



REVOLUTION

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

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Convention to Mark Big Advance

Seize the Time in '77!

Labor Day weekend, 1977 will be an historic occasion. For on this day in Chicago over a thousand workers will found the national united workers organization.

Here, before the eyes of their fellow workers in this country, the most active fighters from every major industry and most major unions in the U.S. will angrily declare that they are tired of being pushed around, driven down and sold out and that the time has come to do something about it. They will proudly and publicly discuss, plan and decide how to carry forward their struggle against the U.S. capitalists in a more organized and concentrated way.

This will be the first time in over 20 years that rank and file workers from so many parts of the country and so many industries convene and map out plans for how to wage their battle. It will be the first time since the formation of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in 1905, the Trade Union Education League (TUEL), and the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL), which existed in the '20s through the mid '30s, that the most active workers have pulled together in such an organization. And by learning from the mistakes as well as the achievements of these organizations the national united workers organization will surely make even greater contributions to the workers struggle in the years ahead.

The formation of this organization will be a decisive step forward for the struggle of the U.S. working class. From September 4, 1977 on, the rank and file struggle within different industries and unions will be more organized and in many cases take place on a national scale. From this day on the working class will

have a powerful new weapon in its hands, helping enable it to step out in a new way onto the political stage and become a powerful force to be reckoned with around the key social issues of the day.

The numbers of workers gathering in Chicago to form the national united workers organization are small in comparison to the size and potential strength of the whole working class. But the conditions for the organization to sink deep roots in the plants and mills all across the country, and for its work to flourish are excellent. The crisis is deepening, the society rotting, the movement of our class growing, though our struggles are often scattered.

By seizing the time, by making the most of these conditions, today's small forces can lead big battles and in the process grow in number, strength and understanding for the battles ahead.

In forming this organization, workers are declaring their resolve that in future mass upsurges of the American people, such as the Black liberation struggle and anti-war movement of the '60s, the working class will have a key weapon in its hands to exert a powerful influence, helping to infuse its strength, discipline and class outlook into those struggles. The convention in Chicago will be declaring its determination to end the days when national strikes could take place without the most active fighters in that industry organizing to unleash the activity of the rank and file against the companies and any sellout engineered by the top union officials. And now the workers will have a weapon to help make key battles into concerns—and organized struggle—of workers in every industry.

This founding convention will establish a rallying

point for workers in all the major battles taking place, in the unions and in society as a whole. It will erect a militant working class center, around which active workers coming forward in thousands of struggles can gravitate. And while not an organization to replace the unions, it will neither be bound by the restrictions the top labor officials place on the struggle nor hold back from fighting every inch of the way to turn these unions into militant organizations of working class struggle.

Of course none of this will happen easily, or because we simply wish it to be. Building this organization after the convention will involve a lot of hard work. And the attacks on it by the enemy are sure to intensify as the new organization grows stronger in the class struggle. But as the organization implements the program it decides on at its founding convention, these attacks can be turned around into further exposure and struggle against the enemy; and the national united workers organization increasingly unite active fighters of our class and become a social force, winning the allegiance of thousands and then millions.

The Revolutionary Communist Party hails the impending formation of this organization and, along with many other activists, has proudly worked to make its founding convention a success. We look forward to working in the future to continue to make it a powerful weapon in the hands of the working class.

The formation of the national workers organization is a big step forward. What remains is for the workers who attend this historic convention to hammer out a fighting program and then take this program back to plants and mills around the country and make the new organization a mighty weapon for the ever increasing columns of workers surging forward to fight the capitalist enemy. ■

Conv. Plans: see page 6

Eviction At I-Hotel

The word was out that evening that this was it. By 8 PM hundreds of supporters began to gather—tenants from Chinatown-Manilatown, workers from all over joining students, lawyers, teachers and others. 10 PM: Large numbers of police were seen massing. Washington St. freeway exit was closed off. By 1 AM 2500 supporters had massed. Thousands chanted: "WE WON'T MOVE. NO WAY. DON'T CARE WHAT THE COURTS SAY!" You could hear it blocks away.

Inside the hotel people were tense. But these feelings were overpowered by the courageous and defiant stand by everyone. Mr. Leung, 89 years old, stepped up to the window and strained to lean out and look at the supporters assembled down in the street. "It's very good," he said, "we are strong." Mr. Jue puffed on his pipe as he watched the supporters below forming a human barricade. He said with pride, "These police are scared, you know. The rich look at us as slaves but they are scared." Mr. Agnes, a retired seaman, never liked to speak in public, but he knew the importance of doing it this night. "My dear supporters. I thank all of you. It makes me very happy to know we are united together." Outside a deafening roar went up.

Then they came. A fire truck headed towards the defenders, followed by a line of sheriff's cars. In full riot gear, 100 cops held clubs like fixed bayonets. 300 more were right behind. The darkened sky lit up from the flood lights of police and TV crews.

For more on the I-Hotel battle see the center-fold (page 12).



Kent State Gym Battle Still Hot And Heavy

Since last May, Kent State University has been rocked by demonstrations, picket lines, rallies, court injunctions, massive arrests and a 62-day occupation of the site of the murders of four KSU students on May 4, 1970. Thousands of students at Kent and around the country have put the KSU administration on notice that their efforts to wipe out the memory of May 4 by building a gym on the site will not be tolerated.

The protests against the 1970 invasion of Cambodia and the murders at Kent and Jackson State have come to symbolize a spirit of resistance to U.S. imperialism. At Kent each new class of students has been educated about the history and background of May 4 through the annual commemorations.

The bourgeoisie would like very much to bury what Kent State represents, bury the current struggle, just like they have tried to proclaim the death of the student movement that shook the country in the 60s and early 70s. The war is over, they say. It's behind us. But the crimes of the capitalist class will not be forgiven or forgotten. Neither will the struggle against these murdering imperialists cease, as has been shown at Kent State, where a new generation of students has risen up to continue the battle, joining with others who had experience before.

New Generation of Students

Many of the Kent State students who are now waging battle against the authorities were not even in high school at the time of the Cambodia invasion protests and the murders at Kent and Jackson. Expressions of solidarity and support have poured in from thousands of students on campuses all over the country. Hundreds have come to Kent during the summer to join the struggle. Nowhere in their worst dreams had the authorities thought that the battle to halt construction of the gym on the site would grow so strong and last so long.

Every one of their moves has been met and counter attacked by students, organized into the May 4th Coalition. The tit for tat battle has gone on daily:

July 12—194 protesters arrested ending the 62-day occupation of the site of murders where gym is to be built.

July 22—600 hold powerful demonstration declaring arrests were not going to stop the struggle. Hundreds defy court injunction by marching back onto the hill.

July 25—Local judge removes the temporary restraining order against construction of the gym.

July 26—Trustees meet 50 miles from campus and give the go ahead for construction. They are picketed by demonstrators led by the May 4th Coalition. On the way back to campus the demonstrators are stopped by police roadblocks. A total of 27 arrested for the 22nd demo and hit with \$2000 cash bail.

July 27—Coalition responds with a mass demonstration at the administration building and picketing of the police station.

July 28—62 people retake the hill. They are busted in the middle of the night.

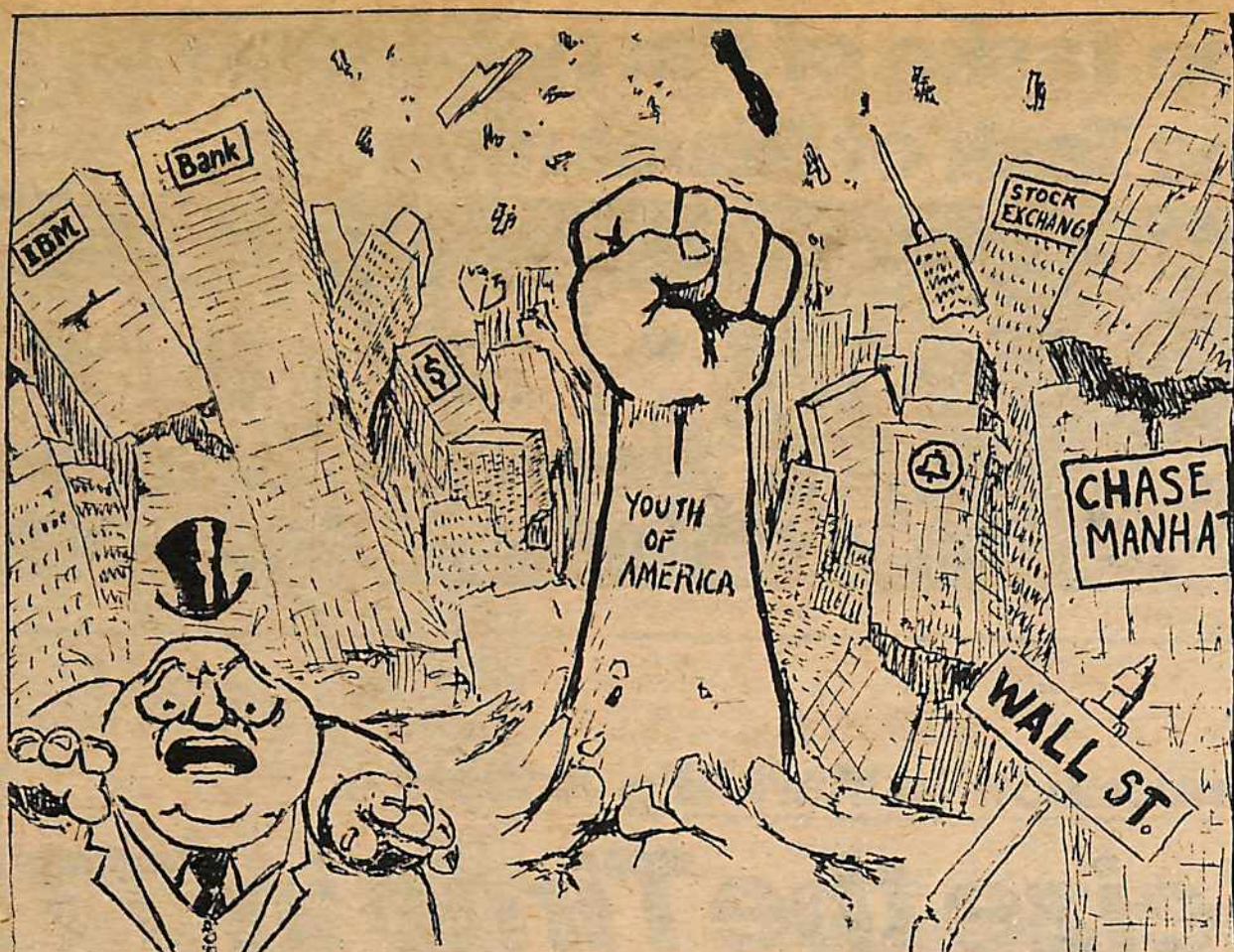
July 29—Federal judge issues another temporary injunction against construction.

Organizing Committee Enters Fray

In the next two weeks actions continued. There was proven support for the struggle not only among the students, but in the working class as well. In early August, the Cleveland area Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization joined the May 4 Coalition in a picket and press conference at the Bucky Arnes Construction Company, contractor for the gym. Picketers call on construction workers to discuss among themselves how to aid the struggle.

At the press conference a letter of support was read from Al Canfora, father of one of the students wounded in 1970 and the vice-president of an Ohio UAW local. John Barbero, vice-president of the USWA local at Youngstown Sheet and Tube, one of the biggest locals in the state also spoke, along with a shop steward from U.S. Steel in Cleveland who is a member of the Organizing Committee. The OC spokesman announced that the Committee was going to bring resolutions of support into the unions, raise funds and spread the word about why the struggle is in the interest of working people. He said the OC would take up the task of mobilizing the rank and file to help stop construction

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Stock Prices Fall

Youth Slam Wall St. With Jobs Demand

On Thursday, August 18, 350 youths and students boarded a ferry boat in the New York borough of Staten Island. Chanting "Jobs for Youth" and other slogans, they unfurled banners from the sides of the ferry. Minutes later the ferry landed in the heart of Manhattan's financial district and they marched off determined and enthusiastic to declare war on Wall Street.

The dramatic beachhead landing of the youth and students was but the opening of two days of militant struggle around the demand of jobs for youth. For several months organizations of revolutionary youth had been taking up the fight around jobs and organizing their brothers and sisters to demonstrate on Wall Street against the magnates of finance and industry who are responsible for the plight that youth find themselves in. They were joined by a sizable contingent from the Revolutionary Student Brigade.

After leaving the ferry, the youths marched through the financial district, stopping at key targets—Citibank, Chase Manhattan, Merrill Lynch, Woolworth's headquarters, and the Stock Exchange—where speakers exposed these capitalist giants for their crimes in this country and around the world and youths spoke from their own experience of the hell that these monopoly capitalists had put them and their families through.

After leaving the lair of the monopolists the youths marched through Manhattan's Lower East Side, a working class neighborhood where they were enthusiastically greeted from those in the area.

Despite the fact that the authorities had gone back on their promise to grant permits for the demonstration, the city was unable to unleash their cops to stop the action for fear of politically isolating themselves and inflaming an already explosive situation—the massive un-

employment of youth. Skillfully outmaneuvering the cops tactically as well, the youths made their way to Battery Park on the edge of the financial district where another rally was held and where the demonstrators slept that night—once again in defiance of the authorities.

Early the next morning the youth and students marched to the Stock Exchange where they took a bold action, blocking the main entrance to the building. The action had a powerful effect. The cops once again stood by, not making any moves without consulting city officials who no doubt were on the phones to their bosses on Wall Street.

By the time noon rolled around, between two and three thousand passersby, so many that traffic on the street was completely choked off, had stopped to check out the actions that the youths and students were taking. Some businessmen stepped forward to try to argue with the demonstrators but youths tore their arguments apart and denounced them and the whole capitalist system.

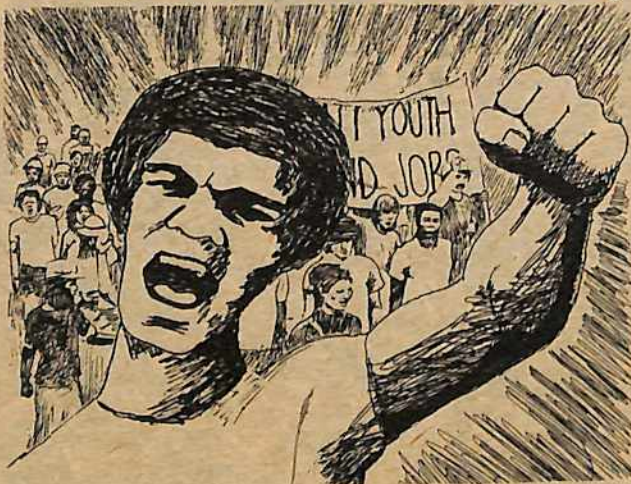
Even though Wall Street is enemy terrain, there was support for the actions from many on the lower level employees of the Stock Exchange and other firms. Several hundred dollars to help pay for the campaign was collected from passersby.

As the action was going on, a stack of *Wall St. Journal*s was burned. When youths spray painted "Youth Declare War on Wall Street" and began to write "Youth Demand Jobs," the cops, many on horseback, broke through the tight cordon of people in front of the Stock Exchange entrance and busted one person. Later on, as youths once again posted their demands in paint on the wall, cops came in and busted seven more demonstrators.

Following the two days of Wall Street actions a most important meeting was held in New York of those working class youth that had participated in the action. The meeting, called by members of the Revolutionary Communist Party active in building the struggle of the youth, was to discuss the formation of a communist youth organization, which will take place this October 22-23-24 at Kent State University in Ohio.

Those at the meeting discussed why it is necessary to build a communist organization that will be able to provide the struggle of youth with a clear direction and tie it with the overall revolutionary struggle of the working class. The discussion brought out why such an organization must be communist but have a mass character, that is, capable of reaching out widely to youths who want to wage a revolutionary fight against the capitalist system and training them as communists.

The meeting was marked by a very high degree of unity and enthusiasm around the task of forming the communist youth organization. The youths at the meeting left determined to go back to their neighborhoods and build up the struggle of youths and prepare for the founding convention of the communist youth organization. ■



COME TO THE FOUNDING CONVENTION
OF A NATIONAL COMMUNIST
YOUTH ORGANIZATION

October 22-23-24, Kent State University

Contact Revolutionary Student Brigade/Young Red
PO Box A3423, Chicago, IL 60690

The Tasks of Party Branches, The Task of Revolution

Article 12 of the *Constitution* of the Revolutionary Communist Party sets forth a most important part of the Party's basic line, summarizing in five points the main tasks of Party branches as the basic units of the Party. What is the significance of these tasks and how do they relate to the fundamental goal of socialist revolution and the eventual realization of communism? Why is it that unless the Party branches act on the basis of these principles the Party cannot fulfill its role as the advanced detachment of the working class?

The first point is that the Party branches must "give constant education to the Party members and supporters concerning the ideological and political line and lead them, together with the proletariat and broad masses, in fighting resolutely against the class enemy." (*Programme and Constitution of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA*, pp. 172-3) Why is this task given such emphasis, why is the question of constant education in the line of the Party given priority in the way that it is here? The decisive point is that education in the Party's line is the *basis* for leading the working class (proletariat) and broad masses in struggle against the bourgeoisie (class enemy). And unless the struggle of the working class and broad masses is led by a correct line, the line of the Party of the working class, then their struggle cannot continue to advance and there is no way it can achieve the final goal of overthrowing and eventually eliminating the capitalist class.

This does not mean that the masses of people can never wage militant struggle against the enemy unless the Party is leading them, that all spontaneous struggle is of no value and cannot lead to progress. Of course such struggle breaks out all the time, does often strike powerful blows against the enemy, and certainly can and does continually contribute to the development of revolutionary mass movements that advance the cause of the working class. The point is that without the leadership of the Party, without the guidance of its ideological and political line representing the revolutionary outlook and interests of the working class, there is no way that mass struggle can continue to advance through ups and downs, no way the struggling masses can thoroughly distinguish real friends from real enemies and build the broadest unity against the enemy, and certainly no way the struggle can be carried forward to achieve the historic mission of the working class, the abolition of class society. Without this leadership, it is certain that the capitalists and their agents will sooner or later succeed in their attempts to misdirect, attack, split and defeat struggles and mass movements, they will succeed in maintaining their rule, even in restoring capitalist rule where it has been overthrown, and in prolonging the capitalist system with all the evils that flow from it.

Throughout the history of this country, as in every country, the working class and others oppressed by the ruling class have waged militant and heroic battles against their oppressors and tormentors. And this remains true today. But what is required is that, through all the twists and turns of the mass movement, the Party of the working class unites with and gives leadership to the masses in struggle. And giving leadership does not

only mean giving tactical guidance in the immediate battle—that is an important task of the Party but not the most important, not the main role the Party must play.

Its overall leading role consists in guiding the masses, first and foremost the masses of workers, through every battle toward the goal of socialist revolution, revealing the class nature of the enemy and of the different forces involved in the struggle, showing in a living way how the source of the outrages the masses are fighting against is the capitalist system, enabling the masses to learn through their own experience the necessity and inevitability of socialist revolution and preparing the masses as well as the Party itself to make revolution when the objective conditions ripen.

Lessons of Old CP

In this regard, as the *Programme* of the Revolutionary Communist Party points out, there are valuable lessons to be drawn from the experience of the Communist Party (CP), "both the positive lessons of the leadership given by the Communist Party to the mass struggle, and the negative lessons of the CP's errors which made possible its transformation into a counter-revolutionary organization." (pp. 64-65) The *RCP Programme* takes note of the fact that the CP provided many of the most dedicated and capable organizers and practical leaders in the great unionizing drives of the 1930s, in the fight against lynching and other acts of terror and oppression of the Black people, and in other mass struggles. The CP did some good work in spreading revolutionary ideas, in raising class consciousness and in building the Party itself. But, as the *Programme* stresses, in the course of the fight for industrial unions and in general, the CP "increasingly lost sight of the final aim of socialist revolution." (p. 104)

At the very time "as the CP grew in strength and influence," during the 1930s, it "fell into pragmatism, an American ruling class philosophy which says, 'It is not really possible to know the laws that govern nature and society; if something seems to work, never mind the reasons, do it.' This leads straight to revisionism which proclaims, 'The movement is everything, the final aim nothing.'" (*RCP Programme*, p. 68) And, although this line was struggled against within the CP, this was done in a "scattershot way," against particular revisionist policies, and the roots of revisionism were never thoroughly struck at (see *Programme*, p. 70).

Finally, in the mid-'50s, the revisionist line was completely consolidated in the CP, and it became another knife in the back of the working class instead of the most important weapon of the working class as it had once been. As our Party's *Programme* also sums up, "Much of this was due to the downplaying of political education . . . CPUSA members were not trained in Marxism-Leninism, or in the spirit of constant struggle within the Party to determine the real situation and the road ahead." (pp. 69-70)

From all this the importance of the tasks of the Party branches, as set forth in the *Constitution* of the RCP, stands out all the more sharply. And it is even clearer why it is crucial to "give constant education to the Party members and supporters concerning the ideological and political line . . ."

Lifeline of Party Branch

If such constant education in the line is not carried out then there is no way Party members and supporters can give the kind of leadership to the mass struggle summarized earlier, the kind of leadership that is essential for the mass movement to continue to advance and for the working class to develop its struggle into a revolutionary force at the head of the broadest masses. Constant education in the ideological and political line is the lifeline of the Party branch, it is decisive in enabling the branches and their members—and ultimately the Party as a whole—to play their vanguard role.

Is this task, as formulated in the *Constitution*, promoting theory as principal over practice and reversing the correct relationship between the two? No, not at all. The ideological and political line of the Party is developed by grasping the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, the science of revolution, and applying them to the concretes of class struggle. This science is rooted in practice—not, however, just narrow and immediate practice, but the practice of mankind historically and internationally in three great struggles—class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experimentation. Further, the Party's line is developed by the *Party as a whole*, through its organized structure, with its leading bodies responsible for synthesizing at the highest level, through the application of this revolutionary science, the experience accumulated

by the Party and the masses in struggle.

Though they definitely can and must contribute to this process, the branches themselves do not and cannot develop the overall line, or else each branch would, on the basis of its limited experience, develop its own line and there would not be one line but many lines, not one center but many centers—and therefore no real center at all—in the Party. Then the Party would be based not on Marxism but empiricism—taking partial experience for universal truth—and would be bogged down in revisionist politics and factionalism in organizational affairs. Of course the fact that only the Party's leading bodies can develop its overall line and policies in no way lessens the responsibility of the Party branches to develop specific policies for advancing the struggle in their areas of work. This involves the branches grasping the dialectical movement from practice to theory and back to practice on a higher level. But in order for this task to be carried out correctly the branches must carry out education in the general line of the Party and develop specific policies in accordance with the general line.

The line of the Party is, of course, not a static thing but is constantly developed by the Party as a whole through the process of applying Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought—the summation of practice in the way stressed before—to practice and on this basis accumulating more experience, which must in turn be summed up by the whole Party to deepen the line and develop its further application—and on and on in an endless upward spiral. But at any point for each of the Party branches constant education in the ideological and political line of the Party is decisive. It enables Party members (and supporters) to take part in struggles with the overall picture and the long-term goal in mind and to avoid tailing after spontaneity in the mass movements, which would amount to abandoning such movements to bourgeois lines and leadership and ultimately abandoning the masses to the "mercy" of the bourgeoisie. Without such constant education it is impossible to correctly apply the mass line—to take the scattered and partial experiences and ideas of the masses and concentrate what is correct, while struggling against what is incorrect, in order to continually arm the masses with a deeper understanding of their actual interests and enable them to fight more effectively for those interests, in terms of the immediate battle and most importantly in terms of the long-term struggle for socialism and ultimately communism.

If education in the ideological and political line is reduced to discussion of only those parts of the line that seem to have the most direct relevance to the immediate battle, or if education in the Party's line is taken up only case by case in the course of particular battles, then the line is reduced to a series of tactics, divorced from the overall aims and strategy which alone form the basis for developing correct tactics that can continue to advance the struggle. Once again, if this approach is taken as the guiding principle then the Party and its basic units will be based not in Marxism but empiricism, not on revolutionary but revisionist politics, and the unity of will and action of the Party, based on and guided by its overall line, will be replaced with narrow "departmentalism," even factionalism, in organizational affairs.

What does it mean, then, to give constant education in the ideological and political line, and how do the branches carry this out in relation to the requirements of leading mass struggle? It means that every branch and all its members must systematically study and discuss major documents of the Party—the *Programme* and *Constitution* and other major documents, major articles in the Party press, etc.—not "all at once" but in accordance with the guidance given by the higher bodies of the Party. This must focus on the following points: What are the most important questions of line in the material to be studied and discussed and how do they relate to the overall line of the Party? How do the main points made and the tasks set forth in any particular material relate to the general and long-term objectives and the basic

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Constitution of the RCP, USA

Article 12

The main tasks of the Party branches are:

1. To give constant education to the Party members and supporters concerning the ideological and political line and lead them, together with the proletariat and broad masses, in fighting resolutely against the class enemy;
2. To maintain close ties with the masses, constantly listen to their opinions and demands and wage an active ideological struggle so as to keep Party life vigorous;
3. To propagate and carry out the policies of the Party, implement its decisions and fulfill every task assigned by the Party;
4. To lead the Party members and supporters in studying Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought conscientiously and thoroughly opposing revisionism and all forms of opportunism;
5. To take in new Party members, enforce Party discipline and constantly consolidate the Party organizations, getting rid of the stale and taking in the fresh, so as to constantly strengthen the proletarian character of the Party and its role as the vanguard of the working class.

Revolution

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Superpowers Vie for New Turf Wars Flare On Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa, with Ethiopia at its center, is a powder keg with a short fuse. Many big contradictions are sharpening rapidly. The superpowers, hungrily eyeing the Horn's military and political significance, are diving into the troubled waters with renewed enthusiasm. The Soviet Union's maneuvers are out front and clear for all to see but the U.S. is just as much there, presently lurking in the background relying on its Arab friends and France to do most of their dirty work.

The stakes in this region are growing higher. Alliances are shifting like the desert sands. The Soviets are backing ex-U.S. clients while the U.S. is looking to pick up ex-Soviet clients. The Soviet Union seems willing to alienate old friends like Somalia and the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) in hopes of getting a lock on Ethiopia, the key to the Horn of Africa. To succeed, they must insure the survival of the bloody dictatorship of the *Derg*. With the *Derg* facing six different rebel armies within Ethiopia's borders and courting war with neighboring Sudan and Somalia, this is no easy task.

Soviet Move for Ethiopia

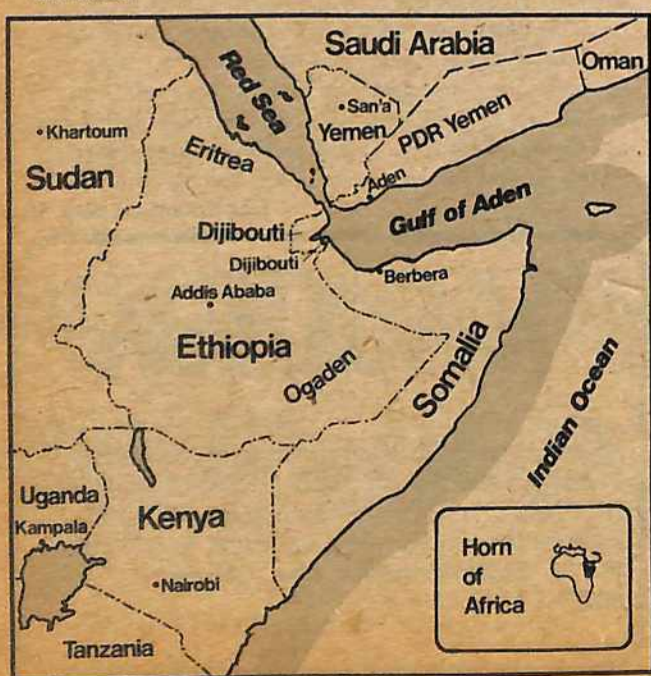
The U.S. imperialists, for their part, see the Soviet's difficulties as opening a whole new spectrum of opportunities to advance their own superpower interests. The big question in the superpower contention over the Horn of Africa is that with the Soviets holding such a poor hand in the *Derg*, will they be forced to pull the Cuban ace out from their sleeve? Will Ethiopia follow Angola as social-imperialism's next prize in its neo-colonial assault on Africa? Or will Ethiopia become the New Czars' version of U.S. imperialism's Vietnam defeat?

Up until 1973, Ethiopia was U.S. imperialism's most reliable ally in non-Arab Africa, except for countries like South Africa. The Haile Selassie regime was the biggest benefactor of U.S. "aid" on the continent. It was a semi-feudal enslaver of nationalities, where some two-thirds of the people were oppressed by the dominant Amharite ruling group.

In February, 1973, Haile Selassie was overthrown by military officers who took advantage of the massive popular struggle against the old regime. The junta, known as the *Derg*, attempted to sabotage the mass struggle by launching a phony land reform and mouthing phony revolutionary phrases, styling themselves as Marxist-Leninists. They took on an anti-U.S. imperialist stance but they did nothing to change the semi-feudal, semi-colonial class relations. U.S. imperialism indicated its approval of the *Derg*, anti-American rhetoric and all, by increasing its "aid."

But since their arrival to power the *Derg* has known no peace. Their rule was continuously under assault from the separatist liberation movements in Eritrea and revolutionary struggle led by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP) and its military arm, the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Army (EPRA). (See *Revolution*, May 1977 for more on the class struggle in Ethiopia.) The *Derg* itself was rent with factional struggle, as many died or were expelled when they either failed to line up with one of the factions that formed or picked a loser.

The turmoil in Ethiopia set the stage for Soviet penetration and the resulting realignment of both progressive and reactionary bourgeois forces in the Horn of Africa.



Ethiopia had a number of things to offer the Soviet Union. It had the second largest population in non-Arab Africa, six times the combined population of established Soviet points of influence in the area, the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) and Somalia. Ethiopia had two excellent ports on the Red Sea, a choke point for European trade, and it was also on the flank of the Middle East, where the Soviet Union had over the years lost ties with Sudan, Egypt and to some extent, Syria. Besides which, if the New Czars could keep the *Derg* in power it could be powerful advertising for similarly beleaguered reactionaries elsewhere in the Third World.

Soviet imperialism was faced with two big obstacles. Firstly, how could they ease in to Ethiopia without alienating Somalia and South Yemen and secondly, how to keep the *Derg* in power. How well they handled these problems would play a major role in determining the freedom U.S. imperialism would have in taking advantage of the Soviet maneuvers for extending U.S. influence in the area.

The conflicting interests the Soviets faced were these: Somalia has long had claims on the Ogaden, an Italy-sized region of eastern Ethiopia. The area was seized by Ethiopia in the 1890s from Somalia and is populated primarily by Somalis. Tensions over the area had broken out in a sharp border war in 1964 and the Somali government had long supported the Western Somalia Liberation Front, active in the Ogaden for many years. South Yemen had supported the Eritrean liberation struggle.

The Soviets signalled their intentions towards Ethiopia with Soviet diplomats being heard commenting that "a real revolution" was going on there. In addition, the Moscow press made favorable comparisons between Col. Mengistu's bloody coup within the coup on February 3, 1977 and the October Revolution in Russia!

The Soviets tried to defuse the Eritrean situation by first breaking the unity between the more strictly nationalist Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Eritrea (PFLE) whose program was much more democratic and anti-feudal. Then the Soviets wanted to get the PFLE to agree to a *Derg* plan for Eritrean autonomy within greater Ethiopia. The effort failed as the PFLE turned the Soviets down cold.

Contradictions Heat Up

Heading the shifting winds, the Somali government in late February moved to strengthen a more independent position by purging the pro-Soviet army chief of staff. Later it appointed him defense minister but neutralized him with four vice-ministers who are considered anti-Soviet and more favorable to the sort of Pan-Arab bloc schemes pushed by Saudi Arabia.

The situation grew tighter for the Soviets and their new buddies in the *Derg* when the governments of Sudan, Somalia, North Yemen and South Yemen met on March 22 to discuss the problem of "security" in the Red Sea area. The meeting was a public warning to "Soviet imperialism."

In late March the Castro/Podgorny African safari blew through. (See *Revolution*, May 1977) In meetings with the *Derg* they promised increased support for their all-round struggle against progressive forces. At the same time they floated out a proposal for an "East African Socialist Federation" which would include Ethiopia, Somalia, South Yemen and, when it gained independence on June 26, the former French colony of Djibouti, an area coveted by both Ethiopia and Somalia. Of course, the "East African Socialist Federation" was billed as a place where all the regional conflicts could be settled peaceably—under the guiding hand of the New Czars. This Soviet initiative failed, too, when Somalia angrily rejected the plan.

Moving in right behind Castro and Podgorny was Saudi Arabia, whose foreign policy in the Arab world is to unite under its leadership a "moderate" pro-U.S. Arab bloc. The Saudis opened their checkbooks for South Yemen and Somalia, promising aid—\$300 million for South Yemen alone.

On April 25 the *Derg* made its decisive break with U.S. imperialism, expelling American civilians. This move cut the Ethiopian army off from its arms supplies. But on May 4 Col. Mengistu was welcomed with open arms in Moscow and within two weeks the first contingent of Cuban advisors arrived in Addis Ababa.

The Soviets had jumped into Ethiopia with both feet and the splash sent ripples racing through the region. Sudan concluded a military cooperation agree-

ment with France to rearm its Soviet-equipped army. Somalia, too, began shopping in France. The U.S., when asked for aid by Sudan, pretty much turned them down, pretending to want to steer clear of the conflicts. Then, in late July, the U.S. announced that it was prepared "in principle" to sell arms to Somalia, an indication that the U.S. would begin playing a more open role in the region.

While the New Czars now had the inside track in Ethiopia, though failing to keep South Yemen and Somalia tightly in their orbit, their problems were just beginning. Somalia increasingly stepped up their open support for the guerillas in the Ogaden, backing them in some cases with regular Somali army forces. The Eritrean struggle continued its attacks, annihilating thousands of Ethiopian soldiers and units of the *Derg's* Peasant Militia. The revolutionary EPRA was winning victories within Ethiopia proper and two other rebel armies, belonging to the Tigre Liberation Front and the reactionary Ethiopian Democratic Union, were also active.

Confident of their Soviet backing, and trying to gain more, the Ethiopians escalated the conflict in the Ogaden in hopes of pushing it to a crisis situation. In addition, to try and back the Sudan away from their active support of the Eritrean struggle, Ethiopia worked to rekindle the dormant secessionist struggle in southern Sudan, a move that further inflamed the Sudanese government.

The Soviet's Predicament

Right now the Soviets have a lot of chips on the table. So far, their gamble has not paid off. Sudan has solidly joined the Saudi-led Arab bloc while Somalia and South Yemen are moving towards Saudi Arabia—and, therefore, the U.S.—away from the Soviets. The *Derg* is weaker than it was last year.

One possibility for the New Czars, and possibly the only chance they have to succeed, is to call in the Cuban army to prop up the *Derg* by force of arms. But unleashing Castro's legions would be a desperate decision. It would have a powerful political impact and further expose the aims of the USSR in Africa. Not only that, but finding Cuban troops to do it would also be rough. The 20,000 Cubans already in Africa are tied down keeping the Neto/MPLA government in Angola alive. The Soviets would certainly have to measure the effect on the Cuban masses of seeing yet another expeditionary army of sons, husbands and fathers being marched off to die in Africa.

U.S./USSR Making Similar Moves

The interference of the two superpowers in the Horn of Africa has been very similar. When the U.S. was aiding the reactionary Haile Selassie government in Ethiopia, the Soviets gave aid to the Eritrean struggle, the South Yemeni struggle against British imperialism and later economic aid. They gave Somalia economic aid as well. But the aims of the Soviets are clear when seen in the light of their recent actions.

Seeing an opportunity to expand their influence and hold in the region, the Soviets are now backing the wholly reactionary *Derg*. Their "progressive" support of Eritrean liberation and national development in South Yemen and Somalia has been thrown to the winds. This has opened the door for U.S. imperialism which, working through Saudi Arabia and France, is hovering over the area looking to back anti-Soviet or anti-*Derg* forces. The aims of the U.S. are, as always, merely to protect their own chances of plundering the

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1200 miners demonstrated in Washington, D.C. in early August against the slashing of their health benefits. The miners present showed the militancy of the strike which has pulled out 80,000 miners and the determination not to let their hard fought benefits be stolen.

Overcome Obstacles

Miners Battle On, Continue Wildcat

The miners wildcat over medical benefit cuts that has shaken the coalfields continued through August. After hitting a low point in mid-July, rank and file miners have been able to rebuild the strike and carry it broader than ever. As of mid-August, 80,000 miners in five states were out.

In the process of putting the strike back on its feet the miners have been forced to wage sharp struggles with the leaders of their own union, the UMWA. In Districts 17 and 29 in southern West Virginia, the district officials have been jammed into backing the strike.

In the course of the strike two big questions have posed themselves. The first is whether wildcatting this summer will weaken or strengthen the battle around the contract which expires in December. The second is what role should independent rank and file organizations like the Miners Right to Strike Committee play during times when some union officials at the local and district level of the UMWA are supporting the strike.

Rebuilding the Wildcat

Initially, the wildcat began on June 20 when miners began walking off to protest the UMWA Health and Retirement Fund's announcement that due to "losses in coal production due to wildcats" medical benefits would be cut beginning July 1. Payments into the fund are based on a royalty levied on each ton of coal mined. During the first week 35,000 miners struck.

The cuts announcement had been timed just before the June 25-July 10 coalfield-wide vacation period in order to diffuse the struggle and give the UMWA leadership time to get organized against the wildcats. The Miners Right to Strike Committee, aware of the problems in trying to carry the strike over the vacation period, had prepared by organizing a rally of 150 miners before vacation which declared miners' determination to "come back fighting" and by continuing to organize during the shutdown.

But at the end of vacation, when rank and file rallies in Districts 17 and 29 voted to continue the wildcat, the miners came up against the organized power of many local officials. In District 17 local officials and some backward workers broke up two rank and file meetings on July 11 and 12, breaking up the wildcat. In District 29, officials cooperated with county sheriffs to bust things up.

As the strike wound down in southern West Virginia—although a few locals stayed out—it picked up in eastern Kentucky and Pennsylvania. On July 17 some 250 miners, mainly from Pennsylvania, demonstrated at the UMWA headquarters in Washington, D.C., demanding that President Arnold Miller do something about the cuts.

At first Miller indicated he might call a sanctioned

"memorial period," a national work stoppage against the cuts. After a July 21-22 meeting of the International Executive Board (IEB), Miller backed off, issuing a three point do nothing program.

Miller and the IEB's betrayal enraged miners. Districts 17 and 29 picked up the strike again as the district leaders reversed their position of two weeks earlier when they were strike busting.

On July 26 the District 17 leadership called for a meeting of all local officials who then voted to stay on strike. They also called for a march on Washington for August 5. Three days later, in an unprecedented move, District 29 leaders called for a district-wide rank and file meeting. There miners voted to continue the strike and to join District 17's proposed march on Washington.

The district officials in 17 and 29 were running scared with strike sentiment and rank and file demands to fight the cuts running high, especially after the July 21-22 IEB meeting, they were afraid that if they continued their strikebusting at that point, without some "militant" show, they would only expose themselves and jeopardize their careers without even halting the wildcat. This would leave the field open for the Right to Strike Committee to provide leadership.

Once the leadership in Districts 17 and 29 moved in, they immediately began looking for dead-end roads to lead the struggle down. District 17 leaders took the tack of building the Washington march as little as possible. In District 29 the officials informed miners that only chosen delegates would be allowed to march. They said that anyone without an "official badge," carrying unauthorized signs or banners or wearing an unauthorized T-shirt would be turned over to the police for violating the march permit.

In spite of union officials' attempts to weaken the march, some 1200 miners showed up. The Miners Committee organized a car caravan from southern West Virginia that linked up with miners from southern Ohio and northern West Virginia. Once in Washington, the union leaders split the miners into three contingents, to march on the BCOA offices, the UMWA headquarters and the Capitol. Many of the union officials stressed that the march was primarily aimed at the Congress, which took the heat off the BCOA.

The BCOA locked the miners out, Miller refused to meet with "his" rank and file and, as usual, the politicians dished up last year's promises warmed over. As one miner summed up, "The reason they got us down here was to march us all over the place in the hot sun and get us so demoralized we'd go back to work." But the outrageous treatment the miners received only served to make them more determined to build the strike.

"Back to Work Movement" Stopped

As the strike went into its sixth week, District 29 of-

officials once again moved to bust it. Another district-wide meeting was held on August 8 and 2000 miners showed up. No discussion was allowed and a voice vote was taken. It split nearly evenly with those wanting to continue the strike holding a slight edge. But the district president announced that since the vote was "too close to call" he was ordering everyone back to work! Immediately the local press announced that the 2000 miners had voted to go back and that this was the beginning of a back to work movement. The next day strike supporters stopped the "back to work movement" cold.

On August 9 district and local officials in District 17 decided to take the issue back to the locals to be voted on. The district president admitted publicly that he expected a back to work vote and it was very clear that without sending it back to the locals he could not put over a back to work order. The issue was too hot.

But at one meeting after another miners stood up and denounced the plans to return to work. When all the local votes were tallied on August 10 the miners wishes rang out loudly and boldly—on with the strike!

The District 17 vote to strike was a real breakthrough. At present, the miners understand that to force the employers to stop the cuts the strike must be spread and built nationwide. Meetings were held, some under the leadership of the rank and file and some led by district officials, to organize the picketing in Districts 17 and 29 and elsewhere.

The response of Miller and the IEB has been clear. At a special meeting they reaffirmed the 10 point program to stop wildcats. They are complaining that "chaos" reigns in the union and they are threatening to put District 17 into receivership, to expel or suspend wildcat strikers from the union and have pledged not to interfere with companies who fire active fighters for their participation in the struggle.

Injunctions Stopped by Power of Wildcats

While the union leadership is willing to use sanctions against the strikers none of the struck coal operators have been able to get injunctions against the miners. This is a very significant development and testimony to the power of this wildcat movement. The "legal" technicality given as the "reason" for this is that since the problems with the Health and Retirement Fund were not an arbitratable contract issue then the strike did not violate the contract. But the real reason underlying this development was made clear by one judge who stated openly that to issue an injunction "would just add more fuel to the fire" and that miners would openly flaunt the authority of the courts. Since legal sanctions would be ignored it was better to let the courts stand aside and keep their "honor" intact.

Although the strike has had a number of high and low points, times when tens of thousands would be out and times when only a handful of mines persevered, the struggle has continued because the rank and file miners are totally opposed to the benefit cuts and because within the strike there has been an active core—the Right to Strike Committee and others—who have been able to point the way forward. The companies' attempt to blackmail miners, holding their health hostage to greater productivity and less strikes, has been dealt a powerful blow.

Back Stabbing by District Leaders

One of the great advances in the strike has been the ability of the rank and file to force the union structure at the district level to support the strike. This has helped to bring broader numbers of rank and file miners into the strike and make it stronger.

But the intervention of the district level leadership in the strike on the side of the rank and file creates new difficulties as well as new opportunities. The District 29 leadership, for example, allowed the cops a free hand in attempting to break the strike in its early days. But when they were forced off their open strikebusting stand and entered the strike to "lead" it, as with the march on Washington, DC, they first tried to use their "leadership" to weaken the march and then just three days later to once again return to open organizing for a back to work movement.

During times when the district leaderships were attempting to lead the strike they were able to some extent to "crowd out" the independent rank and file leadership such as the Miners Right to Strike Committee. The maneuvers of the district leadership point up sharply the need for the rank and file at all times to guard and develop their independence and initiative and be prepared for when the district officials move from "leading" the struggle and subverting it at every turn to openly working to smash it.

While miners are adamant in their hatred for the benefit cuts there has been a lot of debate throughout the strike over what the relationship is between the present strike and the contract which expires in December. There is some fear that the present strike, through loss of wages, exhaustion, the firing of activists, etc., will actually put the miners in a weaker position to wage a successful contract fight.

One side of the battle around this is represented by a leaflet put out under the direction of a district lead-

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Convention Plans Set

As Labor Day weekend draws near, the Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization (OC) has moved into the final push to make sure that the founding convention will be a resounding success. Over the last month in different cities across the country the OC has continued to link up with struggles being waged by the rank and file, and bring out the need for and the news about the organization soon to be founded. In St. Louis, the OC is continuing to be in the thick of the Hussman strike and is standing up to severe attacks being launched on the strike itself and the OC's participation in it by the capitalists of that city (see page 9). The campaign to "Bust the Union Busters," which has been an important part of the OC's activities since shortly after its formation in Cleveland back in February, has continued and led in recent weeks to some sharp battles in both the San Francisco Bay Area and Milwaukee (see this page). In Johnstown, Pennsylvania the OC and the *Steelworker* newsletter have taken the lead in organizing steel workers at Bethlehem to fight the layoffs that the company has announced (page 8). The OC is also continuing to take the news of the convention out broadly to workers. A new and dramatic poster has been put out to call on workers to join in forming the national workers organization.

But especially as the convention approaches, the efforts of the Organizing Committee have been concentrated on the preparations for the convention itself—firming up the lists of those workers who will be attending, getting down with fellow workers around many of the questions that will be discussed, and holding conferences in different localities in preparation for Labor Day weekend.

Labor Day weekend will climax the process that was begun on February 19 when 170 workers gathered in Cleveland, Ohio to set up the Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization. The founding convention of the national united workers organization will determine the actual program, both the general stand and specific battle plans for the next year, of the new organization. It will also determine the organizational structure and leadership that can best get things going.

The agenda for the convention has been set by the National Office of the Organizing Committee and the office has called for a meeting, on August 27, of a rules committee. This committee will meet to come up with recommended policies around structure, leadership, dues, membership requirements, internal and external newsletters (if needed), etc. These will be presented and voted on at the convention.

On Saturday, September 3, the convention itself will open at noon with short opening speeches by workers groups and a veteran fighter. Opening speeches by the national coordinating committee will also be given.

This will be followed by two series of workshops

on Saturday afternoon and early evening—the first set by industry and the second set on major social questions. This first series of about 20 workshops will sum up the struggles taking place in the industries and unions and make plans for further advances.

For example, meatpackers from at least six different areas of the country will be attending the convention. In the last few years this industry has been marked by very heavy attacks on the workers including union busting attempts and wage cuts. In response the meatcutters have waged several prolonged and hard fought strikes, the most important at the present being the eight month strike against union busting at Iowa Beef, the largest U.S. meatpacking company.

Rank and file meatcutters in this workshop will put to use their experience over the last few years. If it is still continuing, they will discuss how to build nationwide support for the Iowa Beef strike. Rank and file meatcutters, who at present lack any kind of national structure, will discuss concrete steps towards tying things together more, including the possibility of a national newsletter sometime in the future.

Another example of what will be going on in the industrial workshops is what is being planned for the steel workshop. In steel, rank and file organization is more developed than in meatpacking, with a national newsletter, the *Steelworker*. In looking ahead, they will be making use of their experience including two recent national campaigns, around union elections at the start of the year and the contract battle soon afterwards.

The activists leading this workshop have set an agenda which will sum up these recent struggles and discuss new battles which could be taken up, such as building a campaign for rank and file ratification of basic steel contracts to climax at the Fall, 1978 USWA convention, and other sharp questions facing all steel workers.

The second set of workshops scheduled for the early evening of September 3 will go into the stand and program of the national united workers organization on major social questions of the day. Tentatively these will be: the unions—the stand and program of the national united workers organization; discrimination and inequality; fascist groups and the stand of the working class; women workers; unemployment; war and war preparations; organizing the unorganized; and the decay and crisis of the cities.

For example in the workshop on war and war preparations, the stand of the national united workers organization in relation to the AFL-CIO General Council will be discussed. On almost every actual war or move towards war George Meany & Co. side with the U.S. rulers, despite their occasional whining and simpering to the contrary. For instance they supported the B-1 bomber, saying it would help create jobs for the unemployed.

and "keep America strong." This is a natural followup to their support for the war in Vietnam.

The workshop will discuss the growing threat of war between the two superpowers, the U.S. and USSR, and will be taking up such questions as what the organization should say about the neutron bomb, the cruise missile and the U.S. supported *apartheid* in South Africa. And what about the argument that workers' jobs depend on war spending?

Another example of this second set of workshops South, have had a lot of experience in the struggle to unionize. At the same time the AFL-CIO has recently made some moves to concentrate attention on organizing Southern workers, publicizing the boycott of JP Stevens and lobbying for the repeal of 14b, the "right to work" section of the Taft Hartley Act, and some other changes in labor legislation.

Workers in this workshop will sum up some of their experiences in organizing the unorganized. They will also discuss the overall strategy for organizing the unorganized, and how the fight to repeal 14b and to make other changes in labor legislation fits in.

Following these workshops will be a cultural evening, featuring the Prairie Fire singing group, other singers, several skits and other cultural presentations.

The convention will continue on Sunday, September 4 with an early workshop on the role of wives and family in the struggle of working people.

This will be followed by a major plenary session to sum up the major resolutions reached at the workshops the day before and vote on the program of the new organization, both its general stand and its specific areas of focus in the coming year. It will also vote on the organizational structure and leadership that can best put this program into action.

The convention will be capped off with a victory party on Sunday evening.

This founding convention of the national united workers organization will take place in Chicago at the Pick Congress Hotel. The registration fee is \$3 per person. For more information call (312) 663-4310. ■

Free Buddy Cochran!

Buddy Cochran, a white tractor mechanic who rammed his car into the speaker's platform and busted up a Ku Klux Klan rally in Plains, Georgia July 2, will shortly face a grand jury which will decide whether or not to indict him. The first judge in the case—who angrily declared that Cochran should get the electric chair for this "crime"—has been forced to remove himself from further legal proceedings against Cochran because of public opinion against him. But the authorities are still out to get Cochran.

At a preliminary hearing August 10, the District Attorney pointed out that the Klan rally Cochran broke up was "patriotic" and "Christian," citing the fact that it had begun with the pledge of allegiance to the flag and a prayer—although under cross-examination he was forced to admit that the prayer was for God to allow white people to "rule the earth." Cochran's original \$220,000 bond was reduced to \$50,000, again because of public opinion against this outrageous sum, but Cochran is still in jail unable to raise the money. Some local Black businessmen, Cochran's father-in-law and others have offered to put up their property as security for the bond, but more is needed. The Buddy Cochran Defense Committee, initiated by the local Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization, is asking people all across the country to contribute desperately needed money for Cochran's defense.

The Defense Committee worked in Plains and nearby Americus (where the legal proceedings are taking place) to pack the courtroom for his hearing to show the growing and powerful sentiment for Cochran and against the Klan. Many people, both Black and white, have responded to this call. When a Defense Committee member, a lawyer and Cochran's wife spoke to congregations of Black churches in Americus, many who have little money pulled out five and ten dollar bills. The Organizing Committee has also worked to build support for Cochran's case in factories in the Atlanta area. The National Organizing Committee has encouraged workers all over the country to send letters of support and contributions.

President Carter and his family, who are the richest and biggest landowners in the Sumter County where the trial is taking place, have continued to maintain silence about Cochran and the Klan. Carter's mother "Miss Lillian" and brother Billy were both on hand for the Klan rally. Carter himself, when he's in town, continues to attend the Plains Baptist Church, which invited the Klan wizard into Plains to speak against the attempted integration of that church. Along with this silent bless-

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More Blows vs. Union Busters



San Francisco—Advanced Management Research tries to hold another union busting conference. 300 rank and file workers confronted them outside the fancy hotel. Even the Labor Council was jammed by the Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization to take a stand against AMR. Cops attacked the workers, beating and macing people. 3 were arrested on felony charges. Everywhere these scabs have tried to hold these conferences they have been met. Everywhere the lines have been drawn sharply. Everywhere they have been met by the OC's call to Bust the Union Busters.

Workers Unite to Lead the Fight Against All Oppression

Since its formation the Revolutionary Communist Party has promoted the slogan, "Workers Unite to Lead the Fight Against All Oppression" to stress the direction that the workers movement must take as it develops "its movement of today into a revolutionary workers' movement that fights exploitation and all oppression in order to end wage-slavery." (*Programme*, p. 102) The slogan both stresses the current battles the working class faces and must increasingly take up, and addresses the long-term aims of the working class struggle.

Experience of class struggle in many countries has shown that the working class alone is capable of providing the backbone necessary to persevere in struggle to final victory and alone is capable of leading the struggle forward through every twist and turn. This is not because of some magical quality possessed by individual workers, but a result of the objective position in society that the working class occupies.

The central contradiction in capitalist society is between the capitalist ruling class and those that stand directly opposite to them, the working class. This contradiction arises from the capitalist system of production that reduces the workers to wage-slaves and expropriates the products of their collective labor. But while this contradiction is rooted in the system of production it in turn underlies every aspect of social life. Around each question that affects the lives of the masses the working class and the capitalists have opposite interests. Be it around discrimination, police terror, the growing danger of war, immigration or any of countless other questions the contradiction between the interests of the working class and the exploiters manifests itself.

Each of these social and political questions, which themselves represent contradictions within the capitalist system, affect not only the working class but broader numbers of the oppressed as well. And into the struggles which inevitably arise around each of the contradictions spawned by capitalism each class and social grouping brings their own outlook and orientation, and from each of these classes and groupings come organizations, spokesmen and political representatives who contend for leadership of these struggles.

Workers must and do enter into all of these battles. In the first place most of the oppression bred by capitalism falls on the workers as well as on others in society. But more importantly, both these struggles themselves and the overall development of the workers movement require the participation in every major battle not only of individual workers, but the participation of workers organized as a class and fighting under their own banner.

The working class is the only class in modern society that stands directly opposite the exploiters and that has objectively no interests in preserving any type of exploitation or injustice. The working class is composed of millions bound together by their common situation of having no means to live other than the sale of their ability to work and by the common process of production. This very nature of the working class makes collective action its most natural method of struggle. And since the working class is at the heart of the productive process, the motor that drives society forward, the working class possesses a far greater potential strength than any other force in society.

Lessons from the '60s

A brief look at some recent history of the struggle of the masses in this country should help illustrate why it

Cochran...

Continued from page 6

ing from the president, the KKK has also been greatly aided by the newspapers in southern Georgia which have been building up the KKK with favorable coverage.

When Cochran attacked the Ku Klux Klan rally, the capitalist-owned media all across the country tried to say that he did it because he was drunk and crazy, while presenting the Klan as a "legitimate" organization. Since then, on a national level, they've tried to bury the case. The behavior of the judge, the newspapers and the Carter family are all examples of how the capitalists are building up the Klan today. But Cochran's ride expressed the common desire of many, including many white workers such as Cochran himself, to fight the oppression of Black people and smash scum like the Klan who openly favor this oppression. Support for Cochran is a part of building this fight.

Money for Cochran's defense should be sent to the Buddy Cochran Defense Fund, PO Box 9004, East Point, GA 30364.

is necessary for the working class to lead the fight against all oppression. During the Vietnam War, for example, a massive movement developed against that unjust, imperialist war that shook the country from one end to the other.

While millions of workers hated the war, and many took part in activities against it, this took place almost entirely on an individual basis, and the banner of the working class was mostly absent from that struggle.

In fact, the ruling class and their labor lieutenants went to great efforts to try to misportray the workers' views on the war, making them appear to be 100% behind the U.S. ruling class. To do this they used faithful union officials like Peter Brennan (later rewarded by Nixon with the post of Secretary of Labor) to engineer reactionary incidents, like having members of craft unions attack antiwar demonstrators, and then blowing it all over page one. This shows that even the bourgeoisie recognizes the critical importance of the role of the working class and its impact on the broad masses, in that instance hoping to demoralize the antiwar forces by painting the working class as its enemy, as well as hoping to dampen support for the antiwar movement among the ranks of the workers themselves.

The interests of the working class were absolutely opposed to the ruling class' aggression in Vietnam. It was mainly from the families of the workers that young men were sent off to kill and be killed protecting U.S. imperialism. Despite the ruling class' claim that war "is good for the economy," the initial "war boom" quickly gave impetus to massive inflation, the devaluation of the dollar, recession, and the wage freeze—all of which greatly increased the burden on the working class. But most importantly, the working class had no stake in preserving the overseas empire of its own exploiters, and the blows the Vietnamese people were dealing were

blows against the common enemy of the U.S. and Vietnamese people—the U.S. monopoly capitalist class.

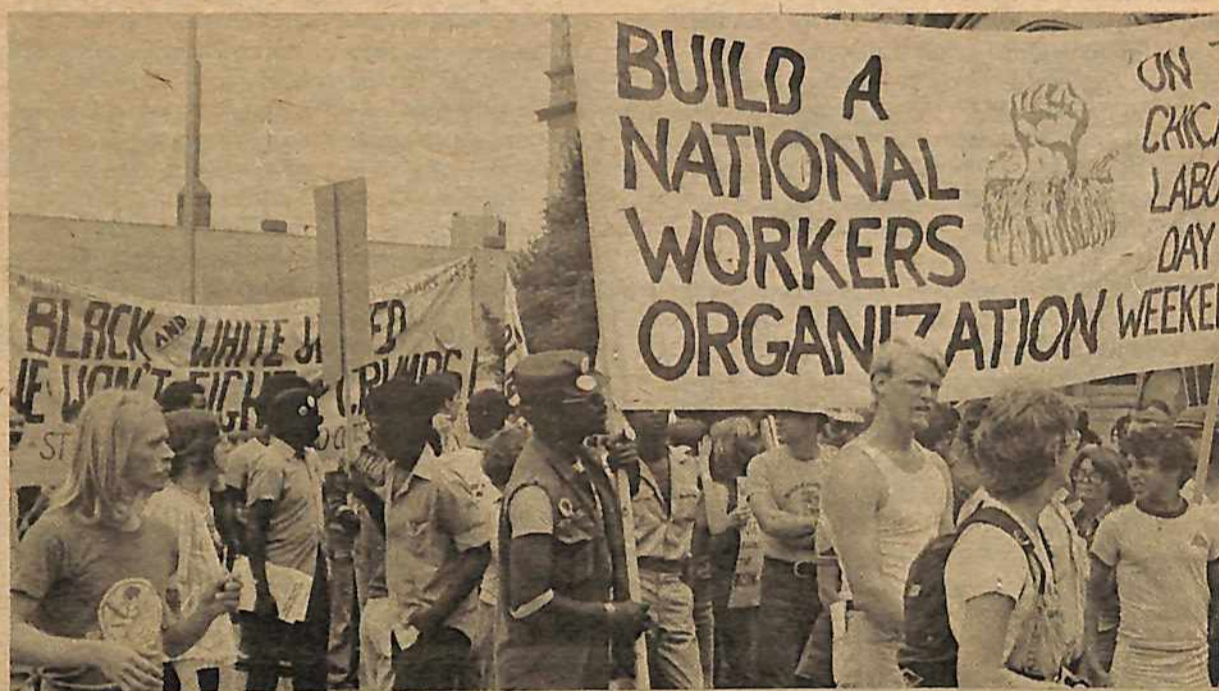
While all this brought workers into the struggle, it was mainly students, young people generally and sections of the petty bourgeoisie that took up the fight in an organized way and many of these people fought courageously. But the lack of a working class center within that movement took its toll.

Many of those forces active in that movement wavered repeatedly and did not clearly see the face of the enemy. Large-scale pacifist tendencies existed which failed to see the class nature of the war, and instead condemned war in general and attacked the Vietnamese as well as the U.S. ruling class. Other tendencies developed which targeted the GIs and even the working class itself as "to blame" for the war or for benefitting from it.

Although the antiwar movement was able to help bring the war to a close and limit the bourgeoisie's freedom to maneuver, without the working class having a strong presence within that struggle, there was no force in the U.S. capable of actually stopping that war. This helped strengthen and made it more difficult to combat the tendency of large numbers to believe that only by persuading so-called "reasonable" politicians and representatives of the capitalists could the war be stopped, while others went off and tried to stop the war through terrorist activities by small handfuls.

Similarly, the powerful Black liberation struggle which reached its high tide in the '60s also suffered from the lack of class conscious working class participation and leadership within it. In the Black liberation struggle, to a far greater extent than the antiwar movement, a great number of workers participated, especially younger workers. But this, too, was on an individual

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New Busts in Anti-Klan Fight

Two new indictments and arrests stemming from the July 4th protests against the Ku Klux Klan in Columbus, Ohio came down on August 16. (See *Revolution*, August 1977.) Tom Welch, a worker at Brook Park Ford, was charged with incitement to violence, a felony, and disturbing a lawful assembly and assault, two misdemeanors. David Sullivan, a shop steward at Alcoa in Cleveland was charged with the same two misdemeanors. Welch was dragged out of his house and held in jail for a day. When returning to work he was given a disciplinary hearing. Both these workers are active members of the Cleveland Area Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization. In response to the arrests press conferences were held simultaneously in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton.

This brings to six the total number who so far have been charged. The grand jury is still in the process of deliberating and additional indictments are expected. The militancy of the demonstration, the fact that the Klan was stopped dead in their tracks, and the tremendous display of Black/white unity came as a big blow to the ruling class. The indictments are an attempt to intimidate people and also are a calculated attempt to make it more difficult for Ohio members of the

Organizing Committee for the National Workers Organization to throw their total energy into building for Chicago. The spearhead of the attack is coming from the Columbus police red squad.

Meanwhile, the Klan, as could be expected, is being treated with kid gloves. When charges were filed against them by the Organizing Committee, the Klansmen were simply summoned to appear in court at their convenience, and every little statement they make gets media play. On the other hand, the state has advised the Klan not to go ahead with a planned Labor Day rally for fear of a repetition of the violent events of July 4, and they were denied a permit.

The first person to come to trial, a Black teenager, was recently found guilty. During her trial a bailiff stumbled across the police coaching some Klansmen in the men's room to identify her picture. A demonstration in her support, as well as telegrams from clergymen across the state, have forced a delay in her sentencing. Plans are now being worked out to continue this fight, defend all indicted people, and greet the openings of the coming trials with campaigns throughout the plants and communities in the area. ■

Major Steel Strike Erupts In Iron Ore

The battle lines are drawn between 15,000 iron ore miners, members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) and their employers in the Mesabi Mountain Range of northern Minnesota and in the upper peninsula of Michigan. These workers are on strike, the first strike in basic steel since 1959.

Their demands are righteous, the most important one being for an agreement on incentive which would increase the wages of the workers by \$.65-.85 per hour and bring wages to parity with those in the rest of basic steel.

(Several different national contracts are negotiated between the steel companies and the USWA—basic is the pacesetter.)

The iron ore miners are covered by the basic steel contract with the exception of the incentive. Other demands have to do with safety, particularly in the ore process where workers are highly susceptible to silicosis, or "gray lung," and with speedup and harassment. For example, this is so bad that in one local with 500 men there are over 1000 unresolved grievances!

Up Against ENA

This strike has assumed a significance, to the men of the Mesabi, workers in the rest of steel and the whole working class, which is even more important than the demands. For in uniting around their common demands in the face of attacks by their capitalist employers, and in uniting to fight for those demands with the strike weapon, they have come smack up against the courts, the companies, and sellout, bloated toad, labor misleaders, all of them holding a piece of paper in their hands called the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA).

The steel companies took the USWA to court when the International President, Lloyd McBride gave authorization for the strike. The companies maintained that the strike would be illegal, since under the ENA only local strikes over working conditions and not over "employee compensation" (i.e. wages) which "is a national contractual matter" are legal. When I. W. Abel signed the ENA in 1972, he bound the USWA by contract with the steel companies not to call a national strike at least until 1980. Local strikes over local issues were permissible, *provided* they were authorized by the International. The judge did not grant the injunction the companies wanted, but indicated he believed the strike would not be over local issues and would violate the no strike provisions of the ENA.

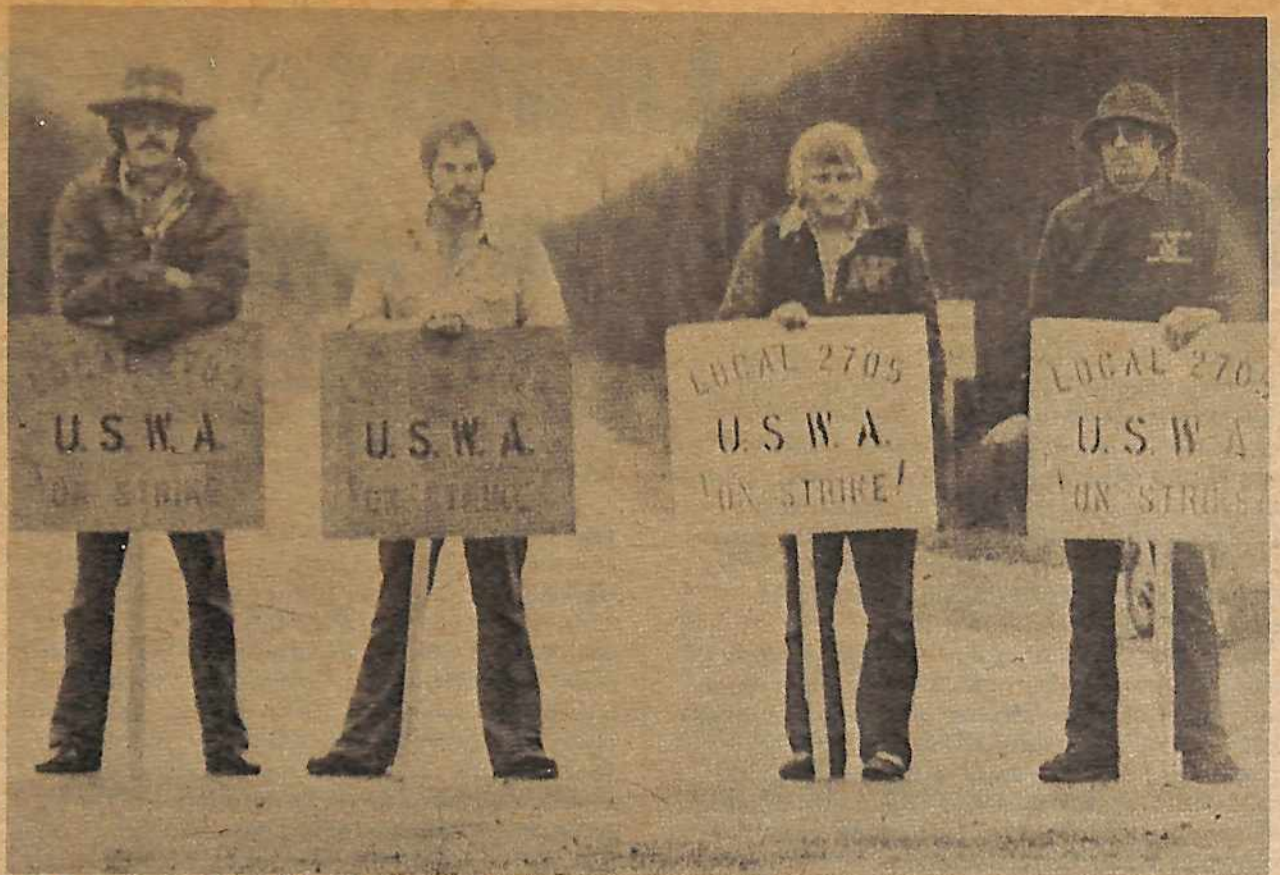
One might well ask, what is going on here? Judges refusing injunctions to companies but "indicating" the strike is illegal! Known sellouts like I. W. Abel's hand-picked successor, Lloyd McBride, granting strike authorization to a militant and determined rank and file! Something is fishy! Well, leopards don't change their spots and neither do labor sellouts or the courts help the workers fight the capitalists which they serve.

The workers of the Mesabi have a very proud history of struggle, especially in the great struggle for the CIO in the 1930s. After the Second World War, with the high grade ore depleted and the companies moving to South America where they could get the ore cheaper, towns along the iron range were left as ghost towns. The skeleton crews left went from one long layoff to another.

But with the development of taconite milling, work picked up in the area. Younger men came into the mines in the late '60s and into the '70s, many of them Vietnam veterans, angry at being used in an unjust war for profit, and angry over the treatment they, together with all the workers, receive from the employers.

In 1975 the local at Minnetac wildcatted over seniority for nine days. In last winter's elections for USWA president, Lloyd McBride won the overall election but he lost badly in basic steel. And workers on the Mesabi range voted against him 10-1. And the local presidents were among the large number who in an unprecedented action voted down the national basic steel contract offered to them in the first round by I. W. Abel. When these workers united their demands and voted to strike, Lloyd McBride knew they meant business. Failure to authorize the strike would have further isolated him from the rank and file in steel.

But there is more than one way to skin a cat, a fact



Iron miners in the Mesabi range have made it clear—they are tired of being ground down by the steel bosses. 15,000 are out and prepared for a tough strike.

known to all. In court, the USWA lawyers did not contest the legality of the strike, but put it straight up: "If an injunction is granted, USWA members will lose confidence in ENA's provision for local issue strikes and may turn against the ENA altogether." Gottsman, USWA attorney said, "It is the opinion of the union and its leadership that any injunction in this dispute probably will spell the end forever of the ENA in the steel industry."

Laying Groundwork

That is why the judge did not grant the injunction to the companies. But, by indicating the strike was illegal, he helped lay the groundwork for future company action.

The legality of the strike is not a settled question, and the companies are preparing to use this the first chance they get. They are now preparing a suit against the union. As they have always done, and will do as long as they are allowed to exist, these capitalists will use every means at their disposal, from the courts to the police to the army (like in the postal strike) to keep exploiting the workers and maintain their rule.

Even if the strike were to end soon, a tremendous victory has been won by the workers, just in mounting this strike. But in all likelihood it will not end soon. For one thing, the companies stockpile up to four months of ore, and ore can be bought other places, like South America. The companies will not be hit really hard until winter, when the Great Lakes and the rivers freeze up. One management official in the Mesabi who wanted to remain anonymous (from fear?)

Johnstown Pa.

Reopen the Mill, Rebuild the Town

"TO THE WORKING PEOPLE OF JOHNSTOWN:
"Brothers and sisters. We've been hit hard and we've lost a great deal. But if the flood alone could not destroy this area, Bethlehem Steel is making plans to finish the job. The flood took the lives of relatives and friends, wrecked thousands of our homes and washed away the few things we've worked a lifetime to buy. Now Bethlehem says much of the mill will never reopen. 4,000 jobs permanently lost and thousands more threatened. . . . They might as well sign the death certificate for this town."

The flood that swept through Johnstown, Pa. on July 20th and killed scores was not just a tragedy, it was a crime. Because the almighty god of maximum profits decreed that there's no money to be made in flood control and flood warning systems, the people of this town were forced to suffer their third major flood disaster in less than a century. Then, as the river's water receded, the people were hit again. Bethlehem Steel, whose giant steel works in the center of town symbolizes the company's place in the economy and the lives of the town's inhabitants, announced that due to flood damage, they were going to close down their Johnstown operation.

As it turned out, this threat to shut down the Johnstown mill was no more due to the flood than the flood was due to an "act of God," because Bethlehem had long had it in mind to close down the unprofitable parts

told a Chicago reporter, "The 116-day steel strike of 1959 had families in this area and elsewhere on their knees praying for it to end. A prolonged strike unfortunately [sic] may be the only way for either side in the dispute to prove its strength to the other as a new generation of mine workers flexes its muscles."

This struggle in the Mesabi has revealed how the ENA, the lack of the right to vote on the national contract and the rest of the set-up created by the USWA International leadership have shackled the workers, and how intolerable these shackles are in their fight against the companies. The USWA constitutional convention of 1978 will be a focus of the growing movement to get rid of these shackles. The fears of the USWA lawyer are partly right, because no matter what happens the ENA will be knocked down!

What the companies and their man McBride are counting on is that the workers will be unable to maintain their unity and determination in a long strike, that they can isolate the Mesabi workers from the rest of the steel workers with the ENA, which does not allow solidarity strikes, and by blaming every layoff on the strike.

There's just one thing missing from their analysis. The workers of the Mesabi can organize themselves and can withstand attacks by the company and the sellout top leaders, as they have begun to show by their actions so far. Furthermore, there is a tremendous reservoir of anger building up among steel workers, along with the rest of the workers in this country. If that anger were organized and led, the workers might upset the arrogant plans of these high and mighty bigshots. ■

of its Johnstown facility. Steelworkers and other workers in the area were outraged. On August 12, responding to a call by the *Steelworker* national rank and file newsletter and the Pittsburgh Area Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization, 300 workers jammed the Fire Hall situated just above the flood ravaged city to build the fight to "Reopen the Mill and Rebuild the City." They voted unanimously to organize a march against the layoffs.

On August 19, despite heavy pressure from United Steelworkers union officials and redbaiting in the press, 100 workers marched to the USWA offices to demand that the union take up this battle. When the union officials they confronted denounced the march as "all wrong," calling it "a splinter group" and urging the workers to "leave it to us, we're talking with the company," workers answered, "talking's all you ever do," "yeah you're talking with the company all right, just like you did when you sold us out on the contract." Then they marched on the offices of Bethlehem Steel, where they barged in and marched through the halls searching for the head man to tell him that they wouldn't accept the loss of any jobs at all at Bethlehem Steel.

As the leaflet by the *Steelworker* and the Organizing Committee quoted above went on to say, "While no one could have stopped the rain, we demand to know how many lives were lost because it was good for business to

Continued on page 17

Husmann Workers Hang Tough

Court, Hacks Go All Out to Bust Strike

The strike of 1500 members of Steelworkers Local 13889 against the Husmann Refrigeration plant near St. Louis, Missouri, continued to be an intense seesaw battle as it entered its fourth month. Enraged by the resistance of the Husmann workers and the growing support they are winning from their class brothers and sisters in the area, the company launched a new set of attacks on the strikers. Husmann relied heavily on the courts which sprang to their assistance in a breathtakingly blatant display of loyalty. In addition, the company had the objective assistance of the International leadership of the USWA, the very union they are trying to bust out of the plant, as the hacks moved coldly to crush the rank and file.

Husmann, a subsidiary of the giant Pet, Inc. conglomerate, had forced the strike in the first place with an offer so full of takeaways that, if accepted, the local would have been left no better equipped to beat back the company's attacks than a Cub Scout pack. As soon as the workers walked the company started working off-ice personnel and hiring scabs.

The local Organizing Committee (OC) for a National Workers Organization learned about the strike and decided to take up supporting it as a campaign, not only because of the militance of the workers, but also because there has been a wave of union busting in the area, including a push to pass a "right-to-work" law in the state. Members of the OC linked up with the strikers and helped give leadership to the strike while working to mobilize support among workers in the whole area. In July, the Husmann workers unanimously turned thumbs down on the company's "new offer," worse than the original one, when the International insisted on a vote. Mass pickets near the plant were set up in defiance of a court injunction and scabs caught a little dose of working class justice. (See articles in *Revolution*, July and August 1977)

Rallying Workers Support

As July drew to a close, the OC put its major effort into building a general workers' support rally for the strike at Pet headquarters on August 6. Although the local's strike committee refused to endorse it publicly, some of its members, like many active strikers, supported it. Scores of strikers, the great majority of whom had not joined the OC, attended meetings it called in a park to build for the rally. People grabbed up the 25,000 leaflets the Organizing Committee had prepared and circulated them at every major plant in the area. Strikers and OC members from other plants went to the meetings of other locals in the area, winning rank and file support and, in some cases, official endorsement of the St. Louis boycott of 9-0-5 liquor stores and other Pet subsidiaries.

People also made contact with a new battle that's shaping up in St. Louis, where the Overnight Trucking Company, which is a nonunion outfit and the eighth largest trucking firm in the U.S., is opening a local operation. The company, partly owned by U.S. Senator Robert Byrd of Virginia, operates mainly in "right-to-work" states—they were probably counting on a quick

victory in Missouri. But they weren't counting on St. Louis Teamsters Local 600 which slapped a 50 person informational picket line on the company and made clear that Overnight will be organized or it won't be permitted to operate. The teamsters at the picket enthusiastically declared they were backing the Husmann strike all the way.

Injunction Defied at Plant Gate

Under a great deal of pressure from the rank and file, the local's strike committee called a mass picket in defiance of the injunctions for the plant August 1. That morning 500 workers showed up but the local's committee members were not there to organize and lead the action. While OC members and other strikers tried to get an organized line established, the cops attacked. After some fighting, they arrested a hundred people, one of them a leading OC member, another a leader of the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee (UWOC) who has been working with the OC, and charged them all with violating the injunction.

At this point the USW International stepped in again. At a meeting of the strike committee on August 5, an International hack told them that if they didn't get the Organizing Committee away from the strike, the local would be put in receivership! All along the strike committee had been characterized by vacillation and internal struggle, and it took strong pressure from the rank and file to push the strike committee to take up the tactics the OC and active workers were putting forward to stop the scabs, strengthen the strike and spread support. Now the pressure was on from the other direction—and heavy.

This helped cut the turnout of Husmann strikers at the big rally at Pet headquarters the next day, August 6, but they still made up the bulk of the 200 workers who attended. Others included workers from Chrysler GM, Scullin Steel, Granite City Steel, American Steel, Cerro Copper, and members of the Ironworkers and the Teamsters. A number of them gave solidarity statements, like a guy from Chemtech Chemical, where the bosses had recently busted the Teamsters Union out. The secretary of Local 13889, who is not on the negotiating committee, was among the Husmann strikers who spoke. And the OC speaker called for redoubling efforts to spread support for and win the strike. The rally then marched, loud and proud, through downtown St. Louis to a 9-0-5 store. With workers picketing its entrances 200 strong, the place soon looked like a ghost town.

During the following week, the main focus changed to the upcoming trial and tensions grew as the strike committee tried to push the OC away and the rank and file objected. What was going on became clear as crystal on August 13, when the International held a meeting for the arrested strikers. Business Agent Buddy Rogers, flanked by two Steelworker lawyers, announced that anyone who hadn't been arrested and anyone who had but wasn't in the local had to clear out.

Splitting Tactics

One of the arrested supporters stood up and denounced this decision as an attempt to weaken support for the strike and split up the working class. The business agent replied that she was right. As Husmann workers rose to defend the OC members, Rogers said, "We don't give a damn what you think. If you don't want to use these lawyers, leave." With the trial two days later, the workers were caught in a bind. The OC members left to wait outside and, as they did, the workers yelled that a defense fund would be set up to make sure their legal expenses were covered.

The union lawyers then got up and said a deal had been worked out with the judge: everyone should plead guilty and they would get a year's probation, as a result of which they would have to stay away from picket lines, the 9-0-5 boycott and the plant itself for a year!

Privately, the hacks even told some of the workers that the International considered the strike to be lost and they wouldn't even get their jobs back. Whether this was just a ploy to start a pell-mell rush to sign a contract, any contract, is unclear, but it was more than obvious that the International was interested primarily in attacking the rank and file and not at all in winning the strike.

Kangaroo Court

The trial itself was unbelievable. The judge, Robert Lee Campbell, stood firmly in the great tradition of

American jurisprudence represented by men like Judge Julius Hoffman in the Chicago conspiracy trial and Judge Webster Thayer in the Sacco-Vanzetti frameup. Refusing to permit a jury trial, he appointed Husmann's lawyer as the special prosecutor for the case! When it became obvious that a sizable minority of the workers had decided to plead innocent and use the lawyer the OC had obtained, the judge changed the docket and announced that the OC and UWOC members would be tried first and separately, even though their charges were the same as everyone else's. A request for a continuance to prepare with the lawyer, who had just come into the case, was denied—the judge gave them an hour and a half to get ready!

Through the course of the trial the OC's lawyer repeatedly exposed the judge as a tool of the company. Two members of the strike committee and two strikers testified on the behalf of the OC and UWOC members. All this made little difference as the judge already had the verdicts typed up! When he came back from his recess, he had pencilled some changes on them which he blandly announced reflected late evidence in the hearing. He then sentenced one of them to five months in jail and the other to two months.

To cap his performance, the judge refused to set bond for an appeal—even though it was only a misdemeanor charge and the two had been out on their own recognizance. He explained, "We don't want people like this walking the streets," and had them taken off in handcuffs. Then he granted the rest of those pleading innocent a continuance until October 3.

The trial was first and foremost an attempt to split the OC away from the rank and file strikers, demoralizing and weakening the strikers, while at the same time crippling the OC.

The intensity of this attack and the International's wrecking, coupled with the vacillations of the local's leaders, have in fact broken the momentum the strike had gained earlier. But it has not broken the determination of the workers to beat the arrogant owners of Pet.

The strike has been a real school of class struggle for them, a school in which they are coming to know and develop their own strength. More than 40 of the arrested workers decided in a half hour meeting on the morning of their trial to defy the International's intimidation and plead innocent, using the lawyer the OC found. The workers who have joined the OC are coming to understand that they have to become organizers among their fellow strikers, to strengthen initiative and organization among the rank and file.

Things are already starting to heat back up. When the two OC leaders were released on appeal after a couple of days in the slam and the OC's intention to continue building the strike was clear, this helped turn the attack around and demonstrate that the courts were not all-powerful. The local AFL-CIO leadership showed they knew the strike was far from over in mid-August, when after months of stalling the Central Labor Council issued a statement of support for the strike, declared a boycott of Husmann products and announced it was considering a boycott of all Pet, Inc. products.

New Plans

New plans and mobilization are underway to give a big greeting from the working class of St. Louis to the stockholders of Pet, Inc. when they show up in the city for the monopoly's annual meeting August 29. And workers from Husmann and other shops are looking forward to Labor Day weekend in Chicago when they will have a chance to share their experience and draw on that of other workers from around the country to strengthen the strike and all the battles they face. ■

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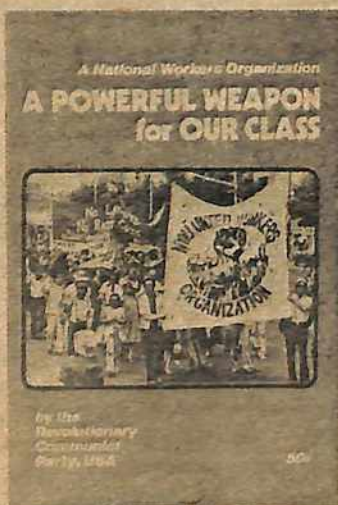
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A big step forward for workers nationwide will be taken in Chicago this Labor Day weekend. A national workers organization will be formed by participants from dozens of industries, dozens of cities across the country. This pamphlet explains the view of the RCP on this national workers organization—where it fits into the development of things today and in the future, and how it will become a vital force in developing the struggles of the working class and the American people.

New Treaty Keeps U.S. Grip on Canal

Carter's proposed new Panama Canal treaty and the charges that this treaty is a sellout being leveled by Ronald Reagan and others are two sides of the same imperialist coin. Both aim at keeping U.S. control over the canal. Carter's idea is that U.S. control can best be maintained and strengthened by making some concessions in secondary areas and appearing "reasonable." Carter's critics, trying to make him look as if he's "soft" and "giving up the canal," are puffing up a storm, saying the U.S. has already made too many concessions to too many countries around the world and this is just encouraging them to demand even more.

It is a reflection of the growing anti-imperialist struggles in Panama and worldwide that the U.S. has been forced to renegotiate the treaty at all. When the U.S. marines seized the Canal Zone where the canal was to be built, the American government wrote itself up a treaty giving itself the Canal Zone forever. Those were the days some of those criticizing the treaty openly long for. Former presidential speechwriter Patrick Buchanan, for instance, wrote in his syndicated column, "Sixty years ago, this country would have responded to hints of riot and sabotage not with negotiations. [Panamanian President] General Torrijos would have been fortunate to make it to the foothills or the jungle before his successor was sworn in—with a U.S. Marine holding the Bible."

Buchanan points out that Panama has only a few thousand troops, and unfavorably compares Carter with Teddy Roosevelt, who never hesitated to send in the Marines. His conclusion puts Panama in a broader context. "Carthage," he says, "is in full retreat before the rising military power of Rome"—in other words, that the U.S. is acting like an old and weak empire bowing before its younger rival, the Soviet social-imperialists, and giving in all across the world.

The Treaty

All this makes Carter look good by comparison, since Carter says that his treaty gives back the Canal to Panama and erases the "stain" of America's seizure of the Canal Zone from the record. But the truth is a little different, because the way the U.S. is giving a little in order to keep a lot shows that in fact the U.S. imperialists are fighting as hard as ever under present conditions to hang onto their empire, crush their rivals and keep hundreds of millions subjugated.

The new treaty calls for the U.S. to immediately turn over to Panama much of the Zone around the Canal, and the Canal itself by the year 2000. In the meantime the U.S. is to up its payments to Panama from a few paltry million a year to \$50 million a year, although even this represents only a small part of the Canal's total revenue. The treaty will also call for a lump sum payment to Panama. But it still puts off giving back the Canal for a generation and allows the 12,000 U.S. troops in the Canal Zone to stay until then, precisely the period when the U.S. sees world war looming before it. And even after the Canal reverts to Panama, the U.S. retains the right forever to send its ships through the Canal with no questions asked and to intervene militarily to "defend" the Canal. In practice, the U.S. would still control the Canal and the sovereignty of Panama as an independent country would still be limited by the U.S.

For all of the bluster of Carter's critics about how "we" shouldn't let a little country push "us" around, the fact is that Carter had little choice but to agree to a new treaty and to some concessions. In 1964, student demonstrators carrying a Panamanian flag marched into the Canal Zone where they were attacked by American MPs. The pitched battle that followed, leaving many dead on both sides, was the start of a broad and growing mass movement to demand that the U.S. give back the Canal—a movement so militant and powerful that



Panamanian people demonstrate against U.S. control of the canal and occupation of the Canal Zone.

one U.S. diplomat called it the potential beginning of "another Vietnam." Clearly this was not a situation that a few thousand Marines could deal with.

The government of General Omar Torrijos, who came to power in the context of this mass movement, promised the people one thing above all—that it would demand that the U.S. renegotiate the treaty it had forced Panama to sign in 1903. During the last few years China and most Third World countries have declared their support for this position. At the same time, the Soviet Union began sticking its own snout into the situation, demanding that the Canal be "internationalized"—in other words, that the U.S. be stripped of its control but that the Canal still not be given back to Panama. The U.S. ruling class has been worried that Torrijos' commercial relations and other flirtations with Cuba might develop into a full-scale love affair with the USSR if the U.S. didn't find a way to satisfy Panamanian demands at least somewhat.

To Whom Does the Canal Belong?

Today, according to the present treaty, the Canal and 500 square miles of territory that cut Panama squarely in half are a U.S. possession. Panamanians are forbidden unauthorized entry, although many are allowed to pass through sentries each day to work. The large and relatively luxurious American homes surrounded by shade trees and neat lawns in the Zone near Panama City are just across the hill from miles of crowded shantytowns where fresh water is a precious luxury and nothing grows but disease and hunger.

This is more than a sharp contrast—it is symbolic of the real cause and effect, because while the Canal Zone isn't the only chain on Panama and its people, as long as the U.S. runs the Canal and maintains its economic, political and military power in Panama in large part through running the Canal, Panamanians cannot control and develop their own country.

The seizure of Panama was an early and shameful crime committed by the monopoly capitalists who launched the U.S. as an imperialist power around the turn of the century. A way for ships to cross from the

Atlantic to the Pacific was considered vital to expanding the U.S. capitalists' share of world trade. In 1903, after the government of Colombia turned down a U.S. offer of \$10 million for the proposed site for the Canal, the U.S. engineered a "rebellion" in the sparsely populated area, set up the country of Panama there and sent U.S. warships to stop the Colombian troops. This is what the arch-reactionary California Senator Hayakawa meant, when he said, "It's our canal, we stole it fair and square."

Of course, to hear what Buchanan and his ilk have to say, you'd think that Teddy Roosevelt and some American engineers built the Canal all by themselves. "As for Panama, without Teddy and the Big Ditch, it would be nothing but a malaria-infested backwater province of Colombia," writes Buchanan. This is perfect capitalist logic—nothing can be done by anyone anywhere unless they are there to make a profit out of it.

But while Roosevelt and the bankers behind the building of the Canal sipped their mint juleps on the Potomac, workers brought in from all over the Caribbean dug out the mud and blasted the rock, dying at the rate of 500 a mile—25,000 in all (including the earlier French project)—due to diseases, the killing pace of the work and blasting procedures that left no time for safety. They were paid 10 cents an hour. The descendants of these men make up much of the population of Panama today. The rich American bankers and speculators and their mouthpieces like Teddy Roosevelt who took the credit were nothing but parasites who contributed not a drop of sweat or skill. Their descendants, the capitalists who rule this country today, have no right to claim the Canal and are the biggest obstacle to progress and independence in Panama.

The disagreements within the U.S. ruling class are not about whether to give back to Panama what rightly belongs to it, but rather over whether the U.S. can keep the Canal and its influence in Panama by making a few small concessions, or if, as one group of imperialist spokesmen claim, these concessions will only lead to greater and greater demands by the Panamanian people. It's not an argument for and against imperialism, but only a disagreement on how to carry out imperialist policy.

Both Carter and Reagan are right in one aspect of what they say. It's true, as Carter says, that the U.S. has no choice but to make some concessions in this treaty, and it's also true, as Reagan's forces say, that these moves won't mean the end of the matter but only set the terms for further battles against the U.S. in Panama. The interests of the American working class and the masses of people in this country lie on the side of the Panamanian people in this struggle. The U.S. must get out of Panama right now! ■

No Peace For South African Racists

The uprising is growing in South Africa against the racist, apartheid regime. In mid-August tens of thousands of youth in the black concentration camps around Pretoria, Cape Town and Johannesburg continued the boycott of schools that began on July 25. 20,000 students in Atteridgeville and Sausville and thousands more in Soweto have closed the schools in a massive protest against the Bantu education that teaches them nothing but to serve the white rulers.

Police and military have viciously attacked the large-scale demonstrations. On July 29, they murdered a teenage girl and arrested 183 demonstrators near Cape Town. In Soweto dogs were turned loose on the students. Regina Nhlapo, a 9 year old girl, was murdered. On August 1 another youth was killed and on August 4 the murderers took yet another life. Bantu education has become a symbol of the suppression and exploitation of Azania's 16 million blacks by the white ruling class.

In Cape Town blacks rose up in rebellion against the brutal efforts of the government to destroy the shantytown homes of 30,000 people. This was a move to force them into the "independent" Transkei Bantustan "country." This is the Vorster regime's plan: to shove the black majority into these so-called homelands, like Transkei, which occupy 13% of the country's land area where they will supposedly have "home rule." Those who are being evicted are being given a one way ticket to Transkei. But as bulldozers demolished over 3000 homes, blacks set fire to the area in protest.

But for every comrade who falls in the face of police guns, for everyone that dies in the racists' jails, hundreds more rise up to take their place. Every demonstration and protest that is teargassed, attacked with clubs and bullets, gives birth to even larger acts of protest and militant struggle. ■



Tens of thousands of laborers recruited in the West Indies built the Panama Canal, not Teddy Roosevelt.



Immigration authorities, the hated Migra, arrest a family in California fields. Immigrant workers have helped build the great wealth of the capitalists with back breaking labor. Millions of Mexicans have been driven across the border to escape the poverty and unemployment of their U.S. dominated country.

With Amnesty Like This...

New Plan Attacks 'Illegal' Workers

On August 4 President Carter announced his "amnesty plan" for illegal immigrants. Despite the fanfare, this plan is no amnesty at all for the great majority of the millions of immigrant workers in this country without papers. The capitalists face contradictions among themselves and for their class as a whole on the question of immigration. This overall plan will, they hope, increase their control over the influx of immigrants and the millions of "illegal" immigrants already here, and systematize and codify the superexploitation of these workers.

At heart, the Carter plan calls for the vast majority of those without papers working in the U.S. to become a kind of third-class citizens, allowed to stay in the U.S. as long as they make some boss rich with the threat of deportation still held over their heads.

The only thing that could remotely be considered amnesty in Carter's plan is that it would allow people who can *prove* that they've been living in the U.S. continuously since 1970—without having left the country for any time at all since then—to become legal residents and apply for citizenship in five years. According to the Immigration Department itself, probably no more than 50,000 of the many millions of "illegal" immigrants in this country would be able to qualify, since many have left to visit their families at least once in seven years and very few have that kind of complete documentation of their employment and residence.

Temporary Status

For everyone else here before January 1, 1977, the Carter plan calls for something called "temporary status." This means that if they report and register, "illegals" who can prove that they came here before January 1 of this year would be given permits to stay for five more years. They would not be allowed to get any of the federal social services—unemployment, food stamps, welfare, etc.—that the taxes deducted from their paychecks go for. In all likelihood they wouldn't get anything from local governments either. They could not bring their families here.

Like the Filipino immigrants brought to work in the fields and other industries in this country earlier in this century who were not allowed to bring their wives or to marry, huge numbers of immigrant workers would be cut off from family life. How convenient for the capitalists, who won't have to pay these workers enough to feed their families and raise a new generation of workers!

Today, workers without papers live under the constant threat of deportation, forced to take the worst jobs and wages, faced with being turned in if they stand up against the jackals who live off them, often unable to apply for food stamps or unemployment or even to go to the hospital for fear of coming to the attention of the authorities. Under Carter's plan they will continue to work under the same conditions, forced to live under the constant threat of their temporary residence permit being revoked and completely cut off from social services. What would be changed is that instead of this pro-

cess going on anarchistically, to the benefit of the capitalists to be sure but beyond the control of the capitalists' government, now all this would be nice and legal—and hopefully, according to Attorney General Griffin Bell, the government would then have the name and address of millions of "illegals" the Immigration Department hasn't been able to track down.

Carter also asked that Congress pass "restrictions" against those who hire workers without papers. Of course, this is not aimed at "punishing" employers. Only an employer who "knowingly" hires these workers could be fined, under Carter's plan, and this only if there are repeated violations. Of course, bosses have ways of "knowing" only what they want to know, especially when they need to hire a lot of help. But if a boss wants to harass anyone he chooses to suspect of being a foreigner, he can demand to see proof of their legal status. This would undoubtedly mean more harassment of Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other foreign-language speaking citizens, as well as of immigrants both with and without papers.

Deportations

To what extent is the government actually moving to get rid of those who've entered the U.S. "illegally" and stop more from getting in? Carter is spearheading some moves in this direction. His cabinet has proposed the hiring of 2000 more immigration cops and the creation of a single, overall government agency of immigration and border control. More, the efforts to get "aliens" to register and the temporary nature of the residence permits they would get would make future massive deportations that much easier.

But Carter's proposal is an overall program to deal

with the question of "illegal" immigration, balancing conflicting interests and views within the bourgeoisie, and not simply nor even primarily a plan to now empty the U.S. of "illegals." The U.S. capitalist class, which has thrived on the labor of immigrants historically and has greatly profited by keeping many of these "illegals," is now facing a situation where they are increasingly unable to profitably employ as many workers. At the same time the influx of workers from Mexico and other countries driven by poverty and unemployment to seek work in the U.S. has increased dramatically in recent years and shows no signs of abating.

Carter's plan is intended to restrict the number of "illegal" immigrants and helps lay the basis for stepped up deportations in the future. Still there are plenty of capitalists whose profits *today* depend largely upon "illegals," and so the plan does not aim at emptying the factories of these workers—at least at this time.

The deep economic crisis that underlies today's temporary and relative "recovery" has made some capitalists all the more desperate for low wage workers including "illegals" to keep down wages and working conditions, while for others, it has created so many unemployed workers that the need for employing "illegals"—and even recruiting them in Mexico to come to work in a particular plant or industry—is not as strong as it used to be. For instance, in Texas, Carter has given the go-ahead for a program to bus in workers from Mexico every day to pick onions and melons for \$2.30 an hour—where the going rate was \$2.83. In California, there is talk of bringing back the infamous Bracero program under which growers, in the 1950s and early '60s, brought in Mexican workers under contract to work in little better than slave labor conditions. On the other hand, in Colorado, there are so many people looking for work in the fields this year that pay for some crops is half of what the growers had to pay last year.

Using "Illegals" as Scapegoats

These varying economic interests are part of why the question of "illegals" has been so controversial within the bourgeoisie. Carter's proposed plan seems designed to satisfy both those capitalists who can't live without "illegals" and those who want to see the government move to establish more control over the situation. But far more importantly, the essence of the "controversy" in the newsmagazines and TV, with headlines like "Silent Invasion from Mexico," "Drowning in a Sea of Illegal Immigrants," and so on, has been to whip up hysteria about how the "illegals" are responsible for all sorts of social ills and especially for unemployment. This is a very big part of what Carter is up to.

The whole tone of Carter's public statements has been to raise the question of "amnesty" as though these people were guilty of some crime. His putting a five year time limit on those partially "amnestied" practically ensures that efforts will be made to create public opinion for mass deportations as 1982 rolls around, and leaves the door wide open to exactly such deportations if the bourgeoisie then deems it necessary.

Carter and other public officials make a big show of how concerned they are for the welfare of these "illegals." Hitting at this, some other reactionaries are making a big stink about how Carter should "care about Americans and American jobs" more than "illegals." All this is nothing but an attempt to catch the American people in a crossfire of reactionary lies. In fact Carter's "amnesty" plan is a plan to screw workers without papers even more and to try to use this to further drive down the wages and working conditions—and undermine the struggle—of the whole working class.

After all, there were about a million people deported last year, and that certainly didn't mean a million more jobs for citizens.

In the recent period the Immigration Service has been used mainly to keep "illegal" workers working "hard and scared" (as Carter's Immigration Chief put it) as well as assisting the employers by deporting workers

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THE CHICANO STRUGGLE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

by the Revolutionary Union



The Chicano Struggle And The Struggle for Socialism

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Tear Down the Boards Open the Doors Reopen the I-Hotel!

The attack came at 3 AM the morning of August 4. The San Francisco ruling class mounted a full-scale military operation to evict the tenants of the International Hotel. Four hundred police and sheriff's deputies, led by mounted storm troopers, complete with riot gear, a hook and ladder truck and power saws.

Twenty-five hundred demonstrators confronted them. The cops hesitated, faced with the strength of the defenders. Then all hell broke loose. Time after time the mounted police charged into the tightly packed lines, trying to break the human barricade. Wielding their lead filled clubs they slashed at people's heads and bodies. People fought back, grabbing the clubs, trying to pull the police off their horses. The line held—the horses withdrew. The cops formed a wedge, attacked and clubbed the line in front of the door.

Three more times they charged. People stood up to them. Finally the cops were able to split off about a third of the human barricade, forcing them up an adjoining street against police barricades. They hoped people would panic, scatter and run. But an organized, moving line formed. "Cops Are the Tools of the Rich Man's Rule," thundered thousands. The people in front of the door held, but once cops had gotten on the roof with their hook and ladder truck and through the windows by the fire escape, and put their saws and axes to work, the monitors jointly decided to pull back the barricade in front of the door where people were being severely beaten.

Once inside the building the sheriffs beat down the barricades erected in the lobby and hallways with sledgehammers and crowbars. Supporters wrestled with the sheriffs. When the halls were cleared deputy sheriffs began smashing into tenants' doors. Sheriff Hongisto, the sweet sounding scum who for months had proclaimed his sympathy for the tenants, personally wielded a sledgehammer, then peered in the rooms and sneered, "Good morning." One by one the tenants were forced into the street. Joe Bungayan defiantly stepped from his room, cussing out the three helmeted sheriffs confronting him. He walked out of the hotel, head held high.

They came in the early morning but the battle raged for almost four hours. By that time hundreds going by on their way to work saw what was happening. Shouts of anger were hurled at the cops. By 7 AM the police, sheriffs and goons of the Four Seas Corporation, owners of the hotel and adjoining buildings, had taken the hotel and were beginning to board it up.

Led by a 67 year old Chinese worker, a member of the Workers Committee to Fight for the I-Hotel and Victory Building (Workers Committee), people marched through Chinatown and rallied at St. Mary's Square. Wahat Tampao, a tenant, spoke. He was tearful at first, but soon he was shouting as his anger and outrage boiled to the surface. A Workers Committee speaker stepped up to speak. "Last night, we could see just what kind of a government we have, what kind of a mayor, sheriff, courts, laws we have. It's in the hands of the rich, for their profits." A seamstress and very active tenant was bitter and mad. "My husband told me before he died that I could come to America and never worry. Now I know what we face. You know, I was never interested in politics before, but now I'm going to study it real

hard, because this is just the beginning of our fight!"

Before August 4 the capitalists had tried everything short of massive military force to win this battle. Court orders, slanders and vicious attacks in their newspapers, police harassment, spying and assaults, phony promises to supply "alternate housing"—each attack had been met and counterattacked by the tenants and their supporters. Far from being able to isolate and discredit the struggle to defend the hotel, it had become a symbol of people's resistance to being driven into the ground for the sake of the capitalists' profits.

The capitalists were enraged by this bold defiance of their rights to run roughshod over the sacred authority of bourgeois private property. Even the *New York Times* editorialized that their buddies in San Francisco were letting things get out of hand and that an end had to be put to the International Hotel immediately. On August 2 the *San Francisco Chronicle* editorialized that now the time had come, and even suggested the day when the eviction attack should be mounted.

Political Power from Barrel of Gun

The military assault on the International Hotel is a vivid demonstration of the truth of Mao's statement that "political power comes out of the barrel of a gun." For years they tried to bury the struggle with pious statements, endless committees, legal "niceties," but when push came to shove, the capitalists did not hesitate to use their military power to enforce their property relations that allow them to rob the working class of the fruits of their labor, to oppress national minorities, and to drive people from their homes and communities.

The oppressive rule of the capitalists is enforced by their state, with its laws that protect and justify their social position and exploitation. At its heart is military power—the armed power of the capitalist class directed squarely against the working class and the masses of people. They try to dress it up with all the trappings of "democracy," equality and individual rights. But when this thin veneer peels off, as it did in the attack on the I-Hotel, when the crunch comes down, the veil comes off and its real essence is left: open force.

One reason the politicians did not move sooner was concern for their own careers. In the months before the eviction the local politicians had been hamstrung by a squabble among themselves, a ballot initiative that would have required the mayor and sheriff to stand for reelection immediately. None of them wanted to stick their necks out and try to move on the hotel during the campaign. But as soon as the campaign was over and the ballot initiative defeated, the mayor gave the go-ahead and the sheriff carried it out.

But more fundamentally, the bourgeoisie used two



After the eviction the defenders marched through Chinatown to nearby St. Mary's Square. Emotions ran high. People were gripped by a tremendous rage, yet proud of the defense they had put up and determined to fight on. Felix Ayson, a tenant of the hotel, spoke to the people: "They say it's the law. I believe it is a very good law and a very good law for the rich people, but it's a very bad law for the poor like me."

tactics, deceit and force, to try to defeat the hotel struggle. They preferred to try to accomplish their aims while keeping up their "democratic" mask. For a year they have tried to disarm the supporters and break the broadening support by a lot of talk, phony gestures and promises. When mass public pressure forced the city officials to sound sympathetic, the mayor floated a plan that would have required the tenants to cough up \$1.3 million to buy back the hotel. Although some supporters, including a few in leadership of the Tenants Association and the IHTA Support Committee, tended to fall for this and push a line of reliance on the courts, the mayor and Board of Supervisors, the Workers Committee immediately raised the slogan "The Mayor's Plan Is an Eviction Plan." It was nothing more than an effort to force the tenants into an impossible situation by a "reasonable sounding proposal" that would then justify eviction when its terms could not be met.

Sheriff Hongisto, who had legal responsibility for the actual eviction, tried to cloak himself in the mantle of the great defender of the hotel by his earlier failures to carry out court eviction orders, even doing five days in jail for contempt of court.

The most disgusting, but also most revealing, show was put on by Undersheriff James Denman who was in charge of the actual assault. On August 3, the eve of the eviction, he was the subject of an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in which he described the "great moral dilemma" it had caused him to have to evict the tenants and he described the battle for the hotel as part of a "class struggle."

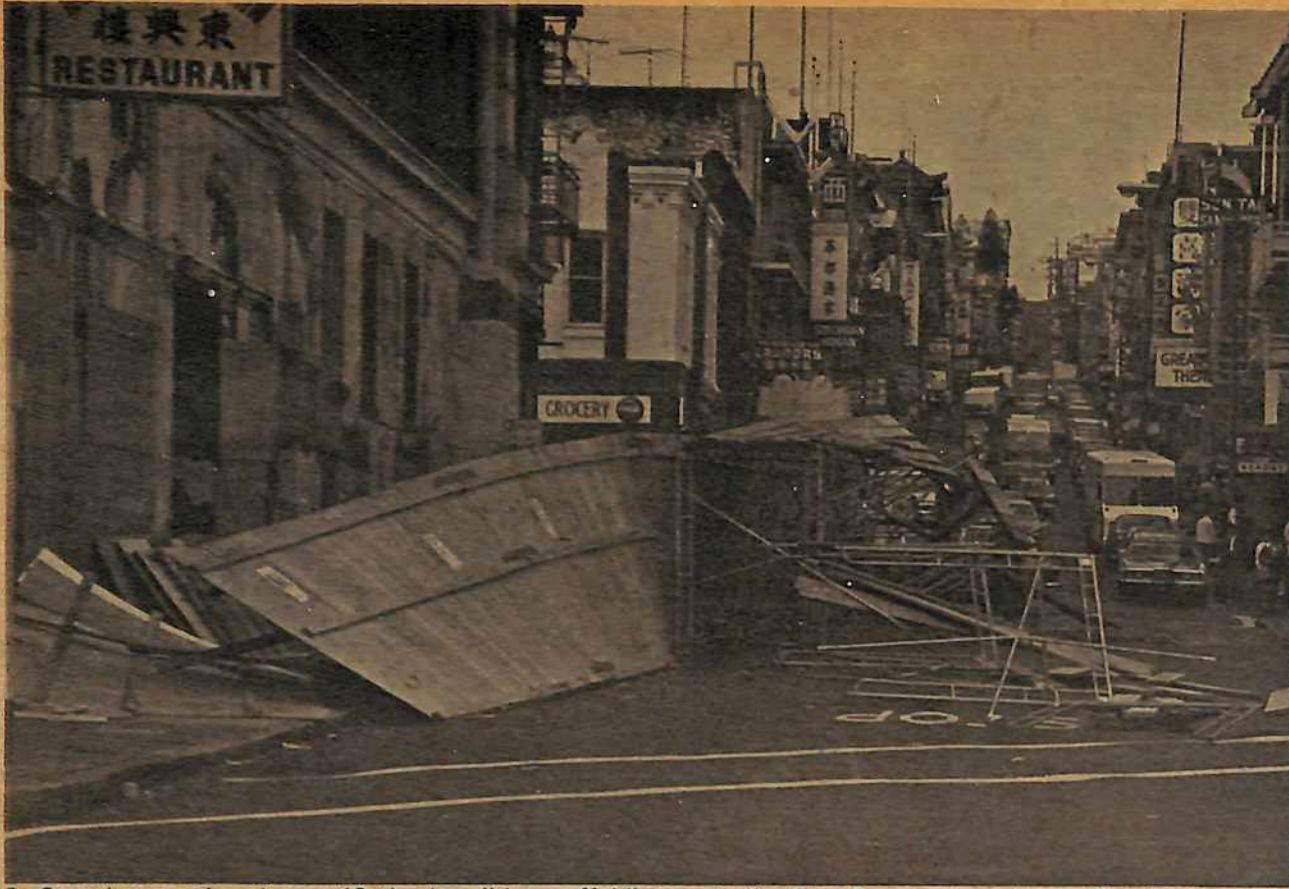
But when their marching orders came from the capitalists, Moscone dropped all his talk, gave the order to wheel out the cops and the guns and high tailed out of town for a Hawaiian vacation. Hongisto smiled broadly in the halls of the hotel while his deputies were cracking people's heads and throwing out the residents, and Denman made it very clear what side of the class struggle he was on. For when their other tactic was defeated and they were unable to diffuse the support for the I-Hotel, they fell back on their basic tactic, their real power: the armed force of the state.

Battle to Reopen Hotel

Politically and tactically the bourgeoisie wanted to finish off the eviction in one stroke, taking the outrage



Thousands formed a human barricade. The cops faced off. Moments later the assault began. Mounted police charged the defenders, clubs swinging. Then the helmeted cops formed a wedge and charged the defenders. It took them almost four hours to break through the defenders and clear out the hotel. For nine years the capitalists had tried to evict tenants from the hotel, to tear it down and make way for more profitable investment. In the end it was only the open use of the massive military power of their state that forced the tenants out.



On Saturday morning, August 13, the demolition scaffolding erected by Four Seas was torn down. Shortly afterwards hundreds of people massed across from the hotel, many with crowbars in hand. They were determined to show that the people meant to retake the hotel.

the eviction would cause, but getting it over quick and minimizing the lumps they would take by telling people that it was all over now and there was nothing to do but be resigned to it. This is why they issued a policy of no arrests to the cops, just giving them free rein to beat and brutalize people. They wanted no "loose ends" that could be a rallying point for further struggle.

Under these conditions direct and militant action around reopening the hotel was politically and tactically key. Confronted with the efforts to get the masses of people to mute their anger at the eviction with resignation to what the bourgeoisie wanted to be considered a finished battle, the Workers Committee along with the Bay Area United Workers Organization and the RCP raised the slogan "Tear Down the Boards! Open the Doors! Reopen the Hotel!"

It was essential to overcome any sense of resignation among the masses of people by building on the anger and the proven broad support and mobilize an offensive against the city, Four Seas and the rest of the capitalists to retake the hotel.

The Workers Committee called a rally in front of the hotel for Saturday, August 6 to do just that. Right at this point, however, when strong unity around a clear course of action was essential, various opportunists who had tried to masquerade as supporters of the hotel struggle moved to split and wreck. I Wor Kuen, a ragtag collection of old movement hacks who had hung around Chinatown for years, doing little to build the fight for the hotel and much to sabotage it, tried to storm the sound stage and disrupt the rally. They were soundly trashed, but did manage to create confusion among many of the 1000 people who had come to express their solidarity and get on with reopening the hotel.

Throughout the following week a campaign was mounted to force the reopening. On Monday supporters jammed a Board of Supervisors meeting and issued them an ultimatum. Reopen the hotel by 9 AM on Saturday morning, August 13 or the people would take matters into their own hands.

The Workers Committee, made up of both retired and younger Chinese and Filipino workers, tenants and community activists, had been formed over a year ago primarily to galvanize support in the Chinatown-Manilatown community. It had operated out of the Asian Community Center in the I-Hotel basement. Through its activity the Workers Committee had shown that there was a huge reservoir of support in the community, and now that the chips were down, increasing numbers of community residents have come forward to actively and openly make their stand in response to calls and actions by the Committee. More community-residents than ever before turned out at the rally on the 6th and on the one built in the following week.

Role of United Workers Organization

The Bay Area United Workers Organization (UWO), had taken the fight for the hotel into the factories and union halls, mobilizing many workers to join actively in the battle. Through this mobilization of the ranks, they had jammed many of the top union officials into taking a public stand that the city should buy and keep the hotel for low cost housing and community centers. Now the UWO worked intensively to rally workers in the shops of the San Francisco Bay Area to the campaign to reopen the hotel and the Saturday action.

UWO loudspeaker trucks rolled up in front of plant gates and union halls. UWO members carried a photo display depicting the struggle into the halls. At the laborers, longshore, warehouse and ship scalers union halls, the workers gave them the use of the dispatchers' mikes to speak. People were angry as hell about the eviction and UWO members saw how it had intensified hatred

for what this system does to people. But there was also a lot of sentiment that the battle had been lost.

Over the mikes UWO speakers said that the attack on the International Hotel was an attack by the same class of people who try to drive workers into the dirt every day on the job. This battle was far from over, they said. And people were glad to hear it. What kind of a system is it, UWO speakers asked, which will spend \$250,000 to evict retired workers from the I-Hotel, throw them into the street like so many pieces of used up machinery, and not spend one penny for low cost housing? In the last ten years 2600 low cost housing units have been demolished in San Francisco, many in Chinatown-Manilatown, and not one has been built.

Still there was plenty of struggle and controversy. One frequently heard the argument that, "Well, it's Four Seas' hotel and they have a right to their private property." In response workers from the UWO tried to show how the capitalists always try to equate their right to run roughshod over the working class with the efforts of working people to scrimp and save to buy a home or car. The defense of the I-Hotel was not an attack on the workers' right to own the few things they are able to get under this system, but resistance to the capitalists' "right" to grind us down.

In the course of uniting new support behind reopening the hotel, the UWO was also able to raise the building of a national workers organization as an organization that will be able to mobilize large numbers of workers to take up class battles like the International Hotel and other broad social issues that affect not only the working class but many others as well. Through its agitation and discussion new contacts were made with people who wanted to fight against the bosses in the plants, the sell-out union hacks and all the garbage the rulers try to heap on us.

As a result of the work done by the Workers Committee and the UWO, showing the real strength of the people in this battle and why the capitalists were afraid of further developments to retake the hotel, people began to rally behind the ultimatum issued to the Board of

Supervisors. At the Seamen's Hall workers put their names on the International Hotel banner that would fly defiantly on Saturday. Members of the UWO went to a meeting of the ILWU Local 10 executive board and got them to issue a statement denouncing the eviction and endorsing the demonstration. The Mail Handlers Union sent a telegram to the mayor attacking the eviction and the brutality of the cops.

Assault on Hotel

The morning of Saturday the 13th came. The hotel had not been reopened. Despite the bourgeoisie's not altogether unsuccessful attempts to get the masses of people to resign themselves to the eviction and efforts by various opportunists to wreck and split the unified support, 500 people rallied across the street from the hotel. Tenants from the 833 Kearny Street Hotel gave them the use of their electrical outlets for the sound system. Earlier in the morning the scaffolding around the hotel had been "mysteriously" pulled down. When police asked a nearby gas station manager who had done it, he told them he had nothing to say to them. As supporters gathered, four Chinese community residents—two members of the Workers Committee and two members of Youth In Action—got to the roof of the hotel. They unfurled a 22 foot banner down the front of the building, proclaiming "Reopen the Hotel! No Demolition! City and Four Seas Pay for All Damages! Fight for Low Cost Housing!"

As the four people on the roof moved to the fire escape and began addressing the crowd, the demonstrators moved quickly across the street, aiming for the front door with crowbars they had brought. A struggle ensued with the police tac squad and the people were eventually pushed back into the street. As the four descended to the ground in back of police lines the chant went up: "No Arrests! It Is Right to Fight Back!"

They were not able to reopen the hotel that day, but the struggle continues. One focus now is against the scab contractor who has been hired by Four Seas to demolish the building. It's been made very clear to him what will happen if he tries to lay one hand on the I-Hotel. In addition the UWO is raising money from fellow workers for the Workers Committee and for the tenants, who face a question of immediate survival. Not a single tenant accepted the city's "offer of alternate housing," which would have scattered them all over the area in expensive or rundown hotels.

Instead the tenants chose to stay together in one hotel, letting it be known that the I-Hotel tenants are still together and united, although this has meant staying in a completely rundown and dilapidated hotel where most rooms do not even have running water. The Four Seas goons inside the International Hotel have been systematically wrecking and tearing it apart room by room. And when the tenants returned the day after the eviction they found their belongings rifled and smashed and their valuables and money—for some their life savings—stolen by the cops and goons.

A leader in the International Hotel battle and Chinatown struggles, speaking for the RCP at the demonstration on Saturday the 13th, focused on the tremendous campaign being waged for the I-Hotel and low cost housing and community centers: "The unity built among the nationalities and the working class in the course of this long battle," she said, "can and will be built on to eventually put an end to Four Seas and the rest of their capitalist class." One thing for sure, these bloodsuckers are not going to be allowed to seize any quick victory. Through open military force they have won a round, but their actions have exposed them still more and the battle is far from over. ■



Defenders march through Chinatown following the August 13 demonstration. They had moved on the hotel, trying to rip down the boards. They were pushed back by the tactical squad. This was only one action in the campaign to regain the hotel and the fight for low cost housing and community centers.

Aimed at Whole Working Class

Welfare "Reform": Slave or Starve

On August 6, President Carter unveiled his long promised welfare "reform" program, calling it a "Program for Better Jobs and Income." In announcing the program, Carter piously expressed a desire to "transform the manner in which the federal government deals with the income needs of the poor." Carter's proposal will certainly live up to his desire if it becomes law. The present inadequate and degrading welfare system will be cut and transformed into a sharper knife in the backs of the poor and low income families and workers, forcing them to work for slave wages or be denied any assistance what ever. His welfare "reform" will hone a sharper weapon for the capitalists to bust up unions and to drive down the wages and conditions of the whole working class.

The problem and extent of welfare is itself a glaring indictment of the system of capitalism itself. The aged and disabled who have been ground down or crippled in the process of production and then tossed aside like useless refuse have no alternative. With childcare non-existent or costing half a paycheck, millions of single parents are unable to work to provide for their children. Furthermore, there are millions of workers who have never been able to find permanent work. Millions more work at such low wages that they live in a permanent state of pauperism. All these reasons and more account for the 30 million Americans who are presently on welfare.

The number of the unemployed and welfare recipients have been in long-term increase with the overall stagnation and crisis of the capitalist system. The increasing cost of paying benefits for this growing pool of poverty has helped compound the financial straits of many cities and states, even while the capitalists have constantly tried to cut and whittle these benefits down. Having cut federal unemployment benefits and with state unemployment benefits under attack everywhere while high unemployment remains, many more workers have been forced onto welfare or into lower paying jobs. To shift the blame from themselves and prepare the way for more cuts, the press and politicians long and loudly bemoan the plight of taxpayers and spread their lies that jobs really exist and that people don't really want to work, while they give wide publicity to scattered examples of welfare and unemployment fraud to paint everyone on unemployment or welfare as a lazy chiseler.

Two Pronged Attack

Carter's "Program for Better Jobs and Income" is an attempt to capitalize on this situation and the public opinion they have created to shift more of the burden of their crisis onto workers' backs. It would eliminate several existing programs such as food stamps and aid to families with dependent children, and would scrap the present welfare system entirely. The present welfare system is no great shakes by a long shot, but by consol-

idating several different programs into one and by tightening eligibility and restrictions, including the work for welfare provision, Carter's plan represents a coordinated two pronged attack aimed at slashing benefits, while at the same time legislating a permanent cheap labor pool for employers both in private industry and for local, state and federal government.

At the heart of this attack is the work for welfare plan—a system of forced labor at minimum wages. Two person families, single persons, childless couples and single parents with children over 14 would be required to look for any work in the public and private sector, and then if unsuccessful would have to accept a public service job from the government, or be cut off benefits. Single parents of children seven to fourteen would also be required to work part time or to accept full time jobs wherever childcare is available. Carter's stated aim is to get twice the number of welfare recipients working as there are now.

But where are these jobs going to come from? There are already "officially" over seven million people unemployed with millions more who aren't even counted in statistics. Many people on welfare are there because there was no work to begin with, or because their wages are so low that they qualify even while working. Forcing millions of welfare recipients to take jobs at minimal wages will only drive down wages further by increasing competition for the few jobs that do exist and will greatly assist employers and help them bust up unions. Employers will try to get off with paying minimum wages or to replace union workers with welfare recipients because those on welfare will be under the gun to accept whatever is offered.

To dress this up a bit and make it more tempting, Carter is offering a cash supplement to welfare recipients who accept these jobs. What this amounts to is a taxpayers' subsidy to minimum wage employers, making it possible for them to employ workers without paying them even close to a living wage.

The way this will probably work can already be seen in Milwaukee, where county officials have already been experimenting with work for welfare for some time. County workers there who were working union jobs at union wages were hit with a big layoff. People on welfare were told at the same time that they had to work in a special county program as custodians, street sweepers or the like, or get no aid. For this they were paid \$2 an hour to do the same work of laidoff county workers, right alongside of union workers.

Public Service Jobs

For those who still will not be able to find any jobs in private or public industry, Carter says he is going to create 1.4 million public service jobs, cleaning up the cities and roadsides, killing rats and the like—jobs with no real future. These jobs will pay the minimum wage with no income supplement from the federal government. Again these jobs could be used to replace laidoff local and state government workers and would not really be the creation of new positions. Further, the funding for these jobs is going to be created by phasing out over 725,000 jobs under the WIN and CETA programs. As Arnold Packer, Assistant Secretary of Labor, admitted, "it is likely that some who signed on for CETA jobs [which presently pay an average of \$7800 a year] who would be phased out in a year, would end up taking one of the new jobs at a lower wage" (around \$4800 a year).

All Carter's talk about putting people to work and providing a job for everyone who wants to work is a sham. Most people on welfare won't be able to work because of children and no childcare, or because of disability, age, etc., while many of those able to work undoubtedly won't be able to find jobs. For these, Carter has set up a guaranteed annual income which for a family of four would be pegged at 65% of the government defined poverty level.

While he spoke about welfare reform which would allow people to live with dignity, his income support doesn't even allow for any kind of existence let alone dignity. An aged, blind or disabled person would receive \$2500 a year. A family of four eligible for full income support would receive only \$4200 a year. How the hell do you raise a family of four on \$4200 a year? But even these figures are lowered by the fact that food stamps would be wiped out, and that the proposal doesn't provide for cost of living increases in benefits as inflation goes up.

In fact, this level of support is lower than 38 states now pay for welfare benefits. Although states are free to supplement federal benefits, in all likelihood the states will take advantage of the "reform" to cut overall bene-

fits. As the *Wall St. Journal* reported, "Administration officials aren't eager to disclose that their proposal decreases benefits for substantial numbers of welfare recipients." In addition the proposal would tighten eligibility for benefits, redefining all blood relatives living in a household as a family. For example, a mother with no income who had to move in with relatives wouldn't qualify if the income of the relatives exceeded welfare levels. Also the plan would increase the waiting period for eligibility for welfare for up to several months for someone who was fired or laid off even if they had no savings and no income.

While there is certain to be a good deal of haggling in Congress over such a sweeping "reform" as various politicians try to wipe out even more or strengthen their political position, the bourgeoisie is uniting around the main thrust of the program as a way to drive down wages while at the same time cutting welfare benefits. New York Mayor Beame's major complaint about the program was that it couldn't be implemented until almost 1981.

Urban League and PUSH

Various Black politicians and other opportunists who worked so hard to sell Carter during the presidential election and were standing increasingly exposed by the lack of anything to show for this support bent over backwards to find good things to say about the plan. They came out accepting the basic idea of the plan, while suggesting some changes. Vernon Jordan of the National Urban League, who recently attacked Carter for failing to fulfill his campaign promises to Blacks and the poor, termed the proposal "an encouraging one" that represented an "improvement over the present system." Likewise Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH, while hedging their bets with criticism, came out praising parts of the program.

Carter claims that his "Program for Better Jobs and Income" would "provide increased benefits and more sensitive treatment to those most in need." True, Mr. Carter, if you can call a knife in the back more sensitive treatment. As to the increased benefits, they come down all on the side of the capitalist class. ■

"Illegals"...

Continued from page 11

before layoffs or on payday. This will most likely remain the same under Carter's plan, at least for the present time.

The fact is that the government could not really stop workers from coming into this country "illegally" even if it wanted to. The U.S. and Mexico share 2000 miles of border. No matter how bad unemployment gets in the U.S., it will always be worse in Mexico so long as Mexico's economy is stunted by U.S. domination. Within the U.S., even if the capitalists as a whole decided on a policy of massive deportations (as they did during the Depression, when Mexicans and U.S. citizens of Mexican descent were hauled out of the country in boxcars), many capitalists would continue to employ "illegals." As long as some employers can hire "illegals" for less than other workers, cutthroat competition will force them to do so. The social forces that have created this situation—the terrible unemployment and hunger in Mexico and the capitalists' drive for profit—cannot be brought under control by the capitalists and their government no matter what they do.

Unity Needed

This is a further reason why the formula so often promoted by the bourgeois media—"eight million illegals and seven million unemployed means no unemployment if we just get rid of them"—is loser's logic for the American working class. "Illegals" or no, unemployment will continue and grow, and no matter what anybody would like, men and women who have no hope at all of finding work have no choice but to move to where their chances are bad but better. And as long as this situation exists, the capitalists will try to take advantage of it by using "illegals" as one of many means to try to hold down the wages of all workers, and to throw the blame for these conditions on the "illegals" themselves in order to confuse and divide the workers.

In order to turn this capitalist trick around—in order to move forward in its day-to-day fight against the capitalists in the factories and in its overall struggle against the capitalist class, the working class has no choice but to unite its ranks. Not only have immigrant workers poured their labor into building up the country, these workers have lent strength to the struggle of the U.S. proletariat and have been in the forefront of many battles. Raising the demand for equality for all working people in the U.S. regardless of where they were born and how they got here—and exposing the capitalists on this question—is an important part of building this unity. That is why it's necessary to oppose Carter's phony "amnesty" and all such attacks. ■



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Wants Palestine to Knuckle Under

Vance Ups U.S. Bid

For Mid East Control

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance toured the Middle East the first eleven days of August in the latest U.S. maneuver to strengthen its position in the area. As Vance began his trip, the media and other spokesmen for the U.S. imperialists said that a key goal of his discussion with Arab and Israeli heads of state would be to resolve the question of Palestinian representation at the Geneva peace talks, which Carter said he hoped could begin by October.

Since Carter's election the new angle in U.S. Middle East strategy has been the official recognition of the "Palestinian problem." Carter has even spoken of a "Palestinian homeland."

For the last 30 years the U.S. has refused to recognize any rights for the millions driven from Palestine by the Zionists. This sudden change of posture reflects the fact that the Palestinian liberation movement has resisted all efforts to crush their struggle and have made it a reality the imperialists have to deal with.

U.S. Strategy

The U.S. has pursued a strategy of using aggressive, expansionist Israel as its main base of operations in the Middle East and, more particularly, as a military threat to the front-line Arab states. But the demands of the Arab states for the return of territory occupied by Israel in the June 1967 war and their strength in pushing for this demand were dramatized in the 1973 Middle East war and Arab oil boycott. These events underscored for the U.S. imperialists that their interests could not be safeguarded merely by total military and political support for Israeli expansionism and aggression. Particularly under Nixon-Ford-Kissinger they tried to use the superpower-imposed no war-no peace situation to put themselves forward to the Arab states as the only ones able to force the Israelis to give up the occupied territory and arrange a Middle East settlement.

To a degree they have been successful, particularly in increasing their influence with Egypt and Syria at the expense of their superpower rival, the Soviet Union. Basically they have promised that in exchange for Arab recognition of Israel, they would get the Zionists to return the occupied territories. But again, the U.S. imperialists, as well as the Arab regimes of Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, have had to deal with the reality of the Palestinian liberation movement and the tremendous support it has among the masses of Arab people. Any "settlement" that did not take into consideration the demands of the Palestinians would not only be rejected by them, but would be extremely unpopular among the broad masses of Arabs and could easily lead

to popular revolt that would undermine or even overthrow some Arab regimes, particularly in Egypt, Syria and Jordan. In addition, a failure by the U.S. imperialists to gain the return of the Sinai to Egypt and the Golan Heights to Syria would open the door to new Soviet inroads in the area and would increase pressure on the already beleaguered Sadat regime in Egypt, a key pin in current U.S. maneuvers.

All this does not mean, of course, that the imperialists will recognize the Palestinian rights to retake their homeland stolen by the Zionist state. Nor does it necessarily mean that the U.S. imperialists will even accept a Palestinian mini-state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which is what the Arab regimes of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia are pushing for. Carter's "recognition" boils down to an attempt to get the Palestinians to accept the legitimacy of a Zionist state on the occupied territory of Palestine.

UN Resolution 242

During Vance's trip these efforts took the form of much discussion of UN resolution 242, passed by the Security Council in September 1967 after the June war. The heart of this resolution, which was also backed by the Soviet Union, as well as the U.S., was a call for an end to belligerency between Israel and the Arab states on the basis of the Arabs recognizing the sovereignty of Israel and Israel returning Arab lands occupied in the '67 war. The resolution completely denied the rights of the Palestinians. They were referred to as a "refugee problem."

Now Carter has announced that if the Palestinians will only accept 242, that is, accept the Zionist state, the U.S. will have no objections to "some form" of Palestinian representation at any conference set up to decide the terms of a Middle East agreement. He even went so far as to allow that the Palestinians could qualify their acceptance of 242 by saying that they thought they were more than a refugee problem!

During Vance's trip Carter was making very optimistic noises about progress towards "peace." But on Vance's last stop the Israelis blustered that they would never deal with the Palestinians, nor would they return all the occupied Arab territory, which Menahem Begin referred to as "liberated" Israeli land. In fact, the Zionists have stepped up their aggressive and expansionist acts. Immediately after Begin returned from Washington in July, he extended official status to Zionist settlements in the West Bank and announced that Israel would demand its "Biblical borders." And in a further step to assert Zionist permanence in occupied territory, in mid-

August he extended financial and government services as well as the "rights" of Israeli citizens to Arabs and Israelis living in the Sinai, Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This extension of "rights" to the Palestinians and other Arabs living in these areas is meaningless. Recent reports have documented Zionist brutalities and atrocities continuing against them. Their rights are so minimal that it is even illegal for the Arab mayors of towns in the occupied areas to hold joint meetings.

There is no question that the U.S. and their Zionist clients have differences over the interests they have to protect. The Zionists are primarily concerned with protecting and expanding their borders. The U.S. has to protect its control of Middle East oil and block any Soviet gains in influence. But overall the interests of U.S. and Israel coincide. In the past the U.S. has used the threat of unleashing Israeli military aggression to try to keep the Arab states in line. Now they are using the "hard-line" Zionist position to try to force greater concessions from the Arab governments. For example, the U.S. floated a proposal that would have recognized Jordanian "sovereignty" in the West Bank, while allowing part of it to be occupied by Israeli troops! And they put forward another that would give the Zionists "trusteeship" over the West Bank. Carter has firmly stated his position that Israel needs "defensible borders." Still, contradictions between the interests of the U.S. and Israel, and even inside the Zionist camp itself, are a thorn in the side of the U.S. imperialists' schemes.

The Soviets' Aims

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union scurries about, making a pretense of supporting the Palestinians and waiting for the U.S. to fall on its face. Like the U.S., the Soviets have opposed the Palestinians' demand and struggle to liberate Palestine. They have made clear their backing for the continued existence of the Zionist state while calling for the creation of a Palestinian mini-state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which they hope to use as a new Soviet base of operation in the Middle East. They are also pushing for the Geneva Conference, of which they are co-conveners with the U.S. They hope out of this to force a role in "guaranteeing" a Middle East agreement.

The Palestinian liberation movement faces difficult obstacles at the moment. They have been attacked militarily and politically by many of the Arab governments and encountered continual sabotage in their struggle from these regimes. Both superpowers support the continued existence of Israel. All of these forces are telling them to give up the struggle and accept whatever settlement is forced down their throats. Face political and military reality, you will never regain your homeland, they are told.

But the masses of Palestinian people will never accept this imperialist view of reality or accept anything less than the complete liberation of Palestine which is the only real settlement possible. ■

Horn...

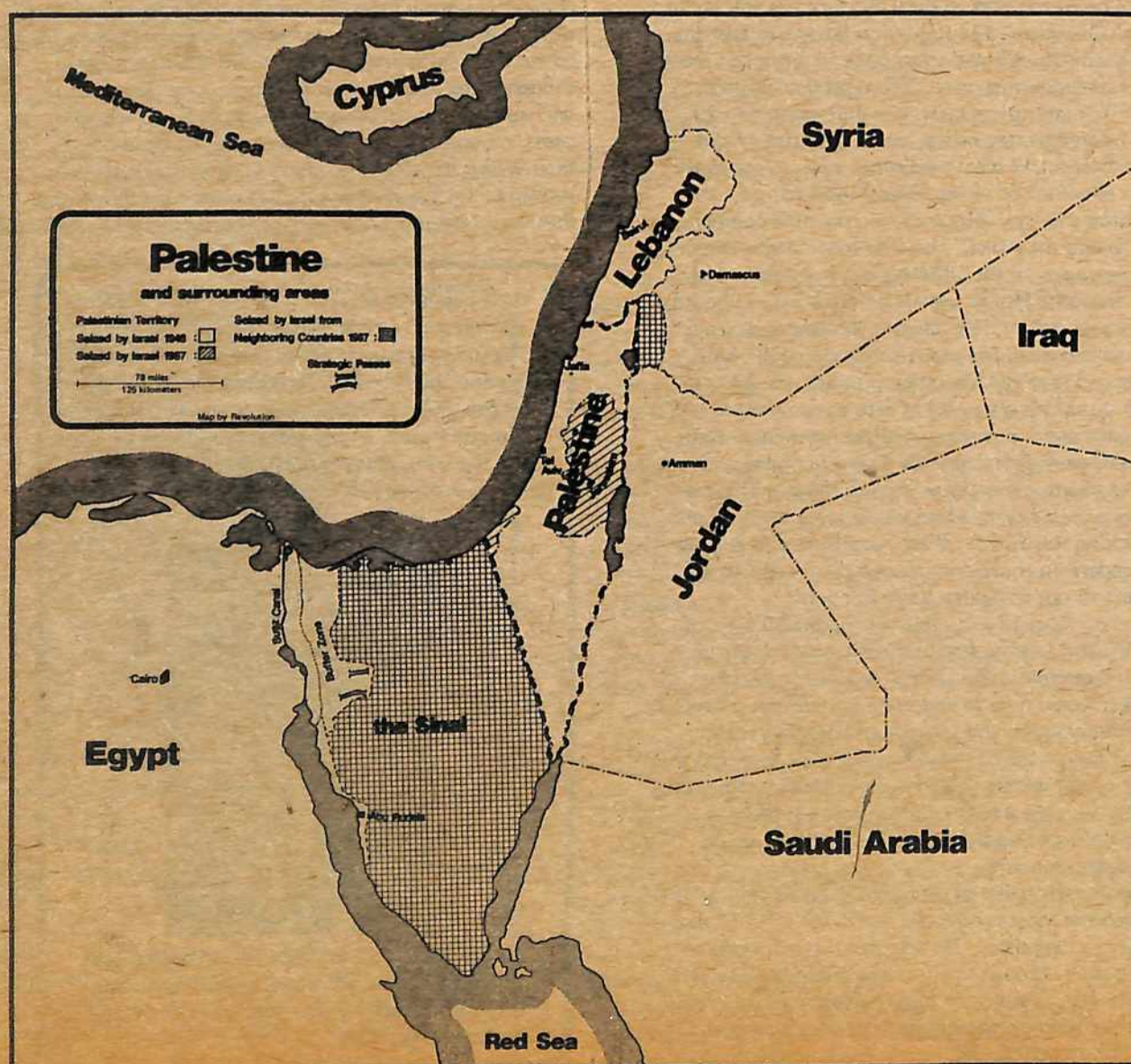
Continued from page 4
area.

The situation in the Horn of Africa is very complex. American-built F-5s from the air force of Soviet-backed Ethiopia swoop across the skies to strafe the Eritrean liberation fighters who fire back with Soviet-made AK-47s, probably transported into Eritrea with the aid of Sudan, using ammunition paid for by Saudi Arabia, both of whom are part of the pro-U.S. Arab bloc. Superpower switchabouts are dizzying.

A number of things, however, are very clear. The two superpowers are taking advantage of contradictions in the region between different bourgeois ruling groups. They are stirring these contradictions up, heightening tensions and using the conflict to step in with military aid and political support in order to gain a foothold for imperialist plunder. They even cynically try to take advantage of the struggles of the oppressed masses toward their own rulers in hopes of advancing their imperialist goals.

In this situation, it becomes all the more important for the masses to clearly target *both* superpowers as their enemy, as well as reactionary ruling classes. Although several countries in the area have made some moves in opposition to the superpowers, and these moves must be supported, the overall situation in the Horn of Africa increases the strong tendency of the ruling classes of those countries to line up with one or another superpower.

The possibility of wider war and still further intervention of the superpowers in the Horn of Africa is increasing daily. On the other side, the struggle of the masses for liberation and revolution is on the rise, winning big victories and advancing steadily. It is a situation that requires close attention from proletarian forces throughout the world, to expose and oppose the dangerous machinations of the U.S. and USSR and to support wholeheartedly the people's struggle. ■



Heat Wildcats Burn Auto Giants

Much of this information was obtained from the *Auto Workers United to Fight* newsletter—Ed.

During the summer heatwave, factories all over the Detroit area turned into ovens. But the corporations continued to push for production—nine, even ten hours a day. In auto plants "labor relations" set out to work—no heat passes, no one sent home through medical. They made it crystal clear that to them, workers were nothing but slaves, extensions of their machinery.

The result—at least three workers died in their factories, murdered by the companies' bloodthirsty drive for profit.

On Wednesday, July 6, Grant Schneider, 21 years old, died after working eight hours at the Dearborn Specialty Foundry in 140 degree heat. His body temperature was 108 degrees. Co-workers said he had been ill, but was refused a pass to medical.

After working in 130 degree heat, Gertie Bienek, a worker at GM Lavonia Trim, died of a stroke. She was not allowed to see a doctor and, with a history of hypertension and cancer, she was refused a medical pass twice.

On July 21, the temperature again reached above 95 degrees outdoors. James Wilfred, an older worker, fell off a fender line at the Dearborn Stamping Plant with a heart attack and died.

The next day hundreds of Stamping Plant workers wore black armbands passed out by Auto Workers United to Fight members to put Ford on notice that these deaths will only strengthen their resolve to fight these inhuman conditions.

Thousands resisted by just refusing to go in to work as temperatures began to soar above 90 degrees, knowing the factories would be literal hellholes of 110, 120, 130 or more degrees.

Most significant were the massive walkouts, where whole departments and whole plants left their jobs when the heat became unbearable. In Detroit, Chrysler's Dodge Truck, Lynch Road, Dodge Main, Trenton Engine, Mack Ave., Sterling Stamping, and a number of departments at the Ford Rouge complex and others all walk-

ed out. Many plants walked out more than once during the heatwave. Workers at the Ford Mahwah Plant in New Jersey and the Chrysler plant in St. Louis also walked. At GM's Linden, New Jersey plant, workers organized confrontations with management and union representatives, forcing an end to overtime and winning a reduced work day during the heatwave.

Hit hardest by the heat walkouts, Chrysler cracked down. At Lynch Road, three people were fired. At Dodge Truck, eleven were fired and over 400 written up. But the workers would not back down. Auto Workers United to Fight and other groups put out leaflets summing up the demands of the workers—Make the Bosses Sweat, No Firings, No Disciplines, Heat Passes on Demand.

At Lynch Road, a special union meeting was held after the firings. Jammed by the people's anger, local union officials said it was too hot to work. People marched from the meeting to the plant gate and shut it down for two shifts, demanding that the three fired workers be brought back to work.

At Dodge Truck, 300 workers came out to the July 19 union meeting, demanding a strike. "I can't do that," the local president said, furious. But by the end of the meeting he was forced to agree to set a strike vote for the following Monday. Then Friday he reneged on the vote, telling a worker that his bosses in the International would not allow it.

From their air conditioned offices, union officials declared that there was nothing the workers could do about the heat or the corporation's flagrant violations of the contract (refusal of heat passes, etc.) But Dodge Truck workers took matters into their own hands. The workers held a meeting of their own at the local hall. None of the local union officials would speak to the workers. The next day, the workers were locked out of their own local hall. About 60 workers went to the plant, set up picket lines at the gate and attempted to shut it down. Others joined them, and close to 200 workers stood in front of the plant and in the parking lot while Chrysler, taken by surprise, called out the police, the helicopters, and ran all of labor relations out to the gate with cameras. Though people were not organized and united enough to shut down the plant, Chrysler lost hours of production.

Most significant was a week long wildcat at Trenton Engine, Detroit. On Monday, August 8, Chrysler fired five workers and a chief steward for a heat walkout that had happened almost three weeks before. That afternoon the workers walked out.

The chief steward at the plant, Bob Paolucci, was fired because of "negative leadership" for not taking "positive steps" to force people back to work during the earlier heat walkout. 200 workers met at the local hall to map out action. The workers succeeded in winning sanction from the local. The strike dealt hard blows

Towards this end the Miners Right to Strike Committee, the Women's Committee of the Miners Committee and others are taking the first steps to organize relief for strikers in need. Since the courts have ruled the strike "legal," miners in W. Va. at least are able to get food stamps. By taking on this task it should be possible to strengthen the strike as well as beginning to learn how to do relief work well, which will be just as important for the contract battle.

As *Revolution* goes to press the strike is still going strong. On August 17 local union leaders in District 6 (southern Ohio) voted to go back to work but many miners stayed out anyway. The next day all three West Virginia districts met. Local presidents in 29 and 31 voted to stay out as long as District 17 did.

The District 17 meeting did not take a vote so the miners remained on strike. Many local officials are vacillating and they discussed two possible compromises to end the strike. The first scheme was to call for the removal of the UMWA's representative, Harry Huge, from the Health and Retirement Fund's board of directors and in effect change the demands from "no cuts" to a call for an investigation of the fund. The second involved having each miner pay \$30 per month out of his own pocket into a special fund to aid the regular fund in making medical payments. Both proposals were defeated as rank and file miners jammed into the meeting to keep an eye on things. This meeting was a vivid example that while some local officials are backing this strike, others—together with the district leadership—have only moved from open strike breakers to not-so-hidden back stabbers.

Also on Aug. 18 Gov. John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia, whose family has big coal mining interests, appealed to the UMWA leadership and the BCOA to begin now to negotiate the section of the contract on health and retirement benefits and to settle it before the contract expires. The fact that this enemy of the miners had to make such a statement is testimony to the power of the current battle and further proof that this fight is crucial to the struggle around the contract.

The present strike of the miners over benefit cuts has been the most protracted battle the miners have waged in a long time. The lessons of the struggle as it has passed through many stages are invaluable and are important lessons for other workers as well. This strike has been a great advance for coal miners and it is still being waged. ■

to Chrysler, quickly forcing several of their plants onto short days.

For four and a half days, hundreds of workers, old and young, all shifts, skilled and production, stood united in the picket lines, answering all the company's threats to go back to work with "Hell no, we won't go!" Their unity, militancy and determination struck a tremendous blow to the arrogant power of the auto bosses and was an inspiration to workers throughout Detroit.

Line Against "Outsiders"

AWUF was greeted by the Trenton workers with cheers when they came with signs expressing their support. But Paolucci asked them to leave, calling AWUF "outsiders" and the strike a "local issue." This narrow line of a few strikers could only hurt the strike. The issues of the strike were of vital concern to all auto workers and the experience and strength of workers throughout the city could only have helped the Trenton workers strengthen the degree of organization they had built and bolster their fight. Chrysler and the International were not about to keep it a local issue. They called in the police, the courts, brought in rats who planted horror stories of other wildcats, etc., to break the strike. When the International went all out to bust up the strike, Paolucci, under intense pressure, declared his "complete faith in the International" and urged people back to work. After all this the union officials were able to push through a vote to end the strike.

The strike showed that it is possible to break through the chains of "proper" union procedures, force some concessions from union leadership (like the temporary authorization of the strike by the local) and make real gains. The treachery of the UAW International leaders proved once again that in battles like this, the rank and file can not afford to relax its vigilance or to be caught off guard for a moment. The main issues of the wildcat—the inhuman conditions, the right of the union leaders to stand with the rank and file, and in the final analysis the right to strike to defend workers lives and livelihood—made it a front line battle for auto workers and significant to the whole working class.

Struggle in Auto Sharpening

This heat wave marked the first massive heat walkouts in the auto industry in three years. At Chrysler plants, especially in the Detroit area, heat walkouts have been sort of a tradition in years before. But the massive layoffs of '74 and '75 made it much harder to walk, since jobs were at such a premium. But it's not just the "recovery" in the auto industry, nor the fact that the heat wave was the longest and hottest in years. The massiveness of these walkouts is also a reflection of the overall growing resistance to the companies and union sellouts since the '76 contract fight. Off the national contract fight, there were dozens of local contract battles and a number of significant wildcats in the spring. Already, in another Detroit Chrysler plant, there was another wildcat, unrelated to the heat, which forced the company to rehire a skilled trades apprentice unjustly fired.

Chrysler especially is running scared. While close to 50 workers in all were originally fired around the country for the heat walkouts and many more were disciplined, in many cases Chrysler has been forced to back down. At Dodge Truck, nine of the eleven workers fired for the heat walkouts have gotten their jobs back, though some of them won't be back until September and none of them have gotten back pay. As we go to press, no one as far as we know has been fired for the later walkouts. The auto giants will try to crush the movement any way they can, but right now they know that further firings could very well bring on more strikes. ■

Miners...

Continued from page 5

ership. Pretending to be on the side of the miners and against the employers' attack this "cutbacks fact sheet" "militantly" takes on the companies' and UMWA leadership's claim that it is the wildcats that are to blame for the lost benefits (lost production equals lost royalties hence cut benefits). But the leaflet says, in an attack on the entire strike weapon, "the operators lose little because of strikes due to their ability to produce coal on Saturdays and an additional shift if the situation mandates." But if strikes don't hurt the operators, then why are they so desperate to stop these wildcats? If the pig isn't stuck, then why is it squealing?

The other side of this battle is illustrated by a miner's speech at one of the rank and file meetings held in District 17 to continue the strike. "Brothers and sisters, my daddy was a coal miner for 46 years and all my brothers are miners. I say if we go back to work now we're fools. If we let the operators get away with these cuts and using the funds to blackmail us with accepting anything they dish up, we're giving them a club over our heads."

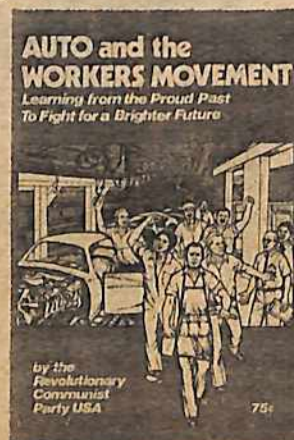
Successfully waging this battle, building the organized strength of the rank and file, and in the process exposing both the employers and those union misleaders who would sell out the interests of the workers, will strengthen miners for the contract battle. Taking these cuts now and turning it over to the UMWA leadership to negotiate with the BCOA in December would be little short of surrender on the cuts and surrender of the initiative of the rank and file—the only source of strength in these battles.

As one miner said: "We're going to make sacrifices no matter what we do, either by striking now or by letting the companies get away with these cuts. So I say, let's make sacrifices that are going to put us in a stronger position rather than sacrifices where we lay down and let them walk all over us." But it is true that if the sacrifices being made in this strike are not understood and some efforts made to lessen them then many miners will not be in a good position to wage further battles this winter.

This pamphlet lays out a battle plan for auto workers and points to the method for building today's struggle against the auto companies and their class and breaking the handcuffs of the union officials. It contains an exciting concise history of the great struggles to unionize the auto industry, including an analysis of the role of the old Communist Party, USA.

44 pages

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AUTO AND THE WORKERS MOVEMENT
Learning from the Proud Past to Fight for a Brighter Future, by the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.



How much must the people of Johnstown suffer at the hands of the capitalists? Wiped out by flood due to inadequate flood control and warning, now Bethlehem Steel, the area's largest employer threatens to shut down.

Rebuild ...

Continued from page 8

peddle the lie that Johnstown was "flood-free"? How much was destroyed simply because there was no profit in setting up a flood warning system, or cleaning the rivers and storm sewers, or inspecting the dams?"

At first the Army Corps of Engineers which has responsibility for flood control blamed the whole thing on the fact that "nobody can control Mother Nature." Then it came out that some things could have been done to control "Mother Nature," such as replacing dirt dams with concrete and dredging out and deepening the river. Even if there had been no more than a flood warning system, many of those who were swept away in their

beds could have been woken up in time to save themselves. Why wasn't any of this done? Well, explained the Army, because it was simply "too expensive."

For Bethlehem Steel, it was also a question of lives and jobs being just too expensive to their profits. Soon it was widely known that in fact the mill hadn't been destroyed, and that tax write-offs, insurance claims and government aid would cover losses. Then Bethlehem gave another reason why the mill had to shut down—the Environmental Protection Agency had given orders to cut down on pollution, and the company just couldn't meet the new standards in this old plant. This excuse, too, didn't last long, because the EPA quickly gave them a few years delay. Finally, Beth came up with its final excuse—that it would have to close some sections of the mill because of the competition from steel imported from abroad.

You'd have to turn to the business section of the newspapers to find a hint of the real story. "By eliminating these marginal facilities and the costs associated with operating them," Beth Chairman Lewis W. Foy explained August 19, "We will be able to concentrate our energies and resources on the more profitable opportunities available to us." In other words, much of the mill is too old to be run at an adequate profit for Beth, which instead of reopening these departments now plans to put its money elsewhere where there are more bucks to be made.

This line—that the problems steel workers face are due to foreign imported steel—is something steel workers have had an earful of across the country. As steel production drops below the level of ten years ago and steel workers from the East and Midwest are hit by layoffs and shutdowns in many mills and shops, and a few whole plants have even been closed down, the company and the union hacks have been pushing this line even harder. What should American workers do to save their jobs? The company and the union have the same answer: "productivity"—in other words, work harder and don't ask for more money. This blackmail has often taken an open form. Two years ago Beth threatened to shut down some steel fabrication plants in Pennsylvania if the workers wouldn't accept a pay cut.

When Johnstown steel workers went to see union officials about saving their jobs, all they heard were reasons why they shouldn't take any action at all because it was all the fault of "foreign steel" and what could the union do but cooperate with the company against it? But the workers had seen enough in the industry to be able to sum up that this line meant nothing but unemployment

for them—at a time when many had already lost everything they had in the flood.

The company began talking about how it was "saving" jobs for Johnstown because it would only lay off 3800 of the plant's 11,500 workers right now, although 3000 more would probably go within a few years. The city officials and the Steelworkers Union officials began to sing the same tune: Beth was saving jobs, not eliminating them. How could the workers stand for the line that called upon them to smile gratefully as they saw their whole lives' work and their futures lost forever?

When the *Steelworker* and the Organizing Committee began to show who was really to blame and point the way to putting up a fight against these layoffs, it was like a breath of fresh air.

August 19 March

Organizing the August 19 march was a real battle. International union leaders and local officials wrote a letter to the newspaper attacking the August 12 meeting of 300 workers that decided upon the march as "a small splinter group," and proceeded to line up with the company's propaganda that the problem was imported steel, not Beth. Lower level officials were warned not to support it. When workers raised money and tried to take out an ad in the paper telling the truth about the matter, the newspaper refused to print it. The whole local media began to tear into the planned march.

This obviously did have an effect, since the march turned out to be smaller than the meeting that had called for it, but nevertheless, the march had a strong and positive effect. It put out clearly that there was militant organized resistance to Beth.

Along with Beth workers and others from the area marched steel workers from Pittsburgh, from elsewhere in Pennsylvania and from Beth Steel's Sparrows Point, Maryland and Lackawanna, N.Y. mills, and a contingent from the Miners' Right to Strike Committee.

This broad participation was living proof of the fight to save the jobs at Beth Steel in Johnstown as a part of the struggle against layoffs and shutdowns throughout the industry and the country. These layoffs and shutdowns are common—what is uncommon is strong struggle against them. As a speaker pointed out at the closing rally of the march, there is much to be done yet in Johnstown. The struggle to keep all the jobs at the mill has to be taken loud and clear to Beth, to the city government, built in the union locals, and taken out to steel workers across the country. ■

Kent ...

Continued from page 2

if they tried to go ahead with it.

The OC speaker said that when massive protests and the murders at KSU and Jackson State occurred in 1970, the reactionary voices of the George Meanys and Peter Brennans, wholeheartedly supporting the imperialists' war and efforts to crush resistance to it, were trumpeted as speaking for the working class, though millions of workers opposed the war and these attacks. Today, true voices of the working class are beginning to be organized and heard and will make themselves felt in support of the students at Kent State.

The press conference received wide coverage and forced a quick defensive reaction from various labor hacks in the area. The head of the UAW Community Action Program (CAP) in Northeast Ohio made his own press statement and came out for construction of the gym on the site of the murders, which he squirmed to present as "honoring the students."

The Tactics of the Enemy

The growing struggle at Kent has made it difficult for the ruling class to put it down and has led to some fissures in the enemy's ranks. Judges, senators and even White House aides have wondered if moving the gym would not be wiser than building it and fomenting even greater resistance. In the middle of all the current battles the Secretary of the Interior even announced that an eight month study would begin to determine whether or not the May 4 site should be declared a national historic landmark.

Other ruling class forces, including most of the KSU administration and Board of Trustees, say the gym must be built, because if the students win, it will go to their heads. KSU vice-president Sneider put it this way: "The issue is, who runs this university. If the gym is moved by mob rule, then you can expect further protests in the fall."

Those capitalists who say the gym site should perhaps be moved are trying to use this tactic to diffuse and defeat the struggle. Repeated efforts have been made to get the Coalition members to rely on the courts and to back off with phony promises of compromise. The RSB and other advanced forces in the May 4th Coalition have argued against tendencies to go along with this, saying that the only way a



Demonstration at the inauguration of Ohio Governor Rhodes in 1975. For seven years the capitalists and their politicians have tried to bury the memory of the Kent State murders. They have not succeeded. The struggle to see those behind the murders brought to justice has gone on for years and new uprisings have blocked efforts to build a gym on the site of the murders on the KSU campus.

victory could be won was by continuing to wage struggle.

At a point in late July when bulldozing had begun, and when 27 persons including many leaders were in jail, there was a feeling among some of hopelessness and that the enemy had the upper hand. The RSB and other advanced forces proposed retaking the hill, explaining that the purpose of the heavy police repression was to hit hard, squash the struggle fast and get the students to see the battle as lost. What was called for, they said, was a counterattack that showed that neither the police, arrests or injunctions could stop the struggle. Events proved them correct.

Aug. 17—The federal court order against gym construction is lifted. The coalition meets and prepares to block the bulldozers. An appeal of the decision is made in court.

Aug. 18—While coalition members are on the hill setting up their picket lines the judge backs down, saying the restraining order would become official only after Appeals Court decision, expected before Aug. 25. That evening when Coalition members went to a local tavern to celebrate, police provocateurs set up a trap. Five cop cars wait outside while agent-provocateurs smash a six-pack to signal the cops, then start a fight with Coalition members. Five stu-

dents are arrested, charged with felony, aggravated rioting, among other things.

Aug. 19—A picket is held outside the courthouse. People march into the courtroom, fists raised, chanting "Frame-ups can't stop us—Free the 5." Cumulative bail \$30,000. It has to be the whole amount—in cash. Word spread rapidly and within an hour of the arraignment the money was raised and the five were out of jail. A tremendous demonstration of the broad support for the struggle.

The battle at Kent State has politicized ever larger numbers of students, as the ruling class has exposed itself more and more. Developments in the struggle have been summed up in mass meetings of the Coalition, discussing and struggling over the road forward. Coming off the experience of their struggle more students at Kent have come forward to support and assist in building for the founding convention of the young communist organization set for October 22-24 on the Kent State campus—a fitting site and a militant setting for this convention.

The lessons that have been learned and spread in the Kent State battle have enabled the May 4th Coalition to carry the struggle on and will certainly help it continue to hold high the spirit of Kent and Jackson State and continue the struggle to block the gym. ■

Oppression...

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basis and only exceptionally a part of organized, class conscious activities.

In the Black liberation struggle it was mainly youth, large numbers of whom were from working class families yet still lacking experience in collective labor and collective struggle, who participated. In addition students, professionals, small businessmen, church leaders and people in government programs and agencies all played a significant role. As in the antiwar movement, the lack of a strong working class "pole" within the Black liberation struggle made it easier for wrong and harmful tendencies to arise and more difficult to combat them.

A big tendency arose which saw white people, especially white workers, as the enemy of Blacks. Other views developed which declared the working class, Black and white, to be bought off and on the enemy side. Such views narrowed the base of support for that movement. And without the working class being in a position to clearly point a direction forward for the struggle, many were easily taken in by various schemes promoted by the capitalist enemy to divert the struggle from the real target—themselves.

This lack of a working class presence in the struggle made it easier for the capitalists to temporarily set back the struggle of Black people when they unleashed a vicious wave of murders and repression on the one hand, and stepped up their efforts to buy off a section of the leadership on the other.

Today's Social Battles

It is not only in the massive movement of the '60s that the need for the working class to take up and lead the fight against all oppression becomes clear. It also is borne out constantly in the numerous smaller struggles that continually erupt. In the neighborhoods, for example, struggle breaks out constantly around such questions as schools, housing, police repression, etc. These struggles bring forward people from different walks of life and usually quite a few workers.

But at the present time most of these types of battles take place without a clear, organized working class presence, and as a result are greatly weakened. If, for example, people are organized on the basis of being property owners it is very common for the struggles to be led down reformist and dead-end alleys—appealing to banks and the city governments, or even directing the struggle against another section of the masses. In these struggles, too, what is needed is for the working class to fight under its own banner while uniting with all others who are stepped on by the capitalist system, and clearly point out who the enemy is and how to move the struggle forward.

When the working class is able to enter into these types of battles, and especially when the factories themselves become centers of struggle and strength around these questions, it not only adds more power and discipline to the fights themselves, but it greatly encourages all the other forces in motion who can readily recognize the strength of the working class.

As stressed earlier, the working class uniting to lead the struggle against all oppression is not the same as the simple participation of workers in these struggles. Individual workers are also susceptible to following wrong lines in the course of the struggles. But whereas the social position of, for instance, the petty bourgeoisie—with a certain "stake" in maintaining their position in society above the working class—makes them susceptible to various reformist and misdirected schemes, the position of the working class in society, having class interests opposite all of the evils of capitalism, means that the masses of workers can and will be won to the most persistent struggle against the capitalist enemy. A key task of the Party of the working class is, by applying the mass line, to arm the workers with an understanding of their class interests for only on this basis will it be possible for the working class to fight under its own banner and play its role as the leader in the fight against all oppression.

Key to Advancing Workers Movement

The Party does not raise the slogan "Workers Unite to Lead the Fight Against All Oppression" simply because the various struggles in society require that the working class take them up if they are to grow in strength and deal sharp blows to the class enemy. For it is equally true that for the working class to develop its own movement in the direction of revolution it must enter into every arena of struggle against the capitalist enemy.

For the working class to escape from its condition as wage slaves requires a political revolution—capturing state power by the working class and masses of people—and constructing a whole new type of society in which all oppression and exploitation will be eliminated and class distinctions themselves will be knocked down step by step.

In order for the working class to carry out this immense change requires that workers themselves come to see that such a revolution is necessary and that their class alone is capable of taking society into its own hands and transforming it. It is also necessary that the vast majority of the oppressed and exploited, from various classes and social groupings, also come to recognize that working class revolution alone will enable society to eliminate the innumerable abuses of capitalism and move society ahead.

The principal way that the workers come to see the responsibility that lies on their class is through repeated experience in taking up all of the major political and social questions in society. In the course of taking up the fight against every manifestation of oppression, workers come to see the positive and negative features of every other strata in society and why the working class alone is capable of seeing the struggle through to victory.

Of course none of this happens automatically or spontaneously. The working class must enter into all the battles against oppression in an organized, conscious way. In the final analysis the task of leading workers to fight oppression on all fronts falls to the Party, which is armed with a scientific understanding of where the struggle of the working class inevitably is heading. And the Party is the key vehicle through which the line and policies of the working class are brought forward to other sections of the masses in struggle. But other forms of working class organization also play a critical role in this process.

Presently the attention of the most conscious fighters for the working class is centered on the critical task of building a national workers organization. This organization, when formed, will have as its task organizing the strength of the working class around the most crucial questions that face it.

Because the working class is attacked on many fronts the national workers organization will be fighting back on many fronts. Not only will the organization be rallying workers from different industries and around the country to mobilize behind key strikes and other similar battles workers in a given industry or factory are waging, it will also take up other issues which take place out of the confines of the plants and mills and affect broader sections of society.

Through this process of taking up key battles confronting the workers on many fronts more and more workers will come to see the necessity of workers uniting to take the lead in the fight against all oppression. The sense that, as Lenin put it, "the same dark forces" who keep the workers in wage slavery are responsible for every ill in society will grow stronger. The numbers of workers actively involved in the national workers organization will tend to vary, with many more joining in when the struggle is at a high point in their shop or industry, or when the workers organization is taking up a campaign that they feel particularly strong about.

But even as the number of most active members of the national workers organization may temporarily drop off during periods between sharp battles, it will precisely be those workers who come to see the protracted nature of the workers struggle and the necessity to fight on all fronts who will remain an active core in plants and mills and be able to galvanize broader numbers as the struggle once again heats up.

All of this will happen not simply because some people wish it to be so, but because it corresponds with real life—that the working class is under attack on many

fronts in society and that on every major political and social question, it has interests that are opposite the interests of the exploiters. Because of all this the national workers organization will be a key form in which the working class will enter the struggle against all oppression around its own interests.

This means, in part, joining together with other people and forces that are in motion around key battles, as, for example, the United Workers Organization in the San Francisco Bay Area has done around the fight against evictions at the International Hotel (see page 1). The most important role that the national workers organization will play in this respect is mobilizing the workers where they are concentrated as a class, on the assembly lines and in the plants.

Taking Battle into the Plants

While actively struggling around all the issues that workers face directly in the workplaces, by taking the struggle against all oppression *into* the plants the national workers organization will be tapping the great potential strength of the working class that is shown in its immense productive power and in its daily battles. This will mean making the major battles in society a concern of the workers, bringing them forward in many ways to join the fight. While at the present time most of this will be on a relatively low level, we should not lose sight of the future when it will be possible for the workers to down tools on a big scale in the fight around political demands.

By taking the fight against all oppression into the factories, by involving workers in the major political questions in society, the national workers organization will grow in strength and influence and develop its role as a lightning rod in the class struggle, playing a key role in concentrating the force of the working class in key battles.

This, in turn, will have a great effect not only on all the other sections of the masses involved in battle with the capitalist enemy, but will be an important part of the workers becoming conscious of themselves as a class and the destiny of their class.

Of course, the basis of unity of the national workers organization is not, and should not be, the fight for socialist revolution. Workers will join the national workers organization because they want to fight the capitalists and see the need to do so on different fronts and together with other workers around the country. Much of what will give the organization life and vitality will be that it brings together workers with different experience in struggle and different understandings and provide a forum for discussion and struggle over what the interests of the working class are around different political and social questions, and to decide together what to do.

As workers fight around their own interests on different questions, gain deeper and broader experience in battling the bourgeoisie and through working together with communists, more and more workers will come to see the need to unite to lead the fight against all oppression and to build their movement to end the source of oppression—capitalism. This is precisely because the interests of the working class is opposed to the oppression bred by capitalism, both in every particular instance and because the liberation of the working class itself depends on leading the masses in making revolution and in actually building a new society only dreamed of for ages, where oppression will be a thing of the past. ■

Publications

- **War and Revolution.** Seven articles from *Revolution*. 50¢.
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- **Elections '76: Capitalists' Desperate Deceit vs. Workers' Growing Struggle.** 15¢.
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- **Our Class Will Free Itself and All Mankind.** Speech by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, USA on the occasion of the founding of the Party. 75¢.
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(The following publications were originally published by the Revolutionary Union and adopted by the Party)

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The pamphlets **How Socialism Wipes Out Exploitation, The Party—Invincible Proletarian Vanguard, and Correct Line Achieved Through Study, Struggle and Criticism** are temporarily out of stock and will be made available shortly.

Branches...

Continued from page 3

strategy, the united front led by the working class and its Party, as well as to other tasks and objectives set by the Party for the present period? How can the line set forth be applied concretely to the conditions the branches and their members face in their work, while keeping in mind the overall picture and the long-term goal? In addition Party branches must take initiative to study and discuss particular documents, or parts of them, on the basis of the needs of the branch in deepening its ability to grasp and apply the Party's line on major points as well as in relation to specific questions and problems arising in the work of the branches and their members.

Giving constant education to Party supporters as well as members concerning the ideological and political line also means making use of the Party press among Party supporters who are not yet members—not only regularly distributing the Party press to them (as well as more broadly among the masses) but also systematically discussing with them major articles. Further it means taking up important questions of line with them, not only individually but in group discussions, through Party forums on different questions and in other ways. It means, in particular, arming advanced workers (and others) who are close to the Party and are potential Party members with a deeper understanding of the Party's line and how to apply it, using the same basic points that are used in Party branches (the questions outlined above) as guidelines for discussion around articles and other Party publications of various kinds. And it means educating them in the role and importance of the Party itself, of building the Party and why they should join it.

In carrying out this task, both among Party members and supporters, Party branches must keep firmly in mind the principle that was stated in the article on Party organization in last month's *Revolution* (August 1977): "all of the Party's work and the very way it is organized to carry out that work, is and must be consciously aimed at preparing its own ranks and the masses of workers (and others oppressed by the capitalist rulers) for the eventual armed onslaught to overthrow the capitalists." Education in the Party's ideological and political line must be rooted in this understanding.

Giving education in ideological and political line and leading mass struggle on this basis, according to the principles summarized so far, will mean that the branches and their members will be able to carry out their work in a more concentrated and systematic way. The more correctly this is done the more the branches and their members will be able to distinguish major questions from minor ones, principal tasks from secondary ones; the more they will have a sense of correct priorities and the relationship of different things and the better they can achieve both collectivity and individual initiative and proper division of labor; the more effectively they can act as communist leaders of the working class and the less they will be caught up in pragmatism and "running around like chickens with their heads cut off."

But this first task of the Party branches cannot be separated from the other tasks of the branches, as set forth in the Party *Constitution*. All of these tasks are interrelated and all must be carried out in order for the branches—and ultimately the whole Party—to fulfill their role.

Close Ties with Masses

Article 12 of the RCP *Constitution* also states (in point two) that Party branches must "maintain close ties with the masses, constantly listen to their opinions and demands and wage an active ideological struggle so as to keep Party life vigorous." (p. 173) This is a basic requirement for applying the mass line and for carrying out the work of the Party in general. But, as indicated earlier, having close ties with the masses and listening to their opinions and demands is only half of the process of applying the mass line and will be perverted into tailing after the masses unless the other part of the process is also carried out—using Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought to concentrate the opinions and demands of the masses and to arm them with a correct understanding of their interests and how to fight for them. To do this correctly requires learning from the masses, yes, but also waging comradesly but vigorous struggle with fellow workers (and others) over what is right and wrong, since their spontaneous understanding is naturally heavily influenced by the bourgeoisie and its agents; it requires taking a firm stand on principles and seeking unity around the actual interests of the masses, not bowing to backward ideas that exist and may temporarily have considerable sway among the masses.

Maintaining close ties with the masses means being a friend among the masses, but fundamentally it means maintaining *political* ties, and such ties can only be established, maintained and deepened by carrying out all the tasks of the Party branches. If, for example, the branches and their members do not "propagate and carry out the policies of the Party, implement its decisions and fulfill every task assigned by the Party" (point three in the tasks of the branches), then there is no way they can maintain close ties with the masses, for they will be

unable to consistently lead the masses in fighting against the attacks from the enemy and will be unable to point the way forward to the resolution of the contradictions that the masses are confronted with, living in capitalist society (or socialist society). And the same is true if the branches fail to carry out their other tasks—fail to study Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and oppose revisionism and opportunism of all kinds; fail to take in new members and build the Party ideologically, politically and organizationally; and fail to give constant education in the ideological and political line to Party members and supporters and lead them, together with the proletariat and broad masses, in the fight against the class enemy.

If the Party branches and their members are carrying out all their tasks, if they are conducting "strictly Marxist propaganda and agitation" in a living way and applying the mass line correctly, then Party life is bound to be vigorous (as called for in point two of the tasks of the Party branches). In these circumstances the branches and their members will see the necessity and be better able to "wage an active ideological struggle," because otherwise it will be impossible to concentrate the opinions and demands of the masses and maintain close ties with them, impossible to provide answers to the questions and problems that the masses raise in response to the work of Party members and that confront the masses and Party members in waging the fight against the class enemy and in advancing it toward its final goal.

On the other hand, of course, if the branches and their members do not strive to carry out their tasks, if they do not grasp the decisive role of line in the fullest sense, if they approach struggles as ends in themselves and reduce their role to mere "tacticians," divorcing the struggle from the goal of socialist revolution—in short if their work is reformist and not revolutionary—then there is no way that they can "wage an active ideological struggle" and "keep Party life vigorous." Instead branches will be bogged down in minor matters and swamped in discussion of scattered "tactical details" of many different events with no unifying direction and purpose, and liberalism, petty sectarian squabbling and subjectivism will characterize the life of the branch.

Tribune of the People

All of this touches on the basic question: what is the role of a communist in relation to the movement of the working class and the overall struggle against the reactionary ruling class? In *What Is To Be Done?* V. I. Lenin gave a very vivid answer to this question, which though it took into account the particularities of the struggle in Russia at that time (1902) has universal application. The communist ideal, he wrote, "should not be the trade-union secretary, but the *tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat." (Chapter 3, Part E, emphasis Lenin's)

And in speaking to this same question, Lenin noted that "In the committees and study circles, one can meet people who are immersed in the study even of some special branch of the metal industry; but one can hardly ever find members of organizations (obliged, as often happens, for some reason or other to give up practical work) who are especially engaged in gathering material on some pressing question of social and political life in our country which could serve as a means for conducting Social-Democratic [communist] work among other strata of the population." (Chapter 3, Part E) Again, while Lenin was speaking to the specific conditions in Russia at that time, his comments have great relevance for the struggle and the work of the Party in the U.S. today.

This is not to say that it is unimportant to lead the economic struggles of the workers and to know the conditions workers in various industries face. It is correct to give proper weight to the economic struggle of the workers and to concentrate our Party's work in this struggle at the present time. In fact we have to do a still better job in doing communist work in such struggles—in utilizing the sparks of consciousness that arise there to develop further understanding and struggle toward the goal of proletarian revolution. But it is certainly not correct to act as merely a trade union militant in these struggles and still less to fail to carry out the work of doing all-around exposure of the bourgeoisie and the capitalist-imperialist system in connection with every significant social question regardless of which class or stratum is most directly affected.

It is correct to acquire knowledge of the different industries and of different companies, branches, etc., in a given industry, and to make use of this knowledge in carrying out the trade union struggle. But it is certainly not correct to make such considerations the *basis* for tactics, to hinge the struggle—even economic—of the workers on the ups and downs of a particular company or industry and still less to place the acquiring of such knowledge above the task of studying the major questions and events in society and the class interests involv-

ed and using *this* knowledge to educate the workers to their general and long-term interests and mobilize them in struggle in their own class interests around these questions.

Study of Theory and Party's Line

Of course there is not only the question of wanting to act as a "tribune of the people," and to carry out "strictly Marxist propaganda and agitation." There is also the question of knowing *how* to do this. This is one of the main reasons why the RCP *Constitution* sets down the task of the branches to give constant education in the ideological and political line and also to "lead the Party members and supporters in studying Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought conscientiously and thoroughly opposing revisionism and all forms of opportunism." (Point four, Article 12) Without education in the Party's line and without the study of the science of revolution it is impossible for Party branches and their members to carry out communist work among the masses.

On the other hand it is incorrect to develop a mechanical, metaphysical approach to this question—an erroneous view that first it is necessary to understand the Party's line and master theory completely, to understand the correct line in opposition to the incorrect line in every aspect, before it is possible to do Marxist propaganda and agitation among the masses. This treats Marxism and the correct line as absolutes, as "perfect knowledge," something static which does not develop together with the development of society, of the struggle and the work of the Party, something which can be mastered "all at once." Such a view in fact reverses the correct relationship between practice and theory.

Comrades who have joined the Party and Party supporters who have taken up the study of its line have a basic understanding of the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and their application in the U.S. today. With the guidance of the Party overall and the Party branches in particular they can take this basic understanding and apply it to the various questions that arise throughout society and can engage in ideological struggle in a down-to-earth living way with their fellow workers and others, while uniting with them in practical struggle against the enemy.

In response to this the masses are bound to raise questions and objections that are difficult to answer or to answer deeply. This is a good thing, not a bad thing. These questions can and must be taken back to the Party and into the Party branches, where through collective study, discussion and struggle the understanding of all those involved will be raised. And this higher level of understanding can in turn be taken back to the masses, which will give rise to new questions . . . and so on, in a continuous upward spiral.

All this contributes greatly to vigorous, healthy ideological struggle within the Party and to raising the consciousness of the masses broadly. It is in accordance with the correct understanding of how in fact knowledge develops, and this, too, can and should be explained to the masses.

Democratic Centralism

The correct understanding of how knowledge develops and the relationship between practice and theory is also directly related to point three of the tasks of the Party branches as set forth in Article 12 of the RCP *Constitution*: "To propagate and carry out the policies of the Party, implement its decisions and fulfill every task assigned by the Party." (p. 173) The Party operates according to the principles of democratic centralism, which as the Party's *Programme* states, "combine centralized leadership and the greatest degree of discipline with the fullest discussion and struggle over policy within the organization and the selection and supervision of Party leaders by the Party membership. They make possible the unity of will and unity of action of the Party." (pp. 60-61)

Lines and policies of the Party are developed by its leadership bodies by concentrating the opinions and demands of the masses of people and the experience of the masses and of the Party as a whole in struggle. The Party branches, as the basic units of the Party, are most closely linked with the masses, most directly involved in their struggles and most closely in touch with their actual opinions and demands. But, as stressed earlier, the Party branches themselves are not in a position to fully concentrate this knowledge; it is the Party leadership which, through the application of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, is most able to synthesize the correct line and develop correct policies. The branches and the entire Party, through its organized structure, play a very important role in this, by concentrating knowledge to the greatest degree possible through the application of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and "passing this up" to higher levels to be part of the overall material that the Party leadership ultimately synthesizes.

Once lines and policies have been set by the Party leadership then the lower levels, including the branches as the basic units, must unite to carry them out, while applying Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought to carry them out in the most correct way in accordance

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with the actual conditions they face in their work and with the overall situation in mind. But if the entire Party does not unite to carry out these lines and policies then the Party cannot achieve unity of action, or unity of will, it cannot act as a solid fist, it cannot play its role as the organized force that "concentrates the organization and discipline of the working class itself, and steels it with an iron will in the struggle against capitalism." (Party Programme, p. 61)

Further, if the entire Party does not unite to carry out the lines and policies of the Party, then there is no way to test their correctness in practice. There is no way to sum up the experience gained in carrying them out, build on what is correct and change what is incorrect or what no longer applies because conditions have changed. Just as the entire Party, through its organized structure from the basic units on up, is involved in the formulation of its lines and policies, so the entire Party, through its organized structure down to its basic units, must carry out these lines and policies, accumulate new experience and once again develop and deepen lines and policies . . . and on and on in an endless upward spiral.

As stressed earlier, education in the Party's line is decisive in enabling the Party organizationally to carry out its tasks in leading the class struggle forward, and if this education is not carried out and pragmatism reigns, it will lead to a breakdown of Party discipline whether anyone desires it or not.

Lively Struggle over Line and Policy

Of course it is possible that lines or policies adopted by the leadership of the Party may be incorrect. If members of the Party find themselves in opposition to these lines or policies it is their duty, while upholding Party discipline and carrying out the line and policies of the Party, to raise their disagreement and criticism through the channels provided in the Party Constitution and to wage struggle over these in the appropriate time and place according to the organizational principles of the Party.

The fact that the Party may adopt incorrect lines and policies and the possibility that the overall line and programme of the Party may become opportunist, may change from representing the proletariat to representing the bourgeoisie, is one of the most important reasons why the Party Constitution sets forth as a main task of the Party branches (point four, Article 12) to conscientiously study Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and thoroughly oppose revisionism and all forms of opportunism. The only way that the correct line can be maintained in the Party and revisionism and other forms of opportunism defeated is for the entire Party, and ever broader sections of the masses, to grasp and apply Marxism in opposition to opportunism. The discipline of the Party does not and cannot stand above its line; in fact the unity of will and unity of action of the Party ultimately depend on its overall correct line. And for Party branches and the membership of the Party as a whole there is not only the question of studying and discussing the line of the Party at any time but also of studying the basic principles of Marxism and waging struggle against all forms of opportunism—not only more obvious forms and those which have already been exposed but also opportunism which disguises itself in new forms or appears under new conditions—in order to be able to distinguish the correct from the incorrect line at all times and ensure that the Party's line and policies continue to develop in a correct direction and reflect the revolutionary outlook and interests of the working class.

The correct line can only be grasped in opposition to incorrect lines and can only develop in struggle against incorrect lines. This is why it is essential for the Party to carry out polemics against opportunist lines and to wage thoroughgoing struggle against the bourgeoisie and its agents of all kinds, including within the ranks of the working class and the revolutionary movement, not only in the practical sphere but in the theoretical and ideological sphere as well. This is also another important reason why the Party's Constitution stresses study of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and opposition to revisionism and all forms of opportunism as a main task of the Party branches.

The more deeply the Party branches, as the basic units of the Party, grasp the correct line, through comparison, contrast and struggle with incorrect and opportunist lines, the more effectively they will be able to carry out the lines and policies of the Party and arm the masses with them to "transform the world through class struggle." (Party Programme, p. 60) The more that there is lively struggle within the Party over its line and specific policies, the deeper and firmer will be the unity that is achieved around the correct line and the more firmly and powerfully will the whole Party unite to carry it out.

All this, of course, does not contradict what was said earlier, that Party branches and members must propagate and carry out the policies of the Party and uphold Party discipline even if they disagree with a particular line or policy. So long as the overall line of the Party is

correct it is absolutely incorrect for any member or unit of the Party to refuse to carry out lines and policies or to fail to carry them out vigorously and thoroughly. Only if the overall line of the Party has become a consolidated opportunist line is it correct for communists to refuse to uphold Party discipline and to carry out the line and policies of the Party—and in those circumstances it is the duty of communists to struggle resolutely against the Party's line. But as stressed before, upholding Marxism in opposition to opportunism is a vital task not only in the extreme circumstances of the line of the Party becoming opportunist—it is the constant duty of the entire Party to study Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and wage a thorough struggle against all forms of opportunism in order to ensure that the Party's line continues to be a revolutionary line representing the working class in the struggle to achieve its historic mission of communism.

Building the Party

Armed with a correct ideological and political line, the Party is the most powerful weapon of the working class, the organized force that leads it through all the twists and turns in the struggle and enables it to concentrate the strength of the masses to defeat the class enemy and advance to the abolition of all forms of exploitation and oppression and all class distinctions, to emancipate itself and all mankind. This is why building the Party is an extremely important part of building the revolutionary movement of the working class at all stages of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie. It is for this reason that the Constitution of the Revolutionary Communist Party states that one of the main tasks of the Party branches (point five, Article 12) is "To take in new Party members, enforce Party discipline and constantly consolidate the Party organizations, getting rid of the stale and taking in the fresh, so as to constantly strengthen the proletarian character of the Party and its role as the vanguard of the working class." (p. 173)

Consolidating the Party organizations and strengthening the Party's proletarian character and role as the vanguard of the working class is first of all a question of ideological and political line. The Party always puts emphasis on quality in recruiting new members and building the Party, putting quantity second. In other words, it is primarily a question of recruiting into the Party "the most dedicated, self-sacrificing, far-seeing fighters" from the working class and other sections of the people, those who have taken up the stand and outlook of the working class and who "dedicate their entire life to building the revolutionary struggle," and "put the interests of the revolution, of the working class, above everything else." (Party Programme, p. 61) This is important not only in general, but especially in this period, in line with what was stressed in the recent report from the RCP Central Committee (see *Revolution*, June 1977). This report quotes Lenin who said it is of the greatest importance "to keep the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat tense and train its best elements, not only in a general way, but concretely, so that when the popular ferment reaches the highest pitch, they will put themselves at the head of the revolutionary army."

With these points in mind, the Party branches must pay consistent attention to finding and training revolutionaries, especially those people who come to the fore in mass struggle, particularly within the working class itself but also among other sections of the people, keeping in mind the requirement that "Party members, from all classes, but especially those from outside the working class, must transform themselves in the course of class struggle, discarding ideas and practices which are alien to the working class and taking up wholeheart-

edly the revolutionary outlook of the working class." (Party Programme, p. 61)

On the other hand, this should not be taken to mean that before someone can join the Party they have to have a "perfect" understanding of Marxism and the line of the Party or be "pure proletarian" in their outlook, free of all traces of bourgeois thinking. In the real world there are no such people, either inside or outside the Party, and as emphasized before, there is no such thing as "perfect knowledge"—Marxism is a living science which must be developed in the course of applying it to the struggle to transform society (and nature).

People, especially those who come to the fore in mass struggle, particularly of the working class itself, should be recruited into the Party if they have a basic grasp of the Party's line, have a determination to master Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and apply it to concrete struggle, and meet the basic requirements for Party membership as spelled out in the Party's Constitution: "Any worker or any other person involved in the revolutionary struggle who accepts the Constitution and line of the Party, is committed to working actively in a Party organization, to carrying out the Party's decisions and to observing Party discipline and paying Party membership dues, may become a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA." (pp. 167-8)

With this standard the Party can and must draw in as many members as possible at every point in the development of the struggle. Party branches, as the basic units of the Party, must, in accordance with the main tasks set for them in the Party's Constitution, bend every effort to recruit new members and build the Party quantitatively while giving first place to quality. For, as pointed out in the article on Party organization in last month's *Revolution* (August 1977), there is a dialectical relationship between quality and quantity in building the Party: "The deepening grasp of the correct line and the Party's links with the masses enable the Party to recruit more fighters into its ranks and as the Programme states: 'As broader and broader sections of the working class become class conscious and join the ranks of the Party, it is more and more able to fulfill its role as the vanguard of the proletariat and to apply the mass line more thoroughly.'" (See Programme, p. 61.)

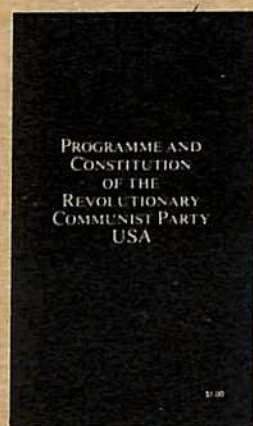
Stale and Fresh

"Getting rid of the stale and taking in the fresh," as called for in the Party Constitution (point five, Article 12 on the main tasks of the Party branches) is also primarily a question of quality and only secondarily a question of quantity. In line with this it is primarily a question of ideological and political line and only secondarily an organizational question. In other words, "getting rid of the stale and taking in the fresh" means first of all and mainly deepening the correct line of the Party, "taking in" new ideas and understanding on the basis of applying the Party's line and summing up the class struggle and "getting rid" of ideas and policies which do not conform to the actual needs and interests of the working class or no longer apply because of new conditions. It means strengthening the proletarian stand and outlook of the Party and struggling against and discarding bourgeois and petty bourgeois baggage in close connection with leading mass struggle.

If this is done correctly then the organizational aspect can also be handled correctly. In this regard, "getting rid of the stale and taking in the fresh" means removing non-communists and anti-communists from the Party and recruiting proletarian revolutionaries into the Party. As for the "stale" forces, they are of two kinds: "Proven opportunists, enemy agents, degenerates and anti-working class elements," on the one hand and on the other, those whose revolutionary will has degenerated but who are not enemies of the working class and its Party.

The first "must be cleared out of the Party and must not be readmitted." But, as for the second category, the policy of the Party is to struggle to win them back to the revolutionary road and enable them to continue to make their fullest contribution to the revolutionary cause of the working class as a member of the Party. This is why only "after serious struggle to rekindle his revolutionary spirit" has failed should such a person "be persuaded to withdraw from the Party." (See pp. 169-70) But here, again, the Party puts priority on quality, making quantity secondary, and in this way as a crucial task builds the Party deeply and broadly in the working class, continually strengthening its ties with the masses on the basis of the correct line and recruiting new forces into the Party, especially those who come to the fore in the movement of the working class itself.

As the basic units of the Party, the Party branches are its most direct links with the masses. It is the branches which most enable the Party to learn the felt needs, the opinions and demands of the masses, the "raw material" for its correct line and policies and the starting point for its application of the mass line; and it is the branches that have the most direct possibility and responsibility to propagate and carry out the lines and policies of the Party and lead the masses to carry forward the revolutionary struggle to the final goal. This is the fundamental reason why the Party branches, under the unified line and centralized leadership of the Party, must consistently strive to fulfill all their basic tasks as set forth in the Party Constitution. ■



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