking up the battles that the workers in their millions have already begun to wage. But both before and during the Founding Congress, the Jarvis-Bergman clique played upon and greatly exaggerated this tendency in order to push their own extremely rightist line. And they totally missed the fact that the main deviation in taking up political struggles in the previous period was that often the *political line* brought to them was not a Marxist-Leninist, proletarian line.

Economic and Political Struggle

According to the Jarvis-Bergman bunch, there is no difference between political and economic struggle. In fact, a close associate of Jarvis, a hatchet-woman whom he often used to run out a political line he was not quite ready to openly defend, became notorious for saying, "I wish I could burn *What Is To Be Done?*," exactly because in that book Lenin insisted on distinguishing economic and political struggle and emphasizing the need for the working class to take up the political struggle. Rather than oppose trade unionism, these people promoted it, and rather than seek to transform the conditions of the class struggle today, these people glorified them.

Leading up to the Founding Congress of the RCP this clique waged a coordinated offensive aimed at getting the Party PROGRAMME and the Party's line in general to reflect their anti-Leninist (and anti-Marxist) orientation. Some of Jarvis' junior officers wrote up a major criticism of the DRAFT PROGRAMME for the Party concerning the role of intermediate workers' organizations and the significance of economic struggle. This polemic—entitled "Clarify the Role of the IWOs"—had as its main point the line that because "the fundamental contradiction, and now also the principal contradiction in America today is between the working class and bourgeoisie... struggle around shop issues is *potentially* revolutionary struggle." It vehemently denied that there is any difference between a plant-based organization taking up the fight for a good contract and taking up a battle around broader political issues.

The Menshevik authors then tried to pervert Lenin's statement from *On Strikes* that "from individual strikes the workers can and must go over... to a struggle of the entire working class for the emancipation of all who labor." According to the Jarvis-Bergman gang, this "clearly link[s] the struggle against the individual employer, struggle around 'wages and benefits, working conditions, against speedup and layoffs, against discrimination' to the struggle of 'the entire working class for the emancipation of labor.'" Here what they mean by "go over" is not that it is necessary to transform the workers movement into a politically conscious one, but, that, at some point the economic struggles themselves will quite literally and directly "go over" to a struggle for power.

What Lenin had written about economic and political struggle is no longer applicable today, these modern Mensheviks argued, because in the time Lenin was writing about, Russia was still ruled by a feudal Czar and not by the capitalists who owned the factories, whereas today factory struggles and broader battles are both directed against the capitalists. Although this does account for some differences in the tasks of the working class in the U.S. today (which doesn't, for example, face the necessity to rally the peasantry against feudalism), this is not at all why Lenin made the distinction between economic and political struggle.

Revisionism is often characterized by what it omits, and the Mensheviks omitted what Lenin always emphasized—that the "framework [of economic struggle] is *too narrow*" (from *What Is To Be Done?*, emphasis Lenin's) to develop the class consciousness of the workers and that while, yes, there is a link between the economic struggle and class conscious struggle for revolution it is even more important to grasp the qualitative leap involved in this "going over." As Lenin pointed out in *On Strikes*, there is quite a difference between "schools of war" (as he characterized the economic strikes) and "war itself." But the modern Mensheviks glossed over this difference in quality to make it seem as if these struggles would by sheer increase somehow add up to a revolution.

Linked to this line on the economic struggle was the call put out by these Mensheviks at that Congress that Party cadre should "enter the national struggle" "as the force which leads the powerful struggle the workers are engaged in the plants." This meant that the Party should not take part in this struggle openly in its own name, but only, or mainly, through mass workers' organizations. It meant treating the struggle of the working class as it is today as though it were already merged with the struggle against national oppression, that is, as though the working class movement was right now a conscious movement against all oppression. But when you really got down to the bottom line, what it meant was trying to tie the struggle against national oppression to the same narrow, pragmatist outlook that took the form of economism in regard to the spontaneous workers' struggles.

The Mensheviks defended this approach by saying, "What the masses want to know is not where their oppression comes from but how they can fight and win." This line is gross right idealism, because it ignores the dialectical relationship between understanding and struggle—the fact that the masses must know where their oppression comes from in order to develop and build their struggle beyond its initial spontaneous forms. But even more blatantly rightist is its conception of "winning." In the final analysis, *winning* either means getting rid of exploitation and oppression by getting rid of their source, the bourgeoisie and the capitalist system, or else it means nothing more than a few reforms. This Menshevik cry can't help but bring to mind that notorious slogan of the original Mensheviks of Lenin's day, "The movement is everything, the final aim nothing."

The "shop struggle is potentially revolutionary" line put forward in the "Clarify" polemic was specifically and emphatically rejected and criticized by

the Founding Congress. Despite Menshevik efforts, the PROGRAMME the Congress adopted was a correct programme, including a correct analysis of the connection between the day-to-day struggle and the revolutionary goal, the need to build organizations rooted in the plants whose overall role would be to take up the big issues in society, while also militantly fighting in the plant-by-plant and industrial battles, and so on.

The Mensheviks' stubborn factionalism, including a lot of baton-waving behind the scenes by leading Mensheviks getting others to say what they dared not say themselves—fundamentally ended in failure. But because the ideological roots of this line were not thoroughly enough dug out, the economist wind which the Mensheviks whipped up had some effect.

Where these would-be bureaucrats did get over and do damage was the adoption of the line that the "center of gravity of the Party's work" should be in the economic struggle at this time, by which was meant not only that the Party should pay attention and give importance to the economic struggle at this time because of the reasons described earlier, but also that the Party should concentrate its efforts on building the economic struggle today.

This was in direct contradiction with the formulation of the Party's central task—"to build the struggle, class consciousness and revolutionary unity of the working class and develop its leadership of a broad united front against the U.S. imperialists, in the context of the world-wide united front against imperialism aimed at the rulers of the two superpowers. As this is developed, together with the development of a revolutionary situation, the question of mobilizing the masses for the armed insurrection will then come to the fore as the immediate question." At the time of the Founding Congress, the Party did not grasp the economist essence of the "center of gravity" line. But this economism was to become clearer and clearer as Jarvis and Bergman used "the center of gravity" as a slogan to oppose the central task and to attempt to turn an incorrect current into a counterrevolutionary tide.

Menshevik Self-Exposure

Today, the Mensheviks are screaming that the "center of gravity" line never really thoroughly characterized the work of the Party, and of course they were right. In their introduction to their recent "theoretical" publication, affectionately known as TOILET PAPERS I by Party members, the Mensheviks complain that the revolutionary majority of the Party leadership agreed to the phrase "center of gravity," but not its spirit. They rant and rave about how the Party leadership didn't allow them to center their gravity in the economic struggles as thoroughly and in the real economist way which they would have liked. This publication upholds the "Clarify" line that "shop struggle is potentially revolutionary struggle," not only by explicitly upholding that polemic by name, but also by repeating its theses in slightly new words. Here we are told that the RCP's "problem" is "the failure in making a basic analysis of the particular stage in the struggle we are in"—in other words, that we failed to make a special stage of the economic struggle in this period. This is of course exactly the line the Mensheviks had proposed (economic struggle today, political struggle for the workers maybe some other day when they are "ready")—and the line the Party had defeated.

As if this weren't enough self-exposure by those who were only a little while ago claiming to uphold the line of the RCP—with "minor differences" of course—these Mensheviks go on to denounce the formulation "two-headed monster" adopted by the Party Founding Congress to describe the relationship between the capitalists and their henchmen in the unions. It's now an "obstacle," they say, to building the struggle.

Certainly such a formulation really is an obstacle—an obstacle in developing from an economist tendency to an all around out-and-out trade unionist line hellbent on winning friends and influencing people by patting these monsters on the head (Not to mention hellbent on sacrificing political principle to win a few cushy trade union jobs themselves). This kind of trade unionism—of finding some hack whose coattails can be ridden—is a special hallmark of L. Bergman.

Economism in Practice

Since the two leading Mensheviks did not come out openly and defend for themselves their full economist line at the time of the Founding Congress, the struggle around the Jarvis-Bergman bunch's attempts to make a special slogan of this formulation continued for some time within the Party. The spontaneous pull of rightism in general and economism in particular in the current situation in this country also had its effect. But the advances made in founding the Party and linking communists with the struggle of the working class would have very quickly turned into their opposites if struggle against this economism and the political and ideological line behind it had not been waged from the start.

The Mensheviks demonstrated what they understood by "center of gravity" early on right after the Party's formation. In New York-New Jersey, for instance, they led that area's United Workers Organization to ignore the city crisis when it was at its sharpest in favor of an "anti-productivity campaign." Since productivity drives are economic attacks that are generally fought shop to shop or within a single industry, taking

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Tasks...

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this up as *the* pressing class-wide campaign is a crude example of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"—a slogan used by the original economists of Lenin's time to excuse their refusal to take up the burning political questions of the day in the working class. This line was criticized and reversed by the RCP leadership.

But simply trying to put this or that area of work back on the right track could not overcome the fundamental problem of ideological and political line from which economist errors sprung up one after another faster than weeds. The Mensheviks promoted a tendency in the Party to try to link all areas of the Party's work to the fight at the "center of gravity." For instance, in veterans work, instead of linking the experience and struggle of vets, especially the experience of having had to fight in an imperialist war, with the capitalist system and proletarian revolution, there would be an attempt to show how the veterans' fight was linked to that of the workers because both today face cutbacks (or "takeaways," as the Mensheviks have taken to calling them).

This went hand in hand with a tendency to try to find an economic "center of gravity" for every struggle, which blossomed into the truly hideous line that the "center of gravity" of the Party's work among students should be the struggle against cutbacks. In fact, with the exception of the speech by Comrade Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Party's Central Committee, which stood out by its sweeping and revolutionary content, the founding convention of the Revolutionary Student Brigade as the communist student organization of the Party was so exclusively centered on cutbacks, with so little else mentioned and hardly a word about communism in general, that it seemed like a national cutback conclave. This was so obviously rightist and out of touch with reality that the main Mensheviks responsible for it had to do some hurried self-criticism. But of course they didn't give up their basic line.

Mass Line Campaign

A few months after the Founding Congress of the Party a campaign was launched within the Party against these rightist deviations. It centered on the study of two articles written directly about the mass line, and a third, "The Day to Day Struggle and the Revolutionary Goal," written by Comrade Avakian.

The first two articles explained that mass line means taking up the ideas of the masses in light of Marxism and the long-term interests of the masses, and in this way concentrating what is correct and returning it to the masses in the form of policies they can grasp as their own. This was in direct contradiction to the way Jarvis and Bergman were using the words "mass line" to mean that communists should mirror the masses and certainly never stir up controversy among them. The third article did exactly what its title said—it dealt with the day to day struggle in the context of how to reach the revolutionary goal, hitting at the idea that building the day to day struggle is the goal itself, or that doing so will bring about revolution.

This article stressed that we cannot build "a revolutionary movement, led by the working class, aimed at overthrowing and eliminating capitalism, . . . if we try to show how every event in society relates to the 'center of gravity' of the present workers' struggle. We can only do it by showing, in a living way, how every event, every struggle, including those concentrated now in this present 'center of gravity,' relate to what they all, in fact, do have in common: that every attack people are forced to fight, that every abuse and outrage, all oppression, is rooted in the capitalist system of exploiting the working class as wage slaves, in the fundamental contradiction between socialized production and private ownership, which can only be resolved through socialist revolution, led by the working class and its Party." For this reason the Party had to carry out "strictly Marxist propaganda and agitation."

While not criticizing the "center of gravity" formulation, this was clearly a sharp polemic against the economist tendencies that had arisen—and had been promoted by Jarvis and Bergman—in connection with "the center of gravity."

The article continued: "It is the case that today it is mainly in the fight around wages, working conditions, etc. that workers fight with a *beginning*, an *elementary*, and only elementary, *sense* of fighting together as workers." And it went on, "It is extremely important to work to raise this embryonic sense of common bond as workers into more developed class consciousness through the course of all these basic day to day battles. But these struggles, and the work of communists in them—even if carried out in the most correct way—will never in and of themselves lead to the achievement of the revolutionary goal of overthrowing capitalism and establishing socialism, nor establish in the understanding of the workers involved in these struggles the need to build their fight toward this goal! It is only as they learn to take up every major question, every important battle against the enemy, *and* to take them up as part of their own class struggle against this enemy, with the aim of overthrowing it, that the workers raise their consciousness to class consciousness in the fullest sense and develop their movement into a revolutionary struggle."

This call for "strictly Marxist propaganda and agitation" was part of a quote in the article taken from Lenin which said, "There is nothing more warranted than the urging of attention to the constant, imperative necessity of deepening and broadening, broadening and deepening, our influence on the masses, our strictly Marxist propaganda and agitation, our ever closer connection with the economic struggle of the working class, etc. Yet, because such urging is at all times warranted, under all conditions and in all situations, it must not be turned into special slogans, nor should it justify attempts to build upon it a special trend in Social-Democracy [Communism]. A borderline exists here; to exceed the bounds is to turn this indisputably legitimate urging into a narrowing of the aims and scope of the movement, into a doctrinaire blindness to the vital and cardinal political tasks of the moment."

A "Special Slogan"

The 1976 Central Committee Report "Revolutionary Work in a Non-Revolutionary Situation" (now printed as a pamphlet) even more sharply summed up and specifically criticized this "making a special slogan out of the economic struggles, or making them an end in themselves, *overestimating* in fact what can be accomplished in these struggles, or negating the need to wage the political struggle." (p. 67, 1976 CC REPORT)

It analyzed this as part of a rightist and pragmatist current in the Party: "By and large this idealism has been expressed in the openly rightist view that the 'Center of Gravity' is everything, that it is enough to wage the economic struggle and to conduct this struggle in an economist way, not linking it with other struggles throughout society against the ruling class and with the long range goal of proletarian revolution. In effect the 'Center of Gravity' was substituted for the Central Task of the Party, and became in effect, the *strategy* of the Party. It is, according to this view, the day to day (economic) struggle that will build the consciousness and unity of the working class and other questions and battles in society are seen as *diversions*. . ." (Ibid., p.5)

This CC Report went deeply into the question of stages in the class struggle, particular contradictions that in any given period condition its development and lay the basis for its transformation to a higher level. It emphasized that the importance of grasping how all things, including the class struggle, develop through stages is not to restrict the Party's tasks to those which fit easily and in fact trail behind the general stage things are at today. The point is exactly the opposite—to grasp the development of stages in order to lead the working class movement beyond its current level towards its final goal of revolution and communism. This was in direct contradiction to the Menshevik line that because the working class movement today centers on economic struggle, any attempt to bring out the long-range revolutionary interests of the working class represents "left idealism." (This obviously has a lot to do with the Menshevik's idea of how to "fuse" communism with the working class movement, which will be the subject of a later article.)

In contrast to earlier Party documents, this Report insisted on distinguishing between economic and political struggle, criticized this "overestimating in fact what can be accomplished" (p. 67) in the economic struggle and gave the deepest importance to the task of taking up political struggle which "does tend, more than the economic, to raise the basic question of how the whole society is run and in whose interests." (p.66)

It also emphasized that there are *three* forms of class struggle—including the theoretical as well as the economic and the political—and called attention to the necessity of the Party taking up all three.

The 1976 Central Committee meeting drew up a series of policies for the Party in line with this orientation, based on the need to conduct all its work in "a strictly Marxist way," including agitation carried out in connection with economic struggle, while also carrying out more broad exposures. To this end it was decided to strengthen the WORKER newspapers, including doing more local political exposures, and to begin publishing them more often, as part of breaking with the line that considered agitation as only a call to action and failed to see that communists have to be "tribunes of the people," exposing and opposing all the abuses spewed forth by the capitalist system and revealing the class relationships and the rule of the enemy behind all events in society. This line was further deepened in an internal bulletin on "The Worker and Our Party's Tasks" (see article "Sharpen Weapon of the Party's Press," REVOLUTION, June 1978).

These Mensheviks first opposed the adoption of this CC Report, then they "agreed" to it, while in reality they tried to distort and sabotage it. Now today they openly oppose it. The revolutionary understanding of the relationship between the economic struggle and revolution was what characterized the Party's line overall. The Jarvis-Bergman bunch were being driven into more and more blatantly factional activity, trying to use the incorrect tendencies within the Party to take over the Party and turn it into a rightist monstrosity. It was inevitable that this struggle would come to a head.

The Second Party Congress, held after the Menshevik split in 1978, summed up not only the tendencies towards making a special slogan out of "center of gravity," but also that that formulation itself represented a special slogan—a stagist, economist view basing the Party's work on building the economic struggle and conducting agitation mainly in the course of that.

It criticized the line promoted by the Mensheviks that reduced the question of raising the consciousness of the proletariat simply to applying Marxism to each separate battle taken as a thing in itself, negating the importance of doing all-around political exposure of the capitalist system.

The Congress noted that the Party must take fully into account the present level of the workers struggle and the advances being made in the economic struggle and pay particular attention under today's conditions to uniting with these fights and giving them revolutionary leadership. But the Congress also noted that the agitation the Party carries out cannot and must not be exclusively or even mainly centered on the economic struggle.

For the Party and the class conscious workers in this country, the fight against economism, against viewing the economic struggles themselves as potentially revolutionary and failing to see the need to *divert* the workers movement away from simply being a fight over the conditions of the sale of labor to a struggle against the system of wage slavery itself, remains a cardinal question.

In waging this struggle the Party is fighting the spontaneous pull of the capitalist system and the ideology and politics foisted on the workers by the bourgeoisie. This question is a rock upon which many once revolutionary parties have been sunk into the depths of revisionist betrayal, but it is an obstacle the Revolutionary Communist Party is determined to lead the workers overcoming. ■

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Tax...

Continued from page 5

alist society and the masses of people are the victims of this situation, not the source of it.

In fact, people in L.A. County have experienced sharp tax increases at the same time as further attacks have come down on existing services. A look at how this has developed over the last few years illustrates that it is the system, not the people, that is to blame.

Partly due to concessions to mass struggle of the '60s and partly because of the functions of government under imperialism (including spending funds to stimulate the growth of capital) L.A. County, as well as other areas, experienced an expansion of various services in the late '60s and the '70s. The number of county employees doubled between 1965 and 1975. Various services like the county health care system also grew.

But while this was more possible in an expanding economy, under present conditions cuts in services have become the order of the day, not because they are expendable to the masses, but given the needs of capital elsewhere, they are expendable to the capitalists. This is not fundamentally a question of greed on the part of the capitalists—the laws of the system dictate that more and more funds must be marshalled to bolster up finance and industry and other spending, notably war preparations.

All this has put strains on local governments to maintain even declining services, and increased revenue has been raised locally. Cuts in federal subsidies to L.A. County's health care system meant that while in 1971, 4% of property taxes collected locally went to health care, by 1976 this figure had risen to 28%.

Also, in the midst of soaring taxes on homeowners, the tax base of the area (in property values) has actually declined by \$2 billion since 1970, mainly due to industry shutdowns.

High levels of unemployment have forced over 1,000,000 people into a near-starvation level existence, as one in seven in L.A. County currently receive some form of welfare.

Massive Attacks

The L.A. County Board of Supervisors summed all this up a couple of years ago in a report which predicted impending financial disaster on the scale of New York City unless drastic measures were taken. Too much was going out, not enough was coming in. Implicit in this report was the plan to steer clear of deficit spending, to keep the books balanced and not fall into the possible situation of a credit cut-off from the banks *a la* NYC.

They called for cuts in services, attacks on government workers and "tax reform" (by which they meant increased taxation). In other words, further robbery of the masses. These plans have gone down, despite resistance on the part of county workers and others.

One small but sharp example is the criminal situation where several people recently died in a county hospital from a staph infection. The county imposed a hiring freeze last year and has driven workers out by attrition. The spread of this infection is a direct result of severe understaffing.

In another case, a nurse responsible for an Intensive Care Unit called her supervisor to plead for more help as several patients were growing critically worse. The supervisor's response was a dial tone as she hung up the phone.

As part of the Board's master plan, a full scale assault was launched on county workers when contracts covering thousands expired last summer. And in the recent election, the Board managed to push over a vote eliminating the prevailing wage clause from the county charter. (This clause supposedly kept county wages at the level of private industry.) This was a sharp indication of one of the Board's "solutions" to the crisis—massive wage cuts.

While this list goes on and on, the fact that crisis had taken its toll prior to the June 6th election is an important thing to note. Vast quantities of bourgeois propaganda have since been devoted to what has become known as the "aftermath" of the vote for Prop. 13. The message has been that the blame for any cutbacks should be squarely placed on the shoulders of those people who, evidently possessed by an unparalleled amount of greed, pushed the "yes" button in the ballot box. This is

the mirror image of the line that blames public workers and welfare recipients for every tax increase.

It's reminiscent of one of the oldest pickpocket stories in the book. The pickpocket sneaks up and grabs your wallet. He then diverts your attention by yelling, "Thief, thief!" With your wallet gone and eyes cast elsewhere, the pickpocket makes good his escape into the crowd.

There is a robbery taking place, but the hundreds of thousands of words of print summing up the "aftermath" of Jarvis-Gann and aimed at convincing the masses that they have been robbing each other, will never keep the real bandits from eventually getting caught!

While the capitalists can have no unified plan to deal with the crisis, most of California's captains of finance and industry had worked for the defeat of 13. Jerry Brown, governor of the state, was in the forefront of this effort.

A challenge to their taxing authority, and the prospect of cutting \$7 billion out of the State's revenue base and the subsequent dislocations in the State's already sagging economy was less than thrilling to them. Even shifting to some other tax (sales or income) was seen as unfavorable, as property taxes tend to be a more stable tax, less susceptible to the ups and downs of the economy. There were, of course, powerful interests working on behalf of the initiative, most notably real estate. More importantly the large vote for 13, especially in an election year, created an opportunity to jump on the bandwagon, and some politicians and the capitalists who pull their strings decided supporting 13 was the way to go.

But no ballot initiative can fundamentally alter the laws of capitalism. While the "revolution" that occurred on June 6th in California is something the capitalists can handle, the crisis that gave rise to it is something they can not.

After weeks of intense deliberations Gov. Brown recently delivered a speech which was broadcast statewide. He laid out that things would be okay, since the cuts in local revenue would be made up for by subsidies from the state budget—for the first year at least. He assured people that business had promised to re-invest in California any excess profits derived as a result of property tax breaks, thus insuring jobs for all.

He said that landlords had promised to lower rents and that top priority would be given to vital social services.

"California has a healthy, expanding economy," he noted, and hastened to add that if we all pull together, we can work things out. If Walt Disney wasn't dead, one could have attributed to him the screenplay of Brown's performance.

Conspicuously absent from Brown's rap, for example, was any mention of the provision of Prop. 13 which would require a popular vote for the raising of new local revenue. And, of course, he made no promise not to increase various state taxes.

Already many local governments have rushed to levy new taxes and raise old ones before July 1st when Prop. 13 is to take effect. One suburb of L.A. increased a \$2 per apartment tax in the city to \$50! Many others have passed or are considering passing what amounts to a city income tax. And people who formerly deducted property taxes on their federal income tax forms are now faced with paying higher income taxes as this deduction is no longer as great. Once things "cool down" somewhat, as one State Senator put it, state levies are also bound to increase. *Business Week* magazine put it well, "If politicians show their usual resourcefulness... Jarvis-Gann's net fiscal impact will be to pull money from the taxpayer's left-hand pocket instead of the right."

At the same time the "popular mandate" sent from the people to the politicians is being used as an excuse to make various cuts that were already slated, as well as others now that there is now more political freedom to implement them.

State workers have been hit with a wage freeze, cost of living increases, welfare payments have been stopped, and some schools have shut for the summer.

All this is a continuation of the contradictions that existed before California's election, under certain new conditions. The bourgeoisie is scrambling to deal with a crisis they can't control, and this crisis is giving rise to ever sharper struggle among all strata of the masses and sharper questions about the nature of the system which can only offer people multiple forms of robbery. ■

'Reform'...

Continued from page 11

the NLRB to seek an immediate injunction against unauthorized picketing. Another example is the fact that, besides giving union organizers "equal time," the bill also provides employer access to union halls!

Secondly, the bill has already been weakened in several ways, and undoubtedly it will be weakened still further before it can get through the Senate. For instance, the bill was originally supposed to award triple back pay to workers who had been illegally fired for union activities; the House version offers double back pay minus the wages earned if the worker has been able to find another job; the Senate version gives 1½ back pay less wages earned.

Likewise the time limits within which union certification elections have to be held after workers have signed authorization cards have been just about doubled in both House and Senate bills compared to what was originally introduced.

In fact, the bill has been changed enough so that President Carter could say, in reply to a question from a newspaper publisher, "I have gone over every item in this labor reform package. It is much more moderate or conservative or much more inclined toward the employer's position than it was in its original form, because I have the same concern that you do." Meany and Co. have shamelessly used this statement in lobbying for the bill.

But the main reason for workers not

to put their hopes in this bill is that the NLRB and its union election procedures, "streamlined" or not, are used for the purpose of further diverting the workers' struggle away from militant mass struggle and onto the capitalists' legalistic turf.

More Ruling Class Support

Carter is not the only ruling class mouthpiece to have become assured of the acceptability of this bill. The NEW YORK TIMES editorialized (7/22/77) that "the new labor package reasserts a basic principle of the Wagner Act and should be adopted." The CHICAGO TRIBUNE, whose stand toward the working class is infamous, gave the bill a partial endorsement (7/16/77). The LOS ANGELES TIMES (7/18/77) said that these reforms "deserve enactment."

These are not the only agents of the bourgeoisie pushing the bill. This piece of legislation originated as part of the current strategy of the AFL-CIO Executive Board. Just as in 1976 these hacks tried to convince union members and the working class in general that the solution to their problems lay in a vote for Carter, they decided after Carter's inauguration that the strategy to which they would try to win the working class would be a legislative program consisting of (a) the common situs picketing bill; (b) repeal of section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act (which allows states to enact so-called "right to work" laws); and (c) this Labor Law Reform bill. (See "Snakes Bask in Sun, Prepare More Poison," on the Executive Board meeting in Miami, April 1977 REVOLUTION.)

Of these three, the common situs bill contained provisions which would have given national construction union hacks more control over local union militants, and this was one of the main reasons why the AFL-CIO was particularly interested in it. As to the other

two, the bureaucrats claim that passage of these measures is the key to opening up the South to unionization. Unionizing the South is certainly an important task facing the working class. But the reason these traitors to the working class want it—to the degree they actually do—is in order to reverse the decline in union membership—in other words, to bolster their own power and wealth.

But the common situs bill went down to defeat in Congress. And the AFL-CIO decided to "trade off" the repeal of 14(b) in advance—because they knew the bourgeoisie would put up a real fight to keep it. So now these snakes see the passage of the Labor Law Reform as their main task. "We are going to fight harder for this bill than for any bill since the passage of the Wagner Act," said Meany some months ago.

\$2.5 Million Lobbying Effort

So far the AFL-CIO has spent about \$2.5 million lobbying for it. Meanwhile, Meany & Co. have, of course, continued their overall class collaboration including on the legislative front, as shown for example in their refusal to fight the cutback of unemployment insurance last year to 39 weeks.

The reason that they are so concerned about this bill has nothing to do with the interests of the workers or concern for those slaving away at near-starvation wages in nonunion plants. Rather they are concerned only with building up their dues structure. The \$2.5 million is for them nothing but an investment which they hope to recoup.

Further, any unionization that does come about on the basis of this legislation—as opposed to the mass struggle of the workers—is unlikely to win any real gains for the workers. The hacks think of unionization as passing out authorization cards, holding an election, possibly appealing to the NLRB,

then having cozy negotiations with the boss.

This may indeed be enough for their purposes, but not for those of the workers. For a union based on legalistic maneuvering may indeed be something that will generate dues, but it will not be something through which workers will win real victories.

Actually, by the time Meany & Co. have finished "trading off" things to get it through the Senate, the legislation will have been not only weakened to the point of meaninglessness, but overall could well represent an attack on the working class.

But, in whatever form it finally gets passed, the bourgeoisie and its agents will try to use it as a weapon against the workers, particularly by entangling the rank and file in a web of bureaucratic rigamarole. The situation in the South is ripe for unionization drives, and both the labor hacks and the companies know it. The industrial workforce in the South has doubled in the last twenty years. Companies have been heading South precisely because of its nonunion low-wage conditions.

When a mass unionization struggle does break out in this situation, the best bet for the capitalist involved may well be to unionize safely—the AFL-CIO bureaucratic way. One thing (among many) that both Meany and the capitalists can agree on is the need to prevent hard-fought union recognition battles like the Farah Pants strike in Texas or the Oneita Mills strike in South Carolina from breaking out and igniting a massive fight for unionization across the South—supported by workers across the country—that the AFL-CIO would be unable to control.

Unionization of the South, like any real gain for the workers, will not come through deals between union hacks and the bourgeoisie or as a gift from Congress, but only through the militant mass struggle of the working class. ■

Killings, Canned Applause Mark Treaty Signing

In the weeks preceding President Carter's trip to Panama to sign the new canal treaties, Gen. Omar Torrijos clamped down on the growing opposition of the Panamanian people to the treaties and demands for complete U.S. withdrawal from Panama. Squads of government workers were ordered to scrub out "Carter Go Home!" and "Panama Si! Carter No!" slogans spray painted all over Panama City. At the University of Panama, "student leaders" on the government payroll and undercover agents of Panama's G2 secret police attacked a meeting of anti-treaty students with small arms and submachine guns, killing three students and wounding 15.

Torrijos quickly seized upon the incident as a pretext for banning all protests during Carter's June 16-17 trip. The government then ordered the university closed indefinitely and suspended classes at the National Institute, a high school where students had also protested against the treaties.

Only two days later, Carter arrived on Air Force One to join Torrijos in the treaty-signing ceremony. June 16 was proclaimed a national holiday by the government, hundreds of buses were dispatched throughout the country to bring people to the "victory rally" at the Fifth of May Plaza in Panama City, and all government employees were told to sign in at the Plaza or lose their jobs.

This circus type "welcome" and the vicious attacks against Panamanians who oppose the canal treaties are part and parcel of the reactionary strategy being jointly pursued by the U.S. imperialists and the reactionary Panamanian rulers to divert and smash the struggle of the Panamanian people for national liberation and genuine independence. (See April/May, 1978, *REVOLUTION* article, "New Face Lift for Colonialism" for an analysis of the treaties' contents.)

After Senate ratification of the new

treaties in April, Torrijos arrogantly boasted that "This treaty ends colonialism. I feel proud that I have accomplished our mission." However, the essential question involved in the treaties—the necessity for U.S. imperialism to change the form of its control over the canal from old-style colonialism to neo-colonialism, and thereby "stabilize" the political situation and open the way for increased imperialist penetration of Panama—was driven home by the president of the Association of Panamanian Business Executives, Leo Gutierrez: "Violence is the enemy of money, and so long as the canal issue was not resolved, there was always the threat of violence... It's no secret that many corporations have filed applications with the government and have been laying out plans ever since the serious treaty negotiations began last year." He concluded, "Now these plans will be implemented."

In spite of his populist rhetoric for the masses, Torrijos has made Panama a tax-free haven for multinational corporations based in the Colon free trade zone, which is now being rapidly expanded. Nearly 80 foreign banks have been enticed to open offices in Panama, which is becoming an important base of operations for imperialist economic activities in the rest of Latin America.

Obviously encouraged by the "improved business climate," the First National Bank of Chicago organized an international syndicate of 68 banks in early 1978 to lend Panama \$170 million to meet its heavy debt service payments.

The continued imperialist domination of Panama can only give rise to more struggle by the Panamanian people, particularly as the real terms and political purpose of the treaties become clearer, and as the reactionary role that Torrijos and the rest of the Panamanian ruling class are playing for U.S. imperialism is exposed. ■

conduct lively struggle and debate and build the NUWO as a political organization of the working class at all levels.

The NSC determined that the character of the NUWO as a political organization of the working class must be strengthened, and that NUWO members have a responsibility to raise the level of understanding and consciousness of the workers through struggle. Only by doing so will the NUWO grow in size and influence.

A representative from the RCP addressed the meeting, explaining why the Party sees the NUWO as an important organization, and discussing the recent two-line struggle within the Party and its relation to the NUWO. The Steering Committee recommended that the Party make similar reports to NUWO chapters around the country.

In the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the Executive Committee read a message to the delegates that it had sent to the Iranian people who are fighting to overthrow the fascist regime of the Shah. The message expressed the solidarity felt by increasing numbers of U.S. workers with the just struggles of the Iranian masses against the Shah and his U.S. imperialist backers.

The delegates discussed possible future campaigns of the NUWO, and besides taking up the struggle in Houston, it was determined that the upcoming Postal Workers contract is potentially important for the working class. Postal members of the NUWO will be taking up the battle, with the rest of the organization staying on top of developments. The NSC meeting ended with much remaining to be discussed, but it represented a significant advance and it put the NUWO on a stronger footing to continue and grow in struggle. ■



Despite the killing of three students on the eve of the treaty signings, a great many Panamanians found ways to show their opposition to neo-colonialism.

Carter Confronted in Atlanta

On his way to Panama on June 16, President Carter stopped off in Atlanta, Georgia to address the Southern Baptist Convention. Even though it was free to get in, only about 8000 people came to the 16,000 seat Omni Auditorium to listen to Carter. As he piously spoke to the Baptist convention about human rights and religion, shouts of "From Africa to Panama, U.S. Out" reverberated through the Omni as members and supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA and Iranian Students Association confronted Carter with a huge 15 foot red banner saying "Down with U.S. and Soviet War Moves! From Palestine to Africa to Panama—U.S. Imperialists Out! Support the Just Struggles of the People of the World!" After disrupting Carter's speech, they left the auditorium to join the main protest outside. As they did so, they were surrounded by newsmedia and asked to explain further why they were demonstrating.

Two RCP members said, "The U.S. should get out of Africa, Panama and Palestine. The U.S. has no business being in any other country and the American people have no interest in it." And "The U.S. and the Soviet Union are going to start a world war. This will cause massive suffering for the people. We want to turn that war into a civil war in this country and throw off our rulers that cause all this war and suffering." ■

whose only apparent goal is divisiveness and ultimate shutdown of a facility or facilities."

Always glad to serve the interests of the capitalists, the U.S. Supreme Court on May 23 moved to strip away OSHA's already meager powers. It ruled that inspectors may no longer make surprise visits to work sites without a search warrant. (In the same month, the lofty court ruled that the police may raid newspaper offices and files without a warrant in search of information.)

The ruling is a two-pronged attack. First of all, the red tape involved in the warrant procedure will cripple OSHA's limited activities even more. Second, and more importantly, the process will forewarn companies of inspection, allowing them ample time to cover up violations. All this will be sanctified in the name of the Constitution and the Fourth Amendment, which is supposed to prohibit unreasonable searches. And all this shows exactly what the capitalists and their Constitution mean by "unreasonable searches."

All the legal mumbo-jumbo aside, the Supreme Court action merely points out that the capitalists are caught in a deepening economic crisis, and they must try to get rid of anything which stands in the way of their necessity to intensify the exploitation of the workers. ■

OSHA...

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in the textile industry.

At best OSHA has been little more than a thorn in the side of the capitalists, an inconvenience that seems to be more than compensated for by having something the capitalists can point to as "proof" that their system works in the interests of the working class. But this has not prevented the capitalists from coupling a demand to dismantle OSHA with their ongoing efforts to intimidate and coerce workers to silently put up with killing working conditions.

For example, in the March 1 issue of the company newsletter, at U.S. Steel's South Works in Chicago, the company plant superintendent arrogantly stated: "I take extreme exception to the recent grandstanding forays by the OSHA agency and its allegations about South Works (e.g., silica levels 21 times above the federal standard) in light of our excellent safety record. At the same time I take exception to the remarks of a few jerks within our own plant family [sic]

NUWO...

Continued from page 7

oppression in Houston. In building for ALD, the NUWO had brought out how the U.S. imperialists who prop up the racist white settler regimes in southern Africa and reap immense profits from the near slave-like conditions of the African peoples are the same imperialists who oppress minority nationalities in this country, and cause nothing but misery and hardship for the working class and masses of people. This year's ALD demonstration in Detroit and 3 other cities had contingents of hundreds of workers, grouped industry by industry, who put forward clearly the stand of the working class on imperialism and national oppression.

The Steering Committee discussed the murder of Joe Torres by the Houston police, and the recent rebellion there. Again, the NUWO has been involved in this struggle, and delegates at the meeting decided to make this an issue among workers throughout the country, including taking up the defense of the Moody Park Three.

At the meeting it was decided to more consciously take up the task of building the ranks of the NUWO. This cannot be done without the NUWO being actively involved in key struggles. But, as the delegates summed up, bringing more workers forward as members also requires that the chapters deal more thoroughly with the most important political questions arising among the workers and from the struggles the NUWO is involved in, and that they

Steel...

Continued from page 6

of movement able to take on that system." (The Mensheviks, it seems, are putting out something they call "The Steelworker," in a pitiful attempt to peddle their economism and syndicalism; but this should not be confused with THE STEELWORKER, which having broken with the Menshevik line is playing an important part in building a class conscious movement of steel workers as part of the overall struggle of the working class, and its allies, against capitalism.)

NUWO, Menshevik Style

Nowhere was the narrowness and syndicalism of these Mensheviks more openly proclaimed than in their attitude toward the formation of the National United Workers Organization (NUWO). The formation of such an organization was a tremendous step forward for the working class. It meant that the working class could begin, in a more systematic way, to bring its backbone and understanding into the major struggles raging in society and take up the task of transforming its scattered fights into a more solid, class-conscious movement.

The Mensheviks would have none of this. They grudgingly embraced the task of building it only after they had rendered it practically meaningless. For them it was to be simply a vehicle for advancing the existing struggles of steel workers. While an important part of the NUWO is building resistance to the sharp attacks of the capitalists in particular plants and industries, what the Mensheviks were doing—and have consistently done—was to deny the overall role of the NUWO, which is to help infuse the strength, discipline and outlook of the working class into the key battles throughout society. They saw in the NUWO only some additional clout for their narrow "steel workers movement."

Of course, when it came to the struggle against the steel companies, these Mensheviks' line did not lead to mobilizing the masses of steel workers there either. This is because they did not see relying on the masses to fight their enemies, but instead they saw this fight as basically a question of jockeying for position and for allies within the union.

Listen to how they present the role and necessity of an organization like the NUWO in the editorial statement they ran in one issue of THE STEELWORKER: "We would ask our fellow workers, what is the main thing we have to overcome in the union? Is it how to fight back against the companies? Or is it the fact that the pretty heavy level of struggle that already exists against the companies needs to be better organized, better led and more coordinated within the ranks so that the full power of our union, of our class, can be brought to bear against the companies?"

Here we see their lofty vision of the struggle of steel workers. Their struggle is to stay basically on the level where it's now at, and all the fights are reduced down to simply a question of getting better organized within the union. Can there be a more clear recipe for top-down style, bureaucratic leadership? And it goes without saying that with this view an organization like the NUWO could only be a hindrance to this nearsighted trade unionist vision.

True to form, things got progressively worse. Continuing in the same vein they write, "It is true that a small number of people won't turn the steel companies (our emphasis) around. But... while a small number won't win the war [what war, we wonder], we can sure say that a small number can organize a small number into a big number, if they are working in the interests of the workers, both today and over the long haul." And this was the consistent theme that ran through their work around the NUWO, the trick they wanted to turn, how to turn a small number into a big number. It became a dizzying question of numbers.

Even as they hinted at broader interests of workers ("the long haul") they could not stomach the thought of raising the sights of the workers. Not once in this editorial do they mention taking up the fight against all oppression save a limp and token statement about such an organization enabling steel workers "to make a real contribution to the cause of our class, against all the abuses we face on the job and off."

But this is just the window dressing for what really counted: "that an organization of this type could serve as a real boost to push forward our attempts to organize our ranks in the steel industry." There was no real politics here, just uniting small numbers so they're not so small, just getting organized so we are not so disorganized, just figuring out plans so we have more plans.

To the extent that the Mensheviks had a strategic view at all it was, as is stated in the same editorial statement, that "conditions are bad now, and will surely get much worse before they get better, and so far as we are concerned *may* [our emphasis, these Mensheviks were never quite convinced about the nature of capitalism] never get better while those in power now, are running the show. Once again we have to stand up and organize our ranks against the companies and now we must take our union back."

This was the heart of their orientation; it was stag-ism pure and simple: first take over the union, and perhaps the NUWO would help them out. To the extent that there was any politics it was unadulterated liberal reformism. In a leaflet circulated nationally they de-

clared that "the foreign and domestic policies of the government directly affect every working person, yet on these questions we also don't have any say." So it's a policy we don't like and all we're asking for is for more of a "say." Needless to say, there are particular policies workers must fight against, but what this kind of statement implies is that the problems of society are the result of "policies," not the operation of a system. And this "say" garbage is nothing but an appeal to backwardness.

The Mensheviks, having built for the founding convention of the NUWO with this incredible vision, would only do it justice by summing up its significance with a puniness which is distinctively theirs: "Steelworkers had come together to figure out a real plan of action to fight the steel companies and to take our union back." In another editorial they declared that "with the formation of the NUWO we feel even more confident about the steps we have to take now, about our *ability to wage* the battles that need to be fought at this time in the steel industry." (emphasis added) Again no sense of developing a movement of the working class which can broaden its perspectives and influence. No sense of a movement which can develop to a higher level *qualitatively*, representing the political interests of the working class. The achievements of the NUWO were translated into a call to steel workers to get behind the battle plan—for the steel industry. For the Mensheviks all roads lead back to Rome—to building a syndicalist movement with the aim of taking back the unions. The NUWO was palatable only insofar as it assisted this.

In fact, these Mensheviks always wanted to keep THE STEELWORKER at a safe distance from the NUWO. Why spoil a good thing, they reasoned. We've built up respectability among some hacks; we're *bona fide* dissidents, after all. So they came up with all kinds of convoluted relations between THE STEELWORKER and the NUWO which effectively kept them apart. This is not to deny the importance of struggling with workers to affiliate with the NUWO from the bottom and carrying on continuing discussions about the need to be part of something like the NUWO, but the Mensheviks saw the whole question of affiliation as a burden, not a political task.

District Organizing Committees

Their line came out very clearly on the organizational question of district organizing committees. These were first established in Chicago/Northern Indiana and in Northern Ohio to concentrate the strength of steel workers on questions bigger than one mill and to assist the formation of in-plant organization. At first, the Mensheviks opposed the formation of these committees because it was in contradiction to simply joining in the so-called Fight Back committees which served as a vehicle for the campaign of union dissident Edward Sadlowski (more on Sadlowski later).

These district organizing committees played a positive role in putting forward the interests of the rank and file in the Sadlowski campaign and around other questions. But after awhile the Mensheviks saw something they liked in these committees and began to push for their formation everywhere. What began to appeal to them was the fact that these committees were organized along the lines of the USWA, reflecting its division into districts.

While this had not been a principle of the district committees at first (the first organizing committees had been structured along district lines because that was what made sense in terms of how the struggle was developing in those areas) the Mensheviks made the district character of these committees the main thing, organizing four different district organizing committees in one city because that's how the union was set up there! To the Mensheviks, organizing in this way

would create a structure parallel to that of the USWA for the purpose of reforming the union and giving more legitimacy to the "dissidents."

The Mensheviks hoped these committees would become instruments with which to contend with the hacks for power and influence over the union. It is absolutely essential for the NUWO to have an industrial identity—workers are organized by production along these lines and such organization is necessary to take up campaigns particular to the industry such as strikes or elections and to use the single spark method to spread classwide campaigns through these industries. But rather than tapping the tremendous strength represented in workers concentrated in plants or throughout the district as a force in the fight of the whole working class around big questions of the day, the Mensheviks would channel and restrict it to "getting organized" to take back the union.

This question of how to look at the unions has been at the center of many of the struggles between the RCP and reformists masquerading as Marxist-Leninists. The CP(ML) (and previous to it the OL) has always blasted the RCP for "dual unionism" because we have for years advocated the development of intermediate workers organizations—intermediate between the trade unions and the Party. The whole idea behind this concept has been to forge organization through which the working class can unleash its energy around key battles of the workers and other sections of the people, break out of the bounds of trade unionism, and at the same time develop the advanced into communists. Part of the role of these organizations is to defeat the treachery of the top union officials.

But as pointed out in the RCP's PROGRAMME "the working class cannot base its strategy on 'taking over' the unions by electing new leadership, and it cannot restrict its struggle to the limits set by the trade unions at any given time. The policy of the proletariat and its Party is to build its strength in the unions as part of building its revolutionary movement, and not to reduce the class struggle to the struggle for control of the unions."

The view the Mensheviks pushed was not that workers must fight to make the union a weapon in their hands, but that the goal was to take the union back, and not until this was done could the struggle really advance. How to deal with the double-dealing and treachery of the union officials and whether or not putting a handful of new people in office would change the basic situation workers faced became the central question posed by the candidacy of Ed Sadlowski.

Two Lines Around Sadlowski Campaign

The RCP analyzed the candidacy of Ed Sadlowski as representing an opportunity for the rank and file to advance its fight and weaken the grip of the Abel-McBride machine. This was not because Sadlowski just happened to be the opponent of the entrenched hacks, and it was better to have someone new in office. It was because his candidacy came at a time of a rising tide of resistance of steel workers and he was forced to speak to some of the issues that the rank and file were fighting around.

Sadlowski himself is a petty reformer who had no intention of seeing the growing struggle of steel workers break out of safe bounds. In fact, he got financial and political backing from various liberal petty bourgeois and bourgeois forces. But his candidacy was perceived as a threat by the machine, not because of who he was or what he wanted, except in the most narrow sense of whom the spoils of union office would go to, but because the righteous struggle of the rank and file had made this election into a referendum on the

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Rank and file activists connected with The Steelworker confront out-going head I.W. Abel in a Las Vegas casino at the U.S.W.A. convention in 1976. Meanwhile, the Mensheviks pushed a line of pleading with Sadlowski to stop playing dead at the convention.

Steel...

whole outlook of company-union partnership and cooperation.

Every day the rank and file felt the weight of the union machine, blocking and attacking its struggles, paving the way for new assaults against it. People hated and detested this machine and wanted to strike a blow at these traitors and create more favorable conditions to carry their struggle forward.

The election concentrated the key issues facing the rank and file and, in particular, the desire of the rank and file to break the shackles of these traitors. It was in this context—of advancing the fight of the rank and file and promoting its organization and unity—that the Party entered into this campaign.

But this orientation made it all the clearer that Sadlowski was not the leader of this resistance nor could he be relied on to carry it forward. The rank and file could and had to utilize the election—tens of thousands of workers were drawn into debate and activity around it—but in a way that did not collapse its fight into the election, recognizing the limitations and pitfalls of reformers like Sadlowski and the need to keep the initiative in its own hands.

The Mensheviks, in words, agreed with this. But their practice came down to pinning the struggle of the rank and file to Sadlowski, and as the campaign wore on their chief concern was that critical support not become too critical. In fact, for them critical support was only a euphemism for uncritical support. The key thing in this campaign was to focus on the whole line of class collaboration as embodied in the policies and actions of the Abel machine, and the key demands of the rank and file in opposing this treachery. Instead, the Mensheviks got caught up in the politicking of the election.

The whole idea behind getting involved in this campaign was to continue to organize the workers' forces and build the movement of the rank and file from the bottom. But the Mensheviks came to see Sadlowski as a substitute for that movement and sought to turn that movement into a pressure group to make Sadlowski act tougher. And where the specific outcome of the election was important, but by no means crucial, the Mensheviks wanted to subordinate everything to it.

1976 Convention

There are some rather blatant examples of all this. Starting back in 1976 at the Las Vegas Convention many of the leading Mensheviks saw their job as getting Sadlowski to act as a spokesman for the rank and file. The line they pushed going into this convention was that somehow we could garner the forces to win key demands on the floor of this unbelievably stacked convention. They wanted to coax Sadlowski to become the standard bearer for the rank and file and to push him out on to the Convention floor. Sadlowski, who

was preoccupied with the timing behind the formal announcement of his candidacy, basically said to jump in a lake.

These Mensheviks threw their hands up in disbelief! "How could he be so timid?" But the revolutionary forces summed up that this whole approach to the convention was wrong, that it wasn't a question of outmaneuvering the hacks—with or without Sadlowski's assistance—or putting one's marbles into one corner or another hoping to win this or that demand. Rather the issue was the convention itself and what it represented. This understanding led to a much more powerful rank and file presence and to Abel being confronted openly with a declaration of war from the rank and file.

But it was in the heat of the campaign that the Mensheviks let it all hang out. In Chicago, Sadlowski and his successor as District Director signed a consent decree with Inland Steel which did not represent any sort of advance in the fight against discrimination (in this it was much like the national Consent Decree). This was done behind the backs of the workers. People were fuming and even McBride was able to make some hay off it. But when Party members in Chicago argued for putting out a leaflet to expose and condemn it, the Mensheviks balked. They said it would hurt Sadlowski's election chances and create confusion among the rank and file.

Here we have a perfect crystallization of the Menshevik outlook. In effect, the line of critical support was considered beyond the reach of workers. It would be too demoralizing and confusing to them to actually point to the real contradictions faced by the rank and file in this election and where the workers' real interests lay. In fact, these Mensheviks were denying that line—in this case, critical support—is based on the struggle and fundamental interests of the masses and must in turn serve that struggle. The key factor in this campaign was always the rank and file, and where this came into conflict with Sadlowski and his own ambitions he had to be criticized and opposed. This is why, for instance, the struggle to free Local 3059 was waged during the election campaign even though he opposed it, claiming that it tarnished his reputation.

But this was only a taste of things to come. The Mensheviks blasted Party members in Chicago, who along with other members of Breakout (a Chicago rank and file steel workers committee in one mill) and the District 31 Organizing Committee had been kept at an arm's length from other workers on the Sadlowski Fight Back Committee. The Mensheviks dismissed this as tactical blundering, refusing to accept the fact that Sadlowski was not about to tolerate a strong rank and file presence in his committee, especially in his home base. The Mensheviks held up in opposition to this experience, Milwaukee, where they distinguished themselves by initiating a Fight Back Committee.

The only problem was that there they completely liquidated any independent presence, using most of Sadlowski's literature, not even thinking about THE STEELWORKER having any kind of life on the committee. This was their dream come true—the closest thing

to a legitimate niche in the trade union hierarchy they had attained.

About the most militant thing they did in this campaign was to win the right to have one of their own people introduce Sadlowski at a dinner held in his honor. They had, in the period of summation of this work, accepted criticism of this. But like other correct verdicts that the Mensheviks hasten to reverse, they now declare this to be a shining model of work in the trade unions. The enduring significance of this work was not spreading the influence of THE STEELWORKER or even building up the steel section of the area workers organization in Milwaukee and advancing the fight of the rank and file. It was that Sadlowski won in Milwaukee!

The degeneration of the Menshevik clique accelerated following the Sadlowski campaign. The two leading Mensheviks with responsibility for steel work went bananas with reformism and outright reaction by the end of 1977. Especially in the face of the shutdowns and other attacks which were bound to intensify, the Mensheviks began casting about for gimmicks and palpable results, rather than seeing the need to help workers understand the underlying causes responsible for this crisis and the kind of movement required to resist these attacks.

This shutdown fight was a tough one and if you couldn't scare people into dealing with it ("industry shutting down") you had to "get something going." So one of them began advocating that we take up a campaign for TRA (Trade Readjustment Act) money. This is payment available to workers who can prove that they have lost jobs due to imports. But the TRA is a piece of legislation designed to strengthen the competitive hand of U.S. industry and its crumbs for workers are for the express purpose of getting them to line up with "impacted" companies and resign themselves to the loss of jobs. While it is not wrong in every case to join with a particular struggle involving the TRA, it is always the responsibility of communists and advanced forces to point out what the TRA represents overall and what the capitalists and their agents are attempting to do with it. But more than that, what these Mensheviks were trying to do by concocting a way to kick off struggle around the TRA in steel was to find some way to gimmick the workers into action by appealing to the most narrow and backward sentiments and playing into the hands of the steel barons and the capitalist class as a whole.

But all this "ideological stuff" was just so much of a nuisance for these Mensheviks. The elder Menshevik advised Party members in the Ohio area to seek out hacks with whom to unite around the shutdown fight in Youngstown—to the point of making repeated phone calls about progress in tracking one of them down, who it turned out played a reactionary role in the whole struggle.

This sacrifice of principle and all-round political work, this obsession with palpable results, led these Mensheviks to rack their brains over how to line up

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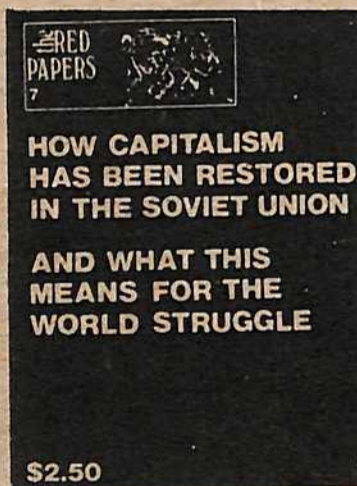
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Nazis...

Continued from page 4

that what they had really been after was publicity and the chance to do some "agitation," all of which the bourgeoisie handed them on a silver platter. They didn't really want to march in Skokie, they said. No doubt they also realized in their cowardly and demented minds the physical danger they faced from the rage of the people — although Skokie's religious and political leaders, together with much bigger bourgeois fish, tried to insure they could march unmolested.

Marquette Park

What they really wanted to do, the Nazis said, was march in Marquette Park. But since the city had insisted they put up a \$60,000 cash bond to march there, they would go into Skokie unless the bond requirement was removed. Once again the ACLU had jumped in and appealed the bond, and a week before the Skokie march date, a federal judge said they didn't have to put up the money. After all, chorus the judges, waving law books in the air, the Nazis have their rights."

A federal mediation committee had worked out the deal, which was approved by a judge. Somehow people were supposed to believe that it was "reasonable" for the Nazis to rally against Blacks in Marquette Park.

Located on Chicago's Southwest side, Marquette Park is an overwhelmingly white, largely working class neighborhood of single family dwellings adjacent to large, ghettoized Black communities. The bourgeoisie has made a big effort, with the aid of their press and other agents, to portray the whites of Marquette Park as all a pack of racists, and have been successful in whipping up a fair amount of white chauvinism in the area.

The Nazis have tried to pimp off the divisions and confusion the bourgeoisie has sown among the people and add their venomous contribution of racist propaganda to serve the capitalists' cause. They have claimed Marquette Park as "their" turf and located their headquarters in the community. They have a small but active base there and have waged a vicious campaign against Blacks in the area.

Over the past few years they have attacked Blacks driving down the streets, and instigated bombings of people's homes. They have tried to divert the anger of the people against red-lining and real estate manipulation away from the banks and real estate companies who prey off the working people, and make it seem that Blacks threaten the homes of whites.

Houston...

Continued from page 2

ed outside. In the courtroom the three made it clear that they did not accept the validity of the court or the grand jury in bringing the indictments. Outside the hearing in a statement to the press, the 3 exposed the fact that there is no justice for the people in the capitalists' courtrooms and there is no such thing as a fair trial under the capitalists' laws.

The 3 pointed to the treatment given to three cops just indicted in the murder of Randall Webster, a 19 year old white youth killed in cold blood. They were only issued bench warrants which means they didn't have to show up in court, much less get arrested. One cop was suspended from the Houston police department with full pay pending the outcome of the charges.

They contrasted this with the many Moody Park defendants who are still in jail, punished with outrageous bail they can't afford to pay for challenging the right of these murderous cops to harass and beat people at Cinco de Mayo.

People United has taken the fight against police repression out to the masses of all nationalities to unite the broadest numbers in the struggle. At the annual Juneteenth Parade (com-

These banks and other capitalists profit handsomely from their victimization of the Blacks in the area as well. These vampires should issue a public letter of thanks to the Nazis.

Mass Sentiment Against Nazis

But the capitalists' promotion of the Nazis in Skokie and their step by step actions directed toward creating a confrontation between Blacks and whites in Marquette Park has also unleashed a wave of revulsion and resentment among the masses of people, focused against the Nazis and their ugly antics.

Some whites in Marquette Park have openly denounced the efforts to "give the Nazis a home" in their community, and many others feel the Nazi efforts are making their neighborhood "stink" in the eyes of the world. And throughout the city, among Blacks and whites, sentiment has developed for some kind

of mass action against the Nazis and all the notoriety they have been given.

Many people feel correctly that the federal building effort to smack the Nazis on June 24 was right on. And despite the fact that the action was somewhat marred by the presence and activities of 57 varieties of organized reactionaries, ranging from the CP's "Rosenberg-Biko Brigade" to Progressive Labor Party and the JDL, it showed that there are masses in motion who are opposed to the Nazis being allowed or able to continue their operations.

The bourgeoisie has quickly stepped in to try to turn this mass sentiment to their own advantage. This time they enlisted the aid of the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who has made a career in recent years of going around telling Blacks that they can make it under capitalism if they only buckle down and improve themselves. Jackson, Director of Operation PUSH, has announced the formation of a Black-Jewish coal-

ition to counter demonstrate against the planned Nazi march in Marquette Park on July 9.

Jackson's pattern has been very consistent over his years of maneuvering in Chicago. While on the one hand he hobnobs and wheels and deals with white bourgeois politicians, particularly the "liberal" ones with whom he sees a profitable alliance, the main thrust of his "standing up for Black folks" is not directed at the capitalists and their system. It is aimed now more now less overtly at the "racist" white masses, particularly the white workers.

This suits the capitalists just fine. They would like to promote Jackson and his line to ensure that the desire of Blacks to fight back against national oppression will be misdirected, and at the same time utilize this line as part of consolidating chauvinism among whites in Marquette Park and elsewhere.

Revolutionary communists cannot, and have no intention to, abandon this field of struggle to the bourgeoisie and their agents. The stand of the RCP is to unite with the broad mass sentiment that has been expressed for action against the Nazis when they try to rally in Marquette Park and to make it clear that these two-bit punks are nothing more than tools of the bourgeoisie.

The situation now is different than the marches led into Marquette Park last year by a shadowy group calling itself the Martin Luther King Movement, but what Jackson is trying to do is not essentially different. The MLK Movement was raising among other things the demands of Blacks to be able to use Marquette Park (the park itself) without harassment. This is a just demand, but the MLK Movement was neither linked to nor helped to build any mass struggle around this. Neither did they target the real enemy. What they were really up to was to take aim at the white masses for their racism, while sometimes pointing to the Nazis as examples. Though he is operating in different circumstances, Jackson will target the Nazis, while fundamentally targeting a section of the masses in order to save the bourgeoisie.

The RCP and other progressive forces have no intention of letting the Jesse Jacksons, the JDL or any other reactionaries have free sway to turn the masses' hatred of the Nazis into an opportunity for the capitalists to create greater divisions and antagonisms among the masses.

The masses of all nationalities have common cause against the Nazis and, still more, against the forces of the bourgeoisie behind them and a million other abuses. On July 9, the Nazis and the masters behind them must be combatted, and it is the responsibility of the revolutionary forces to direct the blow powerfully at these targets. ■



Part of the army of Chicago pigs (estimated from between 900 and 2000) guarding a handful of reactionary scum. Nazis in center, distinguishable only by their swastika armbands.

memorating June 19, 1862, when Congress was forced to enact the first law abolishing slavery in Texas and other territories), People United joined the march with a contingent that raised demands for an end to police terror and freedom for all those arrested in the righteous Moody Park rebellion. They also raised the demand for Justice for Milton Glover, a young Black Vietnam vet murdered by the Houston P.D., whose death has been "under investigation" by the federal government for two years.

This was indeed a controversial move. People United, made up of mostly Chicanos and whites, was marching in what is usually an all Black affair. But when county sheriffs tried to force People United out of the march after half a mile, a contingent of marchers on horseback, the Prairie View Trail Riders, opened up their ranks and welcomed People United back in saying, "Don't listen to those fuzzi, we know they ain't right, come march with us."

This righteous show of solidarity was itself a blow to the capitalists in Houston, who count heavily on the racial divisions they have created to maintain their rule over all the oppressed. The reaction of the crowds lining the streets was overwhelmingly supportive, and many came out to shake the hands of the Moody Park 3, several joining the contingent.

In an indication of just how sharp the

situation has grown in Houston, banner headlines announced President Carter's arrival in Houston on Friday, June 23rd to attend a swank \$500 a head fundraiser for the Democratic Party at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. What got a bigger build up, however, was that he had set up a meeting with 25 Mexican-American "leaders" like State Senator Ben Reyes and Hector Garcia, Director of Community Relations for the Houston-Galveston Diocese of the Catholic Church, to discuss the problems of Mexican-Americans—especially police brutality. These are the same reformist traitors who praised the police for their "restraint" during the rebellion and openly called on them to attack members of People United. (See *Revolution*, June 1978)

The approach of these vendidos (sell-outs) has been to beg Carter for more "human rights" as a reward for preaching reliance on the capitalists' courts and faith in bourgeois "law and order." They are also asking that all government funds for Houston's poverty programs be diverted to their newly created Northside Community Task Force to feather their own nest at the expense of the Black and other oppressed communities in Houston. Carter gave his usual double talk in this meeting, saying he thought there were "some problems" with the police but that the Justice Department had done a fine job so far.

In stark contrast to these reformist

beggars, People United staged a demonstration at the Hyatt Regency demanding "Justice for Joe Torres, Milton Glover and Randall Webster" and "Jail The Murderers for Life!"

There were several hundred people in all outside the hotel. Over a hundred Iranian students who were there to protest arms sales to the Shah united with the slogans put forward by People United. There was also a group of farmers there to protest the government's policy on farm prices.

Committees To Defend The Rebellion

The movement to free the Moody Park 3 and all those arrested during the rebellion is beginning to take root around the country. The Revolutionary Communist Party has helped initiate Committees to Defend the Houston Rebellion, which have been formed in the San Francisco/Bay Area and Los Angeles. Plans are underway in some other areas as well. The National United Workers Organization is also drawing up plans to take up this campaign and spread the issue into the plants. A national leaflet is being written and actions are planned at several L.A. factories.

On July 31 in Houston, the Moody Park 3 will have a court hearing, and plans are being developed for actions around that time. In the next issue of *Revolution* we will report on these and other developments. ■

France, May 1968

This article was originally published by the Workers Press Service, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the tumultuous events of May 1968 in France. WPS is put out under the leadership of the Party, and serves to link together the many local WORKER editions of the WORKER, put out in many cities from coast to coast.

You could hear the cops coming down the street, their battalions banging their clubs in rhythm and tossing gas grenades into cafes and emergency aid centers. A workman dressed in blue overalls began to attack the pavement with a heavy, pointed bar to free the first paving stone which would liberate the others. As soon as he succeeded, a grandmotherly woman took her place in a line of Parisians that quickly formed to pass the stones to others who were building a barricade.

The police were firing gas canisters point blank into the crowd, hitting some in the face, but the people fought back with stones and an indomitable spirit of righteous rebellion. Others came with saws and hatchets to cut down trees lining the boulevards and collectively forged larger barricades. Thousands surged through the city streets, singing the "Internationale." By the end of the day the cops still could not pass.

Bloody battles like this raged for two months throughout France in what came to be known as "the days of May" 1968. This spring marked the tenth anniversary of this revolutionary upsurge.

It began as a student protest against an oppressive, archaic bureaucracy when students sat in and took over France's central university system at the Sorbonne. Venting their pent-up anger and hatred of a society wracked by all the contradictions and misery an advanced and rotten capitalist nation like France foists upon the people, the student revolt quickly spread throughout the country and detonated a larger social explosion.

Workers Join Struggle

The workers of France, inspired by the student takeovers of key educational and cultural institutions, themselves began seizing and occupying factories, mines, shipyards and even whole cities. Within two weeks more than half of France's 19 million went out in an illegal general strike, and they were soon joined by professionals, technicians, office personnel and government employees.

The first plant to be occupied was the Sud-Aviation plant in Nantes. Workers immediately set about to fortify the plant, and prepared to sustain a long siege. Sentinels were posted along the walls topped with barbed wire. Workers manned roadblocks of piled-up logs flanking the gates, which were soldered shut. The open courtyard facing the executive offices was turned into a makeshift village for housing and recreation. A plant barber shop was also set up, and local farmers came to donate tons of food. Throughout the plant knots of workers engaged in often heated political discussions.

Initially the strikers had imprisoned management. The shocked and uptight union hacks jumped like dogs to do the bidding of their capitalist masters and jetted in a union delegation to intervene on management's behalf.

But plant occupations spread like wildfire across France as all the Renault auto plants, a government arms factory, a nuclear plant and hundreds of other workplaces were seized. In several elegant Paris hotels, workers had locked in management and hung banners outside saying, "The Personnel Has Taken Over the Responsibility of Running the Hotel."



Renault workers battle police.

Uprising Terrifies DeGaulle

The "grand" 5th Republic of Gen. Charles de Gaulle and the bourgeoisie it served was badly shaken and alarmed by the rapid development of this revolutionary upsurge among the broad masses of people. The government moved immediately to crush the resistance. Waves of police cordons waded into barricades and tried to bludgeon the people into submission. The hospitals and jails overflowed but increasingly more people rose in revolt—seizing oil refineries, flour mills and food processing plants. Tax collectors walked out; sewage workers staged sewerside sit-ins; customs officials left their border posts; showgirls occupied the Folies Bergère; farmers defiantly parked their tractors across the nation's highways.

The government's brutal repression was met by wave upon wave of strikes cutting off all public transportation; air, rail and sea service; garbage collection; radio and TV stations and communications lines; the post office; the Paris stock exchange; the government-operated savings banks and the Central Bank of France; and the printing of bank notes was halted when the engravers walked out. In short, Paris—the heart of France—was paralyzed, and all the country was in turmoil.

While members of Parliament debated whether or not to censure de Gaulle's rule and how best to use the mass struggle to further their own political careers, the people had already "voted" and demanded, "De Gaulle to the Museum!" Everywhere public officials were held up to ridicule. It was especially difficult to hear, amid the catcalls and jeers greeting his broadcasts, de Gaulle's sundry appeals for "law and order." "France is indeed threatened with a dictatorship," he cried, blaming "the power of totalitarian Communism" for the country's troubles, when in truth it was the dictatorship of the rich owning class that workers, students and others were fed up with.

The working class internationalism that emerged from the struggle helped to break through the many divisions promoted by the ruling class to keep the masses of people from uniting as one to fight their common enemy and oppressor. *U.S. News & World Report* wrote, "The red flag of rebellion often flew in place of the French tricolor."

Posters were printed in different languages reading, "turn against your common enemy: imperialism and capitalism." Bilingual worker-student action committees canvassed the company-owned housing projects where foreign workers were forced to live.

The capitalists' hope of using immigrant workers as scabs were dashed when the vast majority of foreign workers joined in the strike—even when the regime began to crack down with mass deportations of foreign activists. The general assembly of worker-student action committees that were organized during the upheaval passed a resolution "For Abolition of the Status of Foreigner in France" and called for an end to deportations, residence and work cards.

Phony Leaders Sabotage Struggle

Throughout the May upheaval a reactionary role was played by France's so-called communist party (PCF) and the leadership of France's largest trade

union federation, CGT, which is dominated by the PCF. The PCF and the CGT did their best to stifle the growing revolutionary struggle and try to focus the attention of the workers on a few paltry reforms. While strikers proudly hoisted red flags and banners over occupied factories, streets and schools, the PCF secretary-general boasted that "We Communists [!] have always fought for and shall continue to fight remorselessly the lack of national feeling that certain anarchist elements vaunt as a sign of their revolutionary ardor. We, for our part, are proud to have restored to the working class...the colors of France." (emphasis in original)

Like its counterparts in Western Europe and the "Communist" Party, USA, PCF long ago gave up the fight for working class revolution and today trades on its past revolutionary role and laurels to pimp off the workers' opposition to the capitalist system and yearnings for socialism. True to their real anti-communist stand, the PCF trembled at any call for armed insurrection which would sweep them away along with the regime, and worked overtime to suppress the revolutionary struggle that broke out in '68, rendering a great service to the French capitalists.

A particularly graphic example of the PCF's class collaboration was its order to CGT strikers occupying a major auto plant to lock the gates and refuse entry to students and others who marched to the plant in support of the strikers. The PCF labelled the students "children of the big bourgeoisie," and told the workers they didn't need support from students or other strata of the people. They forbade workers to participate in student demonstrations like the storming of the Paris stock market, a symbol of capitalist oppression, or when thousands went to build barricades at the Place de la Bastille and raised the banner of the short-lived 1871 Paris Commune—when for the first time in world history the working class seized power and established a workers' state.

But despite this constant PCF sabotage and treachery, many workers in the course of the struggle were emboldened to fight for their class interests and allied with the students. For instance, chemical workers went to the Sorbonne and struggled with students to come join their plant occupation.

The French working class, concerned with far more than just their daily bread, was eagerly awakening to political life. The spontaneous outburst that had broken out in spurts and sputters, first here and then there, had suddenly and dramatically changed into, as *NEWSWEEK* put it, "a general assault on the whole political and social system."

So when the CGT "leaders," immediately after joint sellout negotiations between the government, companies and unions, personally drove down to the Renault factory (the largest industrial complex in France and a PCF stronghold) and told the workers to return to work now that a new contract offering higher wages was signed—they were hooted and booed down by the 25,000 assembled workers. Shop stewards from around the country called CGT headquarters to say that the rank and file demanded the agreements be turned down.

While de Gaulle held secret sessions to determine whether or not the army could be relied upon in case of an all-out civil war, thousands of riot police were dispatched to forcibly eject

strikers from those plants still holding out, especially in the vital auto industry and at the Sud-Aviation plant. Even after their evictions, workers were joined by students and fought pitched battles with government troops outside the factories.

The PCF leadership, fearing a new wave of revolutionary violence would lose Parliamentary votes for them, openly encouraged the government to resort to violence to quell the uprising. "We can't take the responsibility for making each factory into a fortress," they told the rank and file. (The PCF's earlier support of the regime's repression against students had already lost it many members and supporters disgusted with its cowardice and betrayal.)

But overall the workers were not prepared politically or militarily to overthrow the capitalist rulers and set up a workers state. The strikers' demand for "workers' control" obscured the fact that socialism could not be achieved merely by plant occupations but only by a political and social revolution under which the working class must establish its rule over the minority of capitalist exploiters.

In the face of heavy government repression, betrayal by the PCF and the union leadership, and the weakness of genuine revolutionary leadership, the May uprising failed to bring about the fundamental changes that workers and students alike desired and valiantly fought for.

"Look at it this way," said a postal worker who, though angered and disheartened by the back-to-work order, summed up, "What happened in May was a rehearsal." The 10-year reign of Gen. de Gaulle was eventually toppled that year and even more important gains were made—especially in the class consciousness and revolutionary organization built among workers and students alike.

The working class of France, roused to action by a student revolt, had again raised its head high and reclaimed its revolutionary heritage and its rightful place at the head of all the struggling masses. It was a taste of real emancipation from the chains of wage slavery that the working class will never forget.

Steel...

Continued from page 21

delegate votes and support for the upcoming union convention and which demand—could it be the right to ratify?—stood a fighting chance of winning.

In contrast, at a conference held in Buffalo by rank and file activists associated with THE STEELWORKER in June, there was a whole different way of looking at things. For instance, the September USWA convention was discussed as an attack on steel workers—as part of tightening up the chains of class collaboration in the union—and the question of delegates and demands for the conference was discussed as part of building among the rank and file to consciously take on this attack, and not from the point of view of "how can we win some influence in this convention?" This conference also affirmed the role of THE STEELWORKER as the voice of the steel section of the NUWO, and the importance of mobilizing steel workers in key battles in society, broader than only the fight against the steel companies.

Because these Mensheviks were dyed-in-the-wool syndicalists and reformers, because their narrow outlook and interests came into sharp contradiction with the interests of the working class, they lost the little fiefdom they were trying to build in steel, they lost the AFL-CIO trade union opposition they were trying to create out of the NUWO, and of course they ended up out of the Party. Now of course, they are wilder still in pursuit of careers and careerism.

But they have made one contribution, in a certain sense. In the struggle against their line on the steel industry, as throughout the Party, the understanding of the correct line has been tremendously deepened, so that Party members have a far sharper idea of how to take up the tasks at hand in order to bring about the emancipation of the working class. ■

Auto...

Continued from page 7

they have any problem, they must follow the 'proper procedures.'... Since the workers and bosses have no real conflict of interests, we are told, any problems that come up can no doubt be 'adjusted' in this way." And it pointed out that "AWUF has not confined its struggle to the terms they try to keep us on, nor do we intend to. From the beginning we have stressed that 'their proper procedures are our chains,' and have built struggle of the rank and file to 'take matters into our own hands.'"

Further the letter brought out how "these union 'leaders' take this same approach to the whole society we live in," and that their solution is to use "our dues money to prop up a whole army of lobbyists in Washington, tying our interest to getting this or that politician elected." In contrast, the letter laid out that AWUF members shouldn't confine "the struggle to just inside the plant either. Because it would be short-sighted and self-defeating to think we could overcome these wage-slave conditions one plant at a time... The Big 3... bleed you in the plants, they bleed you in the communities. Working class people are oppressed by a whole system. And if we are serious about fighting for our freedom, we've got to build the kind of movement that takes on that system."

The letter explained the importance of clearly targeting "what we're up against" and that it was essential to bring out *why* things were this way, and therefore *how* things had to be changed. It brought out that struggle, controversy and debate were good things that the AWUF campaign should generate, that political questions should not be avoided but gone into, in order to move forward the understanding of the masses.

The letter went on to discuss the importance of continuing to build independent rank and file organization in or out of office, that getting people elected didn't change the fact that the real change must come from the bottom up—the rank and file—and that the AWUF chapters, as part of the National United Workers Organization (NUWO), would play a crucial political role at every step in the struggle. It spoke to the necessity of building for May Day, which in most cases took place around the same time as the elections. The two slogans that were put forward for the election campaign were "Make the union a weapon in the workers' hands!" and "To hell with their profits, organize to fight!"

Union Positions

This letter provided a healthy basis for working out a battle plan in the different plants. The question of who should run, how many and for what positions, could only be correctly dealt with from this overall perspective. AWUF's line was that, even in building the election campaigns correctly, there would inevitably be some degree of political separation between those who got in office and the rank and file. Given this, it was stressed that all the strongest, most dedicated activists shouldn't run for office, that some should remain full time on the shop floor. And further, that AWUF should mainly concentrate on lower level positions, such as committeeman (chief steward at Chrysler), although in cases where AWUF had played an important role in plant-wide struggle, plant-wide positions should be considered.

This raised a lot of debate among workers who wanted to get rid of as many hacks as possible—*now*—and also who wondered what good it would do just going for lower positions. This struggle sharpened up considerably the general line questions about just where the real power of the enemy was concentrated, where the real strength of the workers lay, and how the elections today tied in with the tasks of tomorrow. And it also demonstrated further that the line of AWUF wasn't just something to be discussed among a few for their enlightenment, but had to be ap-

plied to the actual situation facing the workers.

Working on the political line questions and uniting around a battle plan was a process which involved investigation and struggle among hundreds of workers around the country. AWUF members announced their candidacies and kicked off the campaigns in high gear. Leaflets putting out the politics outlined above kicked off a lot of discussion among the workers. And throughout the campaigns, AWUF members made efforts to sharpen up the lines even more.

For example, in one Detroit plant an AWUF candidate was told by a group of workers that they would vote for him. One response would have been to think, "I don't need to talk to these guys anymore," and move on to talk to other workers. Instead he would reply "Why vote for me—what makes you think I'll do anything different?" to draw out people's ideas more. While the hacks went around saying, "your vote is the most important way to change things," AWUF members made it clear that, while votes could be used to advance the struggle, the main thing was what the workers were going to do no matter who got elected.

Answering the question, "How will you people be any different?" meant getting into some particulars—drawing on examples from the plant, bringing out the role union reps could play in building the workers' struggle, exposing how just going by the grievance procedure was a trap.

Broader Struggles

It also meant taking head on the idea that "we've got to clean up our own back yard first." Because of the role AWUF has played over time—support for the miners' strike, African Liberation Day, building struggles around jobs and unemployment insurance and other "outside the plant" issues—this question was already out there.

A number of workers would say, half-grudgingly, half-respectfully, "Damn, if these guys are elected, they'll have *all* of us out there demonstrating." And while this is an oversimplification of how things happen, mainly it's very good that workers saw it this way.

It was necessary to bring out *why* AWUF is involved in these broader struggles, how taking up these broader fights is a key part of "getting the people in this plant together." It meant

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must be regarded as pie-in-the-sky." As we go to press, the WALL ST. JOURNAL reports these mighty leaders crept into the bargaining with an *initial* wage demand of only 8% in the first year and 6% the second year.

Tailing right behind these union officials is a reformist group called the Postal Contract Coalition which lists a number of tried and true hacks among its endorsers. This coalition was initiated by the International Socialists (IS), an ultra-right Trotskyite organization that occasionally pretends to be communists but keeps this a deep dark secret from the workers. The PCC credits the union officials for "talking tough" and announces that "to the extent they maintain that strong stance we support their efforts."

In the April issue of their CONTRACT NEWS, they make the incredible statement that "We are glad to see that the negotiators realize how important the rank and file is for bolstering *their* [sic!] demands." This line dovetails perfectly with the hacks' plans to keep the negotiations to themselves, claiming to speak for postal workers while the rank and file remains completely disarmed. Such a view, which reduces the workers to a mere pressure group in the superpower "contention" between the postal bosses and the union officials, can only lead postal workers straight into a sellout.

What is needed is the exact opposite approach. The initiative must be wrested from the hands of these union traitors and put directly in the hands of the rank and file. This means taking concrete steps and preparing to strike

speaking to the limitations of just fighting plant by plant, and why auto workers had to take up as their own the key struggles being waged by other workers and other sections of the people against the common enemy.

Building for May Day helped provide a sharp focus for these questions. In many plants, the May Day actions took place within a few days of the elections, so this was a hot item to be sure. In one plant, a lot of the other candidates were putting out buttons with their names and ballot numbers on them. Workers approached AWUF and asked "where are your buttons?" AWUF people answered that they weren't into promoting individuals, that it was a question of promoting the struggle of the rank and file. Workers checked out the May Day buttons and some decided to wear those instead. Since there were only a limited number in the plant at the time, workers in one area rotated wearing them among themselves, and when the committeeman came down to red-bait and hassle them about it, he only exposed himself.

Overwhelmingly, taking out a correct line on the elections created favorable conditions for Party members and other advanced workers to build May Day. While the two campaigns were not the same thing, there was an important political relationship. In different ways, both represented real opportunities to help the workers raise their heads, to help them see beyond the conditions of day-in, day-out slavery.

Getting deeply into the questions posed by the elections raised broader questions about where this system is headed, what kind of workers' movement we're talking about building, and so on. Much of this, of course, should be and was dealt with within the scope of the election campaign. But May Day greatly enhanced the freedom to do that more fully—especially along the lines indicated by two of the slogans, "Workers Unite to Lead the Fight Against All Oppression!" and "Down With the System of Wage Slavery!"

In many cases, the election campaigns had already provoked a fair amount of red-baiting (in some locals, candidates ran on promises "to do all I can to fight communism.") May Day, while representing a united effort of numerous organizations, has a more explicit "redness" because of its history than most struggles presently being waged. As such, it provided an excellent opportunity to take head on the question of communism, and the RCP

regardless of whether the union officials are inclined to come along. There is already more strike talk among the workers than there was in '75. The hacks realize that a wildcat is a real possibility and this has forced them to talk out of both sides of their mouths saying that on the question of a strike they "will be guided by the membership."

But there are tough questions on the minds of the workers about whether it is really possible to strike. For one thing there is the federal no-strike law, designed to con the workers into thinking they are powerless to strike without the "legal" right to do so granted by the capitalists. And along with this there is the well-founded cynicism of postal workers about their union "leaders" leading any kind of militant action to make such a strike a reality. On the other hand there is Carter's threat of federal intervention with troops, a tactic which the coal miners proved was not so devastatingly effective as the capitalists make it out to be.

Combined with this is the "good guy" approach, the timeworn capitalist line that "employees who serve the public have a special duty not to strike." Of course they don't mention that the Postal Service has made it clear that the public be damned as they jack up the rates and slash what little is left of their public service. Since the public is mostly working people anyway, they are certainly capable of understanding who's responsible for the mess the Postal Service is in and that their class interests are no different than those of postal workers.

The answer to many of these questions is revealed in the postal strike of 1970 which holds valuable lessons for all workers today. In that historic illegal

and the role it plays. This was taken up, though in somewhat different ways, by Party members and non-members alike.

The results of the elections show that while AWUF made a very respectable showing, the majority of workers at this time were not ready to make a clean break. Undoubtedly there was a lot of confusion about communism and the role of communists in AWUF. Mainly, there still exist varying degrees of disagreement over the very line questions AWUF tried to sharpen up.

In most locals AWUF ran in, and a large number elsewhere, the incumbent hacks were voted out. A lot of workers chose to vote in "new faces," who pipped off the anger at the present leadership and essentially promised to "make the system work." Although this line still got over in many elections, the election campaign created better conditions in which to expose this line and outlook and bring out more sharply the correct line as the struggle continues to develop.

While many workers want AWUF around, because of the role it plays in the struggle and the issues it raises, they weren't ready to give full allegiance to AWUF. In one shop, a group of workers told one guy in AWUF, "We think you're right about a lot of this stuff, and we should be getting more involved in the demonstrations and things you do. But we just can't vote for you because you won't compromise with the company, and sometimes we need to compromise."

While the point about not compromising with the company is a strategic question, and doesn't mean that tactically there are no compromises (in the sense, for example, that a contract is a compromise—of course as Lenin said, there are compromises and then there are compromises) mainly these workers were responding to AWUF's emphasis on no common interests between the workers and the capitalists. And while they couldn't quite accept that yet, they got a lot out of the campaign.

For them, and for broad numbers of workers, the AWUF campaign summed up their experience in a way many hadn't seen before. It sharpened up their thinking on a lot of points. And even where the workers didn't get involved in the campaign, didn't vote for AWUF, or even held sharp disagreements—the campaign helped hold up a yardstick by which people will judge their experience in the struggle to come. ■

strike, postal workers in New York City ignored the whimpering pleas of their union officials and wildcatted when Nixon tried to take away a dollar pay raise. In two days the strike spread like a prairie fire as 300,000 postal workers across the country brought the mail to a screeching halt.

Immediately, the government called up the national guard in New York City, but this move proved to be completely ineffective. Most of the guard were working people themselves (including some striking postal workers!) and were not about to knock themselves out to break a strike, and many fraternized with the strikers. Despite troops, fines and threats of firing, within five days the Postal Service had been brought to its knees, forced into making some major concessions including higher wages and amnesty for all strikers.

The events in 1970 showed the extreme vulnerability of the postal bosses to a strike. Just as bayonets cannot mine the coal, so zip code by itself cannot move the mail. Given the nature of the Post Office, where the mail must move continuously or the profits of many different enterprises will suffer, striking can bring great and immediate pressure on postal management to settle on terms more favorable to the workers.

But the most important lesson of the '70 strike is that the rank and file workers seized the initiative from the capitalists, broke through the handcuffs placed on them by the hacks, took matters into their own hands and went into battle against the enemy. Whether to take this step again is the question that is quickly posing itself to the country's postal workers. ■