



# REVOLUTION

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

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## Carter In, Ford Out-- Future Holds More Struggle

The 1976 elections are over. Gerald Ford will soon be retired to the status of "elder statesman," which gives the capitalists a living ex-president to tote around who doesn't have to be kept under virtual house arrest, Nixon style. For Jimmy Carter the tune has changed too, as he gears up for his stint as president, taking interviews for government appointments and backing down one by one on the promises he made during his campaign.

According to the politicians and the media "the will of the people has been spoken" and now the only thing that remains is for the public to rally around the new President. But even as the votes were being tallied, demonstrations, ranging from small picket lines upwards to some involving over 250 people, took place in more than 25 cities across the country under the slogan, "Politicians Fight for \$\$ Interests, We Must Fight for Our Own."

These demonstrations, though relatively small in scale, were highly significant, especially since they flew in the face of what the capitalists sought to accomplish through their election campaign and took place at the time when all good citizens were supposed to be home watching Walter Cronkite and waiting for the election tallies to be announced.

At stake in the elections was far more than a contest over which of the two capitalist politicians would occupy the White House. Few real differences over domestic or foreign policy emerged, and among the candidates and their backers an atmosphere of a gentlemen's tennis contest at the country club prevailed, with Carter repeatedly referring to Ford as a "decent and honest man" and Ford graciously accepting defeat and calling on the nation to unite around the president-elect.

More to the point was the tremendous effort exerted during the elections to convince the people that they really held the fate of the country in their hands, that what the government would do, even how life would be for the masses of people, would be determined not by the struggle between classes but by the will and policy of individual politicians. And, so the script went, it was up to the people to determine which of them would govern.

Of course this is a recurring theme, every four years the people are told that their ballots will determine the course of the country, that when election day rolls around the class divisions of society somehow fade into insignificance, with everyone reduced to the common status of voters equal under the principle "one man, one vote."

But in recent years this very deception has become tattered around the edges. People have voted for presidents who promised peace, only to receive an escalating war (LBJ in '64 and Nixon and his "secret plan to end the war" four years later). The whole Watergate affair and subsequent scandals dealt some heavy blows to the halo surrounding the "democratic process," with revelations of illegal spying and wiretapping, "dirty tricks" and outright bribery and corruption. And, most significantly, people have lived through a steadily deepening crisis, intensifying the hardships of the people on every front, despite different politicians with a host of "remedies" at the helm.

It was the attempt to win back some of the faith in their electoral system, to convince people that the only way to influence the affairs of state was through the ballot box, that was at the heart of the capitalists' '76 election offensive.

Part of the script was to find a candidate who could be sold to the working class, sufficiently unknown to

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Election night demonstration in Cleveland, one of over 25 across the country November 2. The Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee initiated them under the slogan "Politicians Fight for \$\$ Interests--We Must Fight For Our Own!"

### Conference Big Success

## 2300 Meet On Int'l Situation

The Conference on the International Situation, War, Revolution and the Internationalist Tasks of the American People held in New York City November 20 was a tremendous success. Over 2300 people registered to take part, including people who have recently come forward in the workers movement, many students and youth, people previously active in the movement against the Vietnam war, teachers and scholars and others. The broad and enthusiastic participation showed very strongly that as these questions grow increasingly sharp, more and more people are concerned about grasping them clearly and taking action.

The conference opened in the morning with an overflow crowd at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Manhattan, as speakers laid out different general perspectives on the international situation and the tasks of the American people in regard to this situation, including some summary of the importance and lessons of the anti-Vietnam war movement. These speakers were Nick Unger for the Revolutionary Communist Party; William Hinton, former chairman of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association; and Eqbal Ahmad, an author and activist in the antiwar movement.

Highlighting the importance of the subject of the conference in the light of the revolutionary struggle and turmoil in the world were messages of solidarity from the Group of Khmer (Cambodian) Residents, Indian Peoples Association in North America, Iranian Students Association, Linea Roja Movimiento Revolucionario 4 de Junio (Dominican Republic), Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

In the afternoon, at Columbia University, there were two sets of workshops in which there was lively discussion and debate between panelists and other conference participants. The first set focused on the issues and tasks arising in particular areas and countries (Angola, Latin America, Southern Africa, East and Southeast Asia, The Mideast and the Gulf Area, and Europe); the second on specific questions (U.S. Foreign Policy, the Nature and Role of the Soviet Union, China's Foreign Policy, the Third World and the New Economic Order,

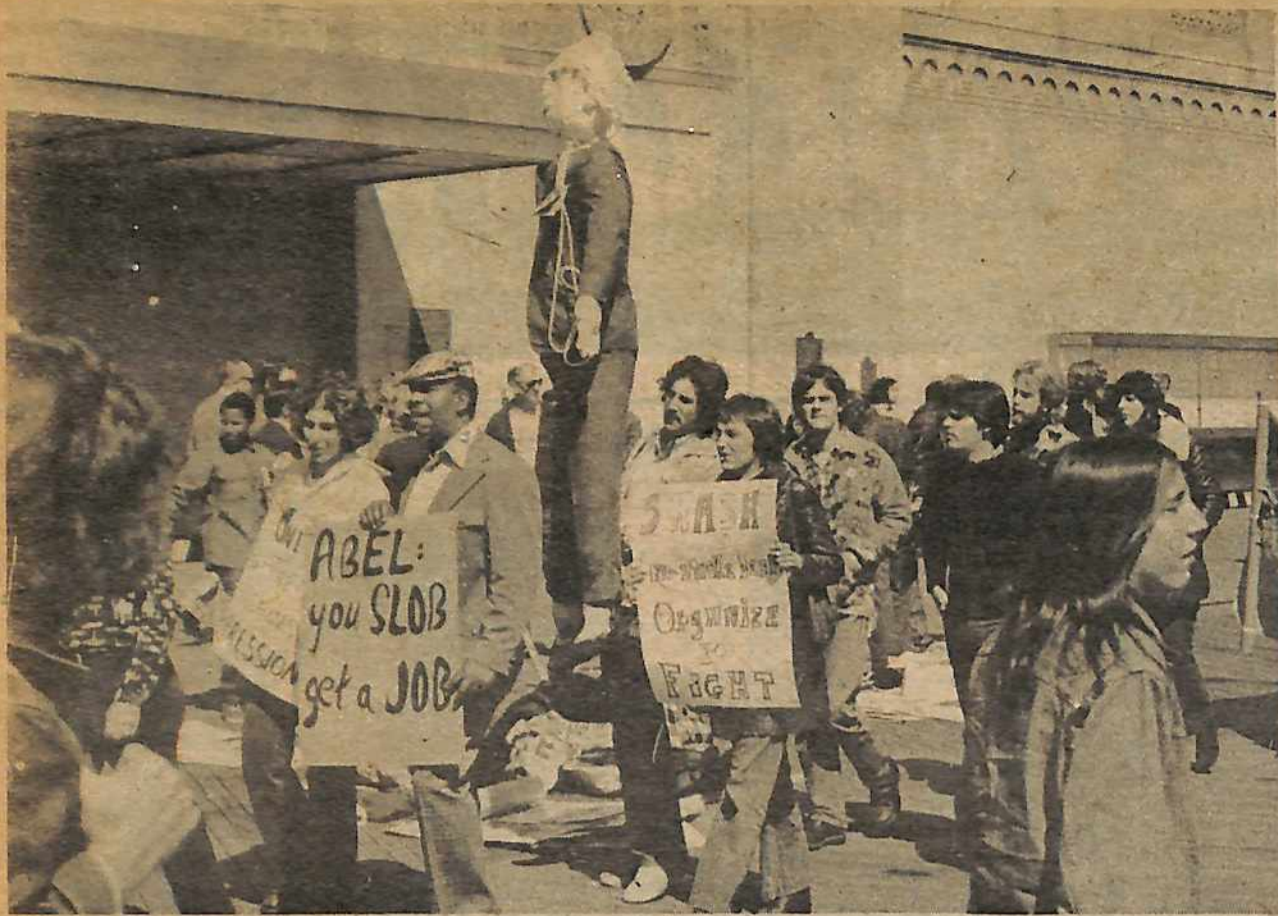
Fascist States and "Junior Partners," Detente and Disarmament).

#### Three Basic Positions

In the evening there was a debate between Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the RCP, Dave Dellinger of *Seven Days* magazine, and William Hinton. In practice, discussion and debate at the conference fell out around three main points of view on the international situation. The first of these positions says that U.S. imperialism is the main enemy of the peoples of the world, and the USSR, while not necessarily a reliable ally of these struggles, is not as great a danger either. The second position holds that in a world situation marked by a growing threat of world war and sharpening revolutionary struggles, inside the U.S. the main blow should be directed against U.S. imperialism while opposing both superpowers on a world scale. The third view also sees the growing struggles and danger of world war, but that holds that on a world scale the USSR is the greatest enemy of the world's people, and must be the main target of the peoples' struggles internationally. These lines were brought out both in an overall way and in relation to specific questions through the speeches, workshops and debate.

The conference was not meant to arrive at any unified conclusions or to form any sort of ongoing coalition. But it served an important purpose—to bring together many different kinds of forces who have been and will continue to be politically active around these kinds of questions in order to discuss and debate what stand to take and how to move forward. Through this discussion the issues were clarified, and there developed a greater understanding of the various political trends—an important step since only the correct political line will enable the masses of people in this country to stand up and fight in their own interests and the interests of the overwhelming majority of the world's people. However, even within this framework, some groups and individuals refused to take part, or took part in such a

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"Abel, Abel, we say No, ENA has got to go!" At the USWA 1974 Convention in Atlantic City, 250 steel workers and others denounced steel union chief I. W. Abel for selling the rank and file out to the steel companies.

## Shake Abel Machine in Steel

# Rank & File Utilize Sadlowski Race

The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) will elect a new president and top officers in February of next year. Usually these elections are no more than a formality in which the incumbents get rubber stamped, and the rank and file gets screwed. But the story is different this time because of the growing struggle of the rank and file against the companies and the union machine and because this situation has given rise to an election battle which can lead to real advances for the struggle of the rank and file.

The USWA is currently in the hands of I.W. Abel, who has run the union in the interests of the companies and never hesitated to smack down the rank and file when they challenged this cosy arrangement. Although Abel is retiring, his hand-picked successor Lloyd McBride is hoping to inherit Abel's machine within the union and continue his policies. Challenging the Abel-McBride machine is Ed Sadlowski, director of USWA District 31 (Chicago-Gary area), whose campaign is one important vehicle the rank and file can use right now to build the fight against the steel companies, deal a real blow to the stranglehold these companies have had over the union, and contribute to the building of a strong movement in the steel industry as part of a developing workers movement.

The last year and a half has seen the beginnings of an upsurge among steel workers as the productivity drives of the steel companies and the layoffs of the past couple of years have resulted in many jobs being combined, crews shortened, increased harassment and deteriorating health and safety conditions. On top of this, the workers in basic steel (the steel mills) all across the country have been hit with two sharp attacks. One is the so-called Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) between the union and the companies, under which the union leadership has signed away the right to strike until 1980. The other is the Consent Decree concocted by the union, the companies and the federal government which tries to turn the steel workers' struggle against discrimination back against them, putting the burden on all steel workers for correcting some of the companies' past discrimination, while allowing the companies to keep on discriminating.

### Development of Struggle

In the past couple of years there have been an increasing number of strikes in non-basic steel plants, walkouts and work stoppages by crews and departments, and several important walkouts in basic steel mills. Overall the struggle has been plant by plant, local by local. But as the elections approach, some basic questions have come up about how to fight the conditions steel workers are facing and what direction their union is going in. This has meant that steel workers are beginning to look at things much more from a national perspective.

To most steel workers, the name I. W. Abel is more

than a dirty word on the shop floor. It has become a symbol of treachery and oppression. He stands for company control of the union, gangsterism and machine dictatorship. He stands for productivity commissions (the union-company committees designed to drive each worker to the maximum for the companies' profit). He stands for subservience to the companies in the face of all the attacks that are coming down on steel workers. The heart of Abel's policies is his line that the future of steel workers lies in "a company-union partnership"—and that is exactly what he stands for. For the rank and file now rising in struggle, the election of Abel's candidate would be a real slap in the face, serving to reinforce the bourgeois line that Abel himself has promoted, that struggling can't get you anywhere.

The Sadlowski campaign is the only real opposition the Abel machine has faced in years. His campaign has, to a large extent, spoken to and reflected the sentiments and aspirations of the rank and file for a union that fights the companies, for a more unified and democratic union, and the right to strike. The Sadlowski campaign has the steel companies worried, not mainly because of the positions he has advocated, but more importantly, because this campaign is a reflection of the growing determination, demands, organization and strength of the masses of steel workers. For this reason the Abel machine has gone wild to "get" Sadlowski, at the recent steel workers convention, in the union paper and through the machine's well-placed hacks in most every local. All this has served to polarize things even more.

In turn, the fact that steel workers around the country are more and more in motion has already had an effect on Sadlowski. In recent months he has taken a firmer and harder stand on some basic questions, moving from his previous vague opposition to the ENA and to the fact that the membership in basic doesn't have the right to ratify contracts, to pledging that if elected he wouldn't sign a contract that contained a no-strike pledge or hadn't been ratified by the workers.

An election that defeated the Abel machine would be a real step forward for steel workers and lay the

## Notice

The publication of this issue of *Revolution* (Vol. 2, No. 2) was delayed until late November to allow coverage of the Conference on the International Situation. It would have normally been dated as the November 15, 1976 issue. However, we have changed our dating policy to correspond to the actual distribution period of each issue. Therefore this issue, which follows the October 15 issue (Vol. 2, No. 1), is dated December 1976. Future issues will be published in the third week of each month and dated as the following month.

basis for real gains in the struggle around the no-strike deal and the rest of the companies' attacks which Abel has been a partner to. Further, fighting for Sadlowski's election can itself help to advance the class struggle, if it is taken up in such a way as to raise the issues and unite the rank and file around a program that reflects their interests and demands, and to build their organization and understanding.

### Sadlowski Campaign No End in Itself

This is why it would be a big mistake to take up the Sadlowski campaign as an end in itself, or to consider getting Sadlowski elected the only task now in steel, as some forces within the union have urged, promoting the illusion that Sadlowski's election alone would insure a better day for steel workers. After all, Abel himself once portrayed himself as a "reform candidate" before he settled down into being an incumbent. Although he has taken a good stand on some key issues, Sadlowski has also done other things which the rank and file must take note of. For instance, at the USWA convention where workers wanted to show their outrage at Abel's double-dealing, Sadlowski urged them not to raise hell but to "wait till February"—in other words, to confine their struggle to voting for him. And recently, as District 31 Director, he okayed a consent decree with Inland Steel behind the membership's back despite all his promises never to do such a thing.

But it would also be wrong to take the line that steel workers should stay away from Sadlowski because he's not "revolutionary enough," as some other forces have done. This position is not revolutionary at all—in fact, it's the flip side of the other wrong line—because it hinges everything on who will be president of the union without taking as the basic thing the question of how to advance and develop the struggle of the rank and file.

Fundamentally, the question of whether or not to support a candidate in union elections does not begin and end with the candidate's professed stand on the issues facing the workers, but also must take into account the concrete conditions in the industry—how the workers see the candidates, how the elections relate to the struggle waged by the rank and file, what the opportunities to advance that struggle are, and most importantly, how concretely a decision to support and work for the election of a candidate can develop the initiative of the rank and file. In steel, the extremely widespread hatred of the Abel machine for being pro-company and the way Sadlowski has called on the rank and file to support him to break up the Abel machine are important factors, as is the general level of the rank and file struggle and its needs in the industry.

The story of Arnold Miller in the miners' union is a good lesson on this, although this does not mean that Sadlowski would necessarily act in the same manner as Miller. Miller's challenge to the hated, all but openly pro-boss, gangster Tony Boyle machine in the UMW reflected the rank and file miners' upsurge in the late Sixties and early Seventies, which had to clear out Boyle as a real obstacle to their struggles. In the battle to get rid of Boyle the miners built up their organization, unity and understanding, winning a real victory. At the same time, some forces from the bourgeoisie were also very active in promoting Miller in order to use him to put a cap on the miners struggle, to confine it within the limits of reformism, at a time when Boyle could no longer control the workers. Once in office Miller turned around and attacked the rank and file, trying to smash the rank and file's organization, but the miners had grown stronger through the course of the battle, and could, not relying on Miller, continue to advance their fight against the capitalists and all their flunkies.

### Struggle Advanced During Earlier Elections

The round of steel elections that took place in the mills earlier this year for leadership on the local level has already brought about some advances that can be built on, as steel workers formulated demands and took them out widely to mobilize and unite the rank and file. *The Steelworker* newspaper has helped sum up a program of struggle for the industry nationwide (see *Revolution*, July 15, 1976) and to begin to bring together workers from different areas to spread the struggle and its lessons. It is this kind of work that helped make possible the Pittsburgh steel workers' demonstration (see story p. 3), which was a real breakthrough for steel workers in linking up and broadening their fight.

Steel workers' contracts are coming up next year. Already there is talk that Abel and the companies would like to have an agreement signed before the union elections in February. Although the fight to break up the Abel machine and elect Sadlowski and the fight around the contract are battles on different fronts, each will have a big effect on the other.

By taking up the Sadlowski campaign in a correct way, with the overall and long-term interests of the working class in mind, steel workers can become more organized, conscious and able to hit at the companies, and to take part in the overall development of a class conscious workers movement fighting on all fronts. ■

# Steel Victory-- Local 3059 Freed!

A big victory was won in November by steel workers—a step in the fight against the stranglehold exercised on the rank and file in the unions by various company agents in union office. The struggle arose from the attempt of the leaders of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) to squash the militancy of Local 3059 of Alliance, Ohio in their fight against their company, by placing the local under administratorship.

Local 3059 is known as a fighting local to steel workers in its area, District 27. This reputation has been earned through bitter struggle against the company—from the 120 day contract strike in 1960, to the 117 day strike in 1968, and numerous wildcats and walkouts over working conditions, safety and unjust firings. In 1970, Al Stanford, a rank and file leader who stood in the forefront of these fights, ousted a do-nothing by the name of Larry Shannon for the Presidency of the local. Shannon was so shameless that he once made a statement (in front of witnesses) that, "I don't give a damn about the union, but I really need the money." He openly admitted to being best friends with the personnel manager of the company. As president of the local, Stanford continued to help the rank and file take matters into their own hands. The local waged and won two wildcats around 1973, shutting the plant down for two days to get a young worker rehired after he was fired, and for eight days when the company refused to pay holiday pay.

The struggle in 3059 was significant and feared by the International not simply because of a few good leaders, but because, together with their leaders, the rank and file were making advances in their militance and organization.

The struggle in Local 3059 highlights the growing rebelliousness of steel workers over the last several years with increased wildcats and walkouts all over the country. This struggle has had to be waged within the union too, directed against traitors like Abel and his henchmen, who have done all they could to stamp out rank and file militancy and initiative and have shackled steel workers with the ENA no strike deal. Abel, in his service to the companies, tried to make an example of what happens to locals and their leaders when they don't knuckle under. In July, 1975, he appointed Shannon as staffman for District 27 to sabotage the fighting example of the local.

As International representative, Shannon made himself a real obstacle to the fight of the local, stalling and refusing to fight grievances and going over the heads of the local to make deals with the company selling the workers out. The rank and file, with Stanford as president, fought back, holding mass meetings and sending a petition to the International to get rid of Shannon. In response, the International placed the local in receivership and appointed none other than Larry Shannon as administrator on March 5, 1976.

## Campaign Built to "Free Local 3059"

For many steel workers around Alliance and the country, the situation facing Local 3059 symbolized the sell-out and dictatorial rule of the International. A campaign to free the local was started, building it as part of the battle to break the enemy's hold on the union and to unite steel workers nationally. An article about the local went out in the October issue of the *Steelworker*, a rank and file newspaper. The *Steelworker* and Local 3059 organized a demonstration to intensify the fight to free the local and others in receivership, to build the fight against the ENA, and for the right to vote on contracts in basic steel nationally. A nationwide petition and speaking tour was organized. As the fight picked up steam and as support grew throughout the country, the demand "Free Local 3059" was growing into a battle cry for thousands of steel workers.

On November 5, in Pittsburgh, Pa, in response to the call for a demonstration, 100 steel workers from Cleveland, Chicago, Baltimore, New Jersey and other areas picketed in front of USWA headquarters demanding, "Free Local 3059! Free all locals under administratorship!" "End Dictatorship in the USWA!" "End the ENA-No Strike Deal!" and "Give Basic Steel the Right to Vote on National Contracts!" Many of the workers—some on four day work weeks—took a day off to drive hundreds of miles to the demonstration. Al Stanford read telegrams of support from locals and individuals



*Steel workers demonstrate November 5 in front of the USWA headquarters in Pittsburgh to demand that Alliance, Ohio Local 3059 be freed from administratorship imposed by the International hacks in an attempt to chain the rank and file.*

from all over the country. Finally in desperation, the International officials called the cops who ordered the pickets off the steps. The pickets answered chanting, "Get off our steps. We built this union with our sweat and blood!"

Forced from the steps, the pickets started for United States Steel headquarters. Everywhere they were met with cheers and handshakes by the people on the streets. But the cops stopped the march again, this time attacking with drawn guns and billy clubs, injuring one and arresting two. The International immediately began spreading the story that the demonstration was not by working union members but by outsiders bent on destroying the union. At a press conference later in the day the steel workers answered these lies and slanders. "We're all dues paying members and if a few of us weren't working it's

because we were laid off on account of the companies' and Abel's productivity drives...When we bust our backs in the mills and pay our union dues, we're called steel workers, but when we fight against the companies and the company men in our union, we're called outsiders.... It's not the rank and file who is out to destroy the union, but it's Abel's brand of union-company cooperation that is destroying the union."

## International Forced to Back Down

Less than ten days after the protest in Pittsburgh, the USWA announced that administratorship of 3059 will end with elections in December, claiming they had intended to do this all along. The charges against the two arrested were reduced from assault, resisting arrest and inciting to riot, to disorderly conduct and littering. As a leaflet summing up the protest pointed out, "Make no mistake about it. Local 3059 would never be free if people didn't organize to fight. The action in Pittsburgh showed that more and more the rank and file is able to unite steel workers from different cities and districts for important battles. Campaigns like the fight which freed Local 3059 and the efforts to raise rank and file demands at the recent convention are laying the basis for broader, more solid organization among steel workers."

The victory of the local was due to the growing strength and organization of steel workers, including the increasing ability to pull together nationally to take up key battles. While it is really important that workers have leaders that fight for and with the rank and file like Al Stanford, by themselves these leaders are not enough. Abel and his flunkies might have been able to get over with their seizure of the local, even though they are increasingly exposed and isolated nationally, by keeping the seizure covered up and localized.

What is needed and is being built is rank and file organization to fight all attacks, unite steel workers in all locals and to begin to make the links nationwide to kick company men out and make the unions clubs in the workers' hands to fight the companies, rather than a club over the workers' heads. Because this fight was built broadly, based on the rank and file and built as part of the overall battle, the victory was a real advance serving to lay the basis for broader and more solid organization for the fights ahead. As the sum-up leaflet concludes, "We've only just begun. We will take this union back and turn it into the fighting organization our fathers sacrificed to build."

*Letters of support and donations for the fight against the charges still remaining for the two workers arrested at the Pittsburgh demonstration can be sent to the Steelworker, PO Box 5170, Baltimore, Md. ■*

## Message to the Party of Labor of Albania

*On November 1, the Party of Labor of Albania opened its Seventh Congress shortly before Albania celebrated the 35th anniversary of the founding of the Party on November 7. At the opening of the Congress, delegates and fraternal representatives stood in silent tribute to members of the PLA who have died since the last Congress and in tribute to Mao Tsetung, the great leader of the Communist Party of China. Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the PLA and its outstanding leader, gave the main report to the Congress, standing below a banner which read, "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" The Seventh Congress came at a time of great victories in the class struggle and socialist construction. The text of Enver Hoxha's report, which constitutes a highly important statement by the Albanian Party, has been published in English by Albania and is available in the U.S.*

### To the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania:

Please accept our warmest greetings on the occasion of the Seventh Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania and the thirty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the vanguard Party of the working class in your country.

The courageous struggle of the Albanian working class and people, led by the PLA and its great and time-tested, battle-tested leader, Enver Hoxha, and the great victories won are a tremendous source of inspiration for the revolutionary working class in our country, as well as throughout the world.

By relying on their own efforts and guided by the correct Marxist-Leninist line of the PLA, the Albanian people defeated the fascist powers occupying Albania during the Second World War and established the People's Republic of Albania, a socialist state under the rule of the working class. Since then, the Party, working class and people have persevered in the class struggle, beaten back all attempts by the bourgeoisie to restore capitalism, defeated attempts by the imperialist powers to strangle socialist Albania, made great advances in socialist construction, and given internationalist support to the world revolutionary struggle.

When the modern revisionists usurped leadership of the Soviet Party and state and the leaders of the majority of Communist Parties followed them down the path of betrayal, the world communist movement confronted a grave crisis. It was at that time that Enver Hoxha and the PLA united closely with the Communist Party of China and its great leader, Mao Tsetung, in defending Marxism-Leninism and standing up to the bullying and threats of the Soviet Union.

The example of the firm stance of Albania in the face of imperialist encirclement by both the U.S. and the USSR is a living refutation of the fallacy promoted by imperialism and revisionism that the working class and people, especially in a small country, cannot take the destiny of their country into their own hands, but must rely on the gangster-like "protection" of one or another imperialist marauder.

At the Seventh Congress, the great Marxist-Leninist, Enver Hoxha pointed out that the two superpowers, the U.S. and the USSR, represent to the same extent and to the same degree, the common enemy of the international working class and the people of the world, reaffirmed the truth that the people of a country can never rely on one superpower for protection against the other, and condemned both imperialist blocs headed by the two superpowers. This was of great encouragement to the struggle of the working class and people of the United States in our struggle to overthrow the criminal rule of the monopoly capitalist class.

We are confident that, under the leadership of Enver Hoxha, the Party of Labor of Albania will continue to advance in the front ranks of the world revolution, win even greater victories in the class struggle and socialist construction, and remain a beacon light of socialism for the peoples of the world.

Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

## USCPFA Convention

# Build Peoples' Friendship Broadly

Since the third annual convention of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association (USCPFA) this September, the role of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) in the Association has become something of a public question. The September 15 issue of the *Guardian* carried an article on the meeting by Irwin Silber which devoted much of its space to gloating over what he called a "forceful political rebuke to cadre and supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party." By an odd coincidence, there appeared an almost identical article in the *Call*, the organ of the October League.

The RCP has not made a practice of commenting on its work or the internal struggles in the USCPFA outside the Association. We would let the *Call* and *Guardian* articles pass but for the fact that the developments in the Friendship Association they have united in crowing about are ones that could seriously hinder the continuing growth and development of that organization and therefore deserve some attention.

The real question at stake in the many particular issues that have been raised is whether or not the USCPFA will continue to carry out its goal as laid out in the Statement of Principles: "to build active and lasting friendship through understanding between the people of the U.S. and the people of China." The RCP has argued consistently that the Association should be carrying on broad outreach about New China and its great progress to all sections of the American people as the best way of accomplishing this.

The RCP has fought for the Association's main emphasis to be on this kind of people-to-people friendship work, while supporting recognition of the People's Republic of China as the sole government of China and normalization of diplomatic relations between the PRC and the U.S. government. Under present conditions the latter task can be accomplished especially by demanding, as the Association does, the implementation of the 1972 Shanghai accord and an end to U.S. interference in China's internal affairs, most importantly its propping up of the Chiang Kai-shek clique on Taiwan.

Unfortunately, through the course of the Association's history a number of lines opposing building broad outreach in practice have developed. One trend has held that in building friendship, the fact of socialism and working class rule in China should be avoided in the Association's outreach work and the accomplishments of the revolution presented as "easy-to-understand" reforms—healthcare, women's equality, etc. Discussion of socialism, China's foreign policy, and so on are necessary but should be carried on among Association activists. This results in a position of panda bears for the masses, Marxism for the initiated—which misses the boat twice.

More serious is a "left" tendency which argues that the focus of U.S.-China friendship work should be among workers and the oppressed nationalities. On the surface there is much to agree with in this—a major job confronting the USCPFA is doing more outreach into the working class and among the oppressed nationalities and recruiting more Association members from among these groups. There have been strides in carrying this task out. To cite just one example, the Cincinnati Association got a very enthusiastic response when it set up a large photo display and information tables in some of the busiest shopping malls where workers of various nationalities go. It is through boldly and imaginatively extending broad outreach and educational work and paying particular attention to reaching workers and minority people with it that the Association as a whole can move ahead on this front.

### Inward Turn

But those demanding a working class/minority focus do not put much stock in this. In fact, their whole thrust is not outward to the masses, but toward turning the USCPFA inward on itself. They argue that the only way to judge the effectiveness of the Association's work in reaching these "focus" groups is by the number of individuals of working class or minority background who become Association members. Some even put forward and fought for the slogan "Membership first, program second" to guide the organization's work. Further the "worker/minority focus" forces contend, it is the current Association members who are, because of their petty bourgeois backgrounds and attitudes and particularly their "racism," the main roadblock to bringing in workers and minority members.

This proposal to "broaden" the Association finally ends up not only promoting the internalization of its efforts, but winds up blindly attacking the entire petty bourgeoisie which is supposed to be "already reached"

and "over represented" in the local chapters and the national organization. This is absurd.

The only stratum of society with any substantial representation in the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association is pretty narrow—radical or communist-minded veterans of the upsurge of mass struggle around Black liberation, the Vietnam war, etc. in the 1960s. Many of these forces are among the most dedicated to building friendship with the Chinese people and to say the Association couldn't use more people from this background is unbelievably small-minded.

As for the rest of the petty bourgeoisie, there is vast fertile ground for the Association's work which has barely been touched. Teachers, professionals, small businessmen, farmers—there is great interest in People's China in all these strata. The fact is that at the present time the members of the petty bourgeoisie will tend to be the most attracted to Friendship work. More than workers, they have had exposure, although much of it through bourgeois or petty bourgeois "scholarly" sources, to analysis and reporting on New China and they tend to have the time, the opportunity to pursue such interests.

Special attention has to be paid to reaching workers, not in place of the other strata but to strengthen the Association and insure that it does work as its charter states among all popular sections of "the American people." At the same time, there are objective reasons why workers have not responded to the USCPFA in the same manner as the petty bourgeoisie.

Even leaving aside the particular conditions sparking interest among professionals and others cited above, the general approach of advanced workers to China will not as a rule be focused around or limited to the question of friendship. Practice has shown that advanced workers are particularly interested in questions of the science of revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the class struggle under socialism and the path to communist society not only as they manifest themselves in China but in terms of the tasks workers face here.

These questions have a clear and important place in the USCPFA, but they are not and should not be its basis of unity or principal area of interest. This too would run directly counter to the goal of building friendship broadly.

It is interesting that even those pushing the worker/minority focus have been forced to tone down their assertions of how easily the Association could attract workers if it only tried. A workers' trip to China put together by the Association last year had serious recruiting difficulties and resulted in a definition of "worker" so broad as to include practically anyone this side of David Rockefeller. The leadership of the entire Southern region, who have been among the strongest advocates of the "turn to the workers and minorities," were unable to produce a single candidate for the trip.

The only result so far of this brush with reality has been a shift of accent toward the second half of the "worker/minority focus." And indeed the question of the oppressed nationalities is a different one from the working class. These nationalities contain within them different classes, and their response to China tends to parallel those in American society as a whole. (Chinese-Americans, of course, show a particular interest.) Members of various petty bourgeois strata and community activists in the oppressed nationality communities already take part in many local associations and the potential exists to increase this several fold.

### Quotas?

Unfortunately one of the key decisions taken at the recent convention turned away from the path the USCPFA should be continuing along and flew in the face of concrete experience in working with workers and minority people. This was a vote to establish a quota system on trips to China whereby no Associa-

tion trip could leave without two workers and two minority people on it. This condition betrayed the real outlook of its proponents on building friendship.

First, it assumes that trips to China, preferably fully funded, are the only way to win workers and people of the oppressed nationalities to the Association and to friendship with China. Secondly, the quota system is based on the openly stated premise that the "white, petty bourgeois" Association membership will not move a finger to broaden the group beyond their own class and nationality unless they are threatened with some kind of club: "Do some outreach or you can't go to China yourself."

The results of this kind of scheme are not too hard to imagine—threats of trip cancellations, opportunist recruiting, organizational infighting and further squabbles over whose motives—and class background—are purest, in short a situation into which any prospective member would hesitate to step.

Lost in all this is the real importance of the Association's tour program, which takes people from many walks of life, many communities, and fires their enthusiasm about China and equips them to carry on the work of building friendship among ever wider sections of the masses. This highlights the basis on which people should be chosen for the tours—their potential to reach others on returning, especially where the Association's work has been weak—and the need for concrete measures around finances and planning to facilitate participation by those for whom the trip poses hardships.

How did such an odious proposal pass the convention? The majority of people there were not dishonest or opportunists, but many of them fell for the arguments purveyed by an unholy alliance of political opportunists like the OL and individual careerists, some of whom consider themselves Marxist-Leninists yet work only in the Association and seek to mold it to fit their needs for a political organization. One participant described them as having pushed their proposals through by using three "magic weapons"—narrow nationalism, patronage and anti-communism, each of which contributes its own bit to narrowing the overall work of the Association as well.

### Minority Caucus

The opportunists inspired and supported the construction of a minority caucus in the convention as a cutting edge to push through the quota proposal. It helped consolidate some honest members from minority nationalities behind the line of "worker/minority focus" and served as a club to cow and guilt-trip white delegates into supporting the proposal.

The RCP opposed the formation of the caucus and its recognition as an "advisory body" by the convention. The USCPFA is not in any way an organization which is based on or profits from national oppression. As in any group fighting for the interests of the masses in capitalist society, there is no barrier that can prevent the ideas prevalent in capitalist society from manifesting themselves in various ways in the organization. This is true not only of national chauvinism, but also male chauvinism, anti-working class thinking, anti-communism, class collaboration, the list is endless. However, none of these, national chauvinism included, is dominant in the Association. The formation of caucuses around any or all of these issues, let alone their formalization as semi-official USCPFA bodies, can only divide the Association and turn it further in on itself.

Patronage is the glue that holds together blocs of opportunists in organizations like the USCPFA. Petty bickering over who will control trips to China and determine who gets to go on them show where the "capital" lies in the Association now, but as it grows there will be paid official posts in the national office, on publications, etc. and some of those who have chosen friendship work as the field in which to hew out a political career see these as plums to be worked for even today.

### Anti-Communism

The last of these "magic weapons" is anti-communism, which has been directed mainly at the RCP (and Association members who have agreed with RCP positions or with whose positions the RCP agreed). Members of one local Association even produced and sent around the country a whole pamphlet attacking the Party. The RCP has made a point of not responding to each and every provocation of this type because turning the USCPFA into a battleground for left sects is a sure prescription for stagnation and a service to the bourgeoisie.

Although those peddling anti-communism sometimes claim "It's just the RCP and its line we oppose," the objections raised are against communist forms of organization as a whole, and particularly the unity and discipline of Party members in the organization. This is usually raised as the spectre of "The RCP is trying to take over the Friendship Association." Those raising this hue and cry are doing so to hide the fact they themselves are trying to use the Association to further their own ends. While aiming their main attack at the RCP and even warning of others who have an organizational presence in the USCPFA, they have also attacked and even driven away numbers of independent, individual

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## Revolution

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# Ashby Leach Battle Heats Up

The struggle to free Ashby Leach is starting to pick up momentum. The Ashby Leach Defense Committee (ALDC), composed of his family, friends, supporters and the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) has been set up and is coordinating a defense effort in a national campaign. VVAW has made the case an important focus of its work. In Norfolk, Virginia, the VVAW has had two marches to Chessie facilities (a corporate conglomerate which operates the old Chesapeake and Ohio and the Baltimore and Ohio railroads) in order to leaflet and talk with Chessie workers. In Veterans Day marches and demonstrations from Philadelphia to San Francisco, there were banners demanding "Free Ashby Leach," and speeches which pointed out how Ashby is an example both of how veterans are used once by the capitalists to fight their wars and then thrown away once the use has been sucked out of them, and of how veterans refuse to take this treatment lying down. Petitions demanding that Leach be freed, that Chessie honor its debt to veterans, and that the GI Bill be extended and expanded are being signed in cities across the nation.

After three months in jail, Ashby Leach was released on the payment of \$5000 bond by his relatives Thanksgiving. Funds are still being raised to finance Ashby's legal defence.

After a five year long struggle to get his veteran's benefits from the Chessie system, Ashby Leach took direct action on August 26 of this year by going to Chessie headquarters in the Terminal Tower building in Cleveland, Ohio, seizing one of the offices and holding 13 hostages (including one Chessie vice-president) for nine hours. In front of the national media, the Chessie system agreed to Ashby's demands—that Chessie extend all benefits of the GI Bill to its vets and that past employees who have been cheated of these benefits be reimbursed. Once these promises were made, Ashby surrendered; he had made a statement by his actions that not just vets but everyone else who's been pushed around and messed over by the system, could take as their own. (For more on this takeover and Ashby Leach's five year struggle leading up to it see the Oct. 15, 1976 issue of *Revolution*.)

## Slanders in the Press

As soon as Ashby Leach was arrested, however, the bourgeoisie opened up a full-scale attack of lies and slander. Chessie immediately reneged on all its promises. Ashby Leach was charged with 16 felonies (13 charges of kidnapping) and his bond set at an astronomical \$450,000.

The media opened up an attack. The *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the city's largest paper, owned by Cyrus Eaton, Chairman of the Board of Chessie, wrote, "He had a point to make, and he wanted to get some attention. But he chose a stupid way to get it." The *Cleveland Press* said, "Leach is not a hero at all. Heroes don't hold anxious, defenseless people at bay with a gun." WCLV, a Cleveland radio station, told its listeners, "Ashby Leach is a criminal. Let us never forget that."

Now Chessie and the State of Ohio are trying to have him declared "incompetent" or "insane," and prevent his case from coming to trial.

But would this kind of campaign to discredit him have been necessary if Ashby Leach was a "criminal" or was "crazy?" Of course not.

Ashby Leach made very clear in his action that it was aimed not at the hostages, but against Chessie and the system which uses vets once and throws them away. His demands had a clear focus: that Chessie extend all benefits of the GI Bill to its veterans and that past employees who had been cheated of these benefits be reimbursed. No one was hurt; in fact the shotgun he car-

ried into the building was loaded only with letters he'd written to Congressmen and others.

Nor is Ashby Leach crazy, although he is certainly angry and justifiably so. Ashby Leach is angry, and he and millions of vets would be crazy not to be angry.

## Chessie's "Happy Vets"

One of the most vicious attacks on Ashby Leach has come from the pages of *The Chessie News*, the company's newsletter, which devoted the two front pages to an article entitled "Disgruntled Ex-Apprentice Quit Job With Another Railroad Before Harassing Chessie Hostages." And the next three pages are devoted to interviews with Chessie's "happy vets," all of whom, according to the publication, are delighted with their jobs and the way Chessie is treating its veterans.

Some of what *The Chessie News* says is distortion, some is simply lies. For instance they say, "Although Leach has claimed that his 'campaign' was on behalf of his fellow veterans there is no evidence that he has ever spoken for anyone other than himself." Yet Ashby Leach himself says, "I have stood up not only for the veterans but the American people as a whole." His demands to Chessie clearly reflect the sentiments of millions of veterans, sick of the economic crisis as the government tries to push through cuts in the GI Bill, wretched health care, and unemployment continues up. How does Chessie explain the 2000 people who gathered outside the Terminal Towers the day of the takeover, many raising clenched fists and cheering?

As to "happy and contented veterans" who love the Chessie system, how many have lost their jobs since the workforce has been trimmed more than 25% since 1970? What do they think about the job combination and work rule changes of the last few years?

This, of course, is exactly the reason the bourgeoisie has come down so hard on Ashby Leach and is carrying on the muckraking campaign they are. They are afraid Ashby Leach's action will set a militant example to millions of other veterans around the country, sent to fight a war overseas to protect their imperialist interests, many getting killed and maimed, with those who returned facing unemployment, discrimination, and cutbacks of veterans benefits. They are afraid that Ashby Leach's action, and the growing movement to demand his freedom will help give a focus to the anger and frustration millions of veterans feel. In fact Howard Skidmore, Vice-President of Chessie for Public Relations, admitted as much when he wrote in a letter that Ashby's public statements "grip our sympathy because they fit so neatly into the pattern of the ill-treated veteran...."

As things stand right now, after being "counseled" by the court-appointed attorney (who, incidentally, has an office in the Terminal Tower building and pals around with Chessie executives) to take any "deal" that the prosecution might offer, Ashby Leach, during a pre-trial hearing on November 17, requested his own attorney. Since there was no way to deny this request, the new attorney immediately asked for reduction in the ridiculously high \$450,000 bond and found that the court appointed attorney had never bothered to make that simple legal request. As a result of his request, bond was reduced from \$450,000 to \$100,000, making it possible for his release on \$5000 bond.

The VVAW and the Ashby Leach Defense Committee are continuing to build nationwide support for Ashby and raising funds to finance his legal defense. In Milwaukee the VVAW chapter is asking people who sign the Ashby Leach petition to contribute one dollar each. Other chapters of VVAW will be doing similar fundraising. Contributions can be sent to the Ashby Leach Defense Committee, P. O. Box 09100, Cleveland, Ohio 44109. ■

## Angry Vet Speaks Out

The following are excerpts from answers written by Ashby Leach in response to questions mailed to him while he was in jail by the Vietnam Veterans Against the War—ed.

(November 17, 1976)

**Question:** What were you thinking of on the 36th floor of the Terminal Tower on August 26th?

**Leach:** Well, I was thinking of a variety of things over the span of nine hours or so while in the corporate headquarters of the Chessie System. I was thinking that it was a dirty shame that the only way that I could get anything done was by risking my life and scaring a bunch of innocent people. I was thinking about sending my *open letter* to every member of the 94th Congress and getting only three replies. I was thinking about how the railroads are always getting more money (via lobbyists) from Congress. How Hayes T. Watkins who as president of the (fat cat System) Railroad was a mathematics prodigy but he knew so little or cared so little about people, had lied to me and cheated thousands of veterans of this country's most tragic war out of their GI Bill of Rights because he said it was a complicated business procedure. I thought about all those people (like me) who had fought in that war and went over there because we were told we were fighting for principles. I thought about how the Chessie System's policy of refusing to cooperate with the Veterans Administration was a desecration of the graves and memories of those who had died in that bloody conflict and how a business situation was more important than the survivors (people).

I was thinking about writing to [Senator] Hartke of Indiana who was the Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee and requesting time and time again that he check into this matter and could I come to Congress and testify before the Veterans Affairs Committee about the railroads' refusal to cooperate with the VA and how the Chessie System had cheated thousands of veterans out of millions of dollars in educational benefits. I was thinking of how Hartke was also the Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and how he was throwing away my letters that were written on behalf of Viet Nam veterans and justice and how he was up there before Congress proposing, introducing and supporting legislation to give the Railroads more of the people's tax money.

I was just that much more resolved in the justice of my cause because I knew I wasn't going to kill or harm anyone, that is the reason I had the barrel of my shotgun loaded with copies of letters and an American revolution-

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## Plans Nationwide Fight

# UWOC Mobilizes to Free Bornson, Davis

Tom Bornson and Lonnie Davis are two unemployed workers sentenced to jail for taking over a food stamp office in Portland, Oregon last February. The struggle to free them, which has been growing over the last several months, represents in a microcosm the class struggle that is developing around unemployment. The Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee (UWOC) has built support in the Northwest for a number of months and is currently launching a nationwide campaign.

These two are working men, who when faced with unemployment and no way to live, a situation that increasingly threatens more and more workers, decided to rebel and fan the sparks of their rebellion as wide as possible. For their part, the bourgeoisie, recognizing the political nature of their action and fearing larger numbers of people taking matters into their own hands around unemployment, set out to make a negative example of Bornson and Davis, attempting to show that if you fight back you will be crushed. But Bornson and Davis, acting as individuals, represented the sentiments of the working class in its hatred and growing struggle against this system which breeds unemployment. And the working class is going to set its own example by building a movement to set them free.

The local press in the Portland area called these two men everything from "welfare frauds" and "cheats" to even "professional con men." Lonnie Davis was termed "dangerous" and "mentally defective" for siding with the family when he had nothing to gain from it personally.

### Background to the Seizure

But these two men are not kooks. They are workers, who like millions around the country couldn't find a job. Bornson's last job was in Lubbock, Texas, working in a cotton oil mill. He was laid off in April, 1975, and unable to find work, he and his wife packed up their 6 kids and took off in an old school bus to follow the crops and look for more permanent work. They came to Oregon where they met Lonnie Davis, who had been laid off from a Missouri highway construction project and was also traveling, looking for work. Both men hoped to prune trees but due to warm weather couldn't find any work.

Bornson and Davis went to the unemployment office two or three times a week looking for jobs, too poor to live in anything but the old school bus in a state park. They received emergency welfare assistance in December and January, and to raise money for gas and rent they sold their blood.

But in January they were told they had exhausted their emergency funds and were not eligible for any more assistance because they lacked a "permanent address," the kind of disgusting excuse the unemployment and welfare offices are known to use time and time again to deny thousands the benefits they need to feed their families. Faced with a family eating one meal a day, a sick baby and a young daughter with a heart murmur who needed medical attention, Tom Bornson, together with Lonnie Davis, had to decide what to do.

Bornson and Davis considered turning to robbery. A few times they stole food from the grocery stores, hiding hamburger in their pants and walking out. But this went against the grain of these two men who had spent their lives working to support themselves and their families. They quickly dismissed stealing as a dead-end. As Bornson later summed up "I'm not a criminal, you know, I've worked hard all my life. If I go to jail it's going to be for something. It's not going to be for some petty-ass thing like going and robbing a bank or something like that. I don't want to rob anybody or anything."

Pushed up against the wall by this system which breeds increasing unemployment and misery for the masses of people, Bornson and Davis decided it was time to take decisive action. Armed with knives they took over the Portland food stamp office for several hours, holding the office supervisor and several office workers hostage. They issued four demands: (1) Food stamps for the family; (2) Medical attention for the sick baby, Brian; (3) Press coverage to get their story out to other working people; and (4) That only Tom and Lonnie be charged. After their demands were met Bornson and Davis surrendered and the rest of the family was released.

After the action, there were those who said these two men went too far in this takeover, that it was wrong to hold office workers at knife point. But their

action was directed not against these office workers but against the government. It was an act of rebellion coming out of years of frustration and anger at a system which leads to the impoverishment of the masses on the one hand, the accumulation of capital in the hands of the privileged few on the other.

In China, during the period of massive peasant uprisings similar criticisms came up about how the peasants were going "too far" in rebelling against the landlords. Mao Tsetung answered these criticisms saying: "Doing whatever they like and turning everything upside down, they [the peasants] have created a kind of terror in the countryside. This is what some people call 'going too far,' or 'exceeding the proper limits in righting a wrong,' or 'really too much.' Such talk may seem plausible, but in fact it is wrong. First, the local tyrants, evil gentry and lawless landlords have themselves driven the peasants to this. For ages they have used their power to tyrannize over the peasants and trample them underfoot; that is why the peasants have reacted so strongly." ("Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 28)

Is it so surprising that two unemployed workers "exceeded the proper limits" with such an action when thousands of unemployed just like them are thrown out of their jobs and stand day after day in long lines, many times facing the denial of benefits and the prospect of not being able to feed their families? With massive, long-term unemployment increasing and with unemployment benefits being cut back in many places these kinds of spontaneous actions where the unemployed take matters into their own hands will surely increase.

In this action Bornson, of course, was interested in getting immediate action on his family's food and medical problems. But the demand for press coverage was seen as a way of reaching out broadly to the working class in the Portland area, to use the family's plight as a way to expose the abuses of the system and get others to join the fight. "I was naturally looking out for my family, but felt like if I had to do it then I was going to do it for a bunch of other people too. I was going to get everybody involved. And I still want to get everyone involved," says Bornson. He and Davis acted as individuals but in the *political content* of their takeover they represented the sentiments of the entire working class in its hatred and struggle against this system which breeds unemployment.

There are millions of working people who have slaved all their lives and been pushed to the wall, a fact which the capitalists, in their own distorted and perverted way, colored by *their* class interests, recognize. That is why Bornson and Davis were sentenced to nine and seven years respectively. The judge made clear he was out to "make an example" of the men—an example of the kind of repression that will be brought down upon those who dare to stand up and take matters into their own hands. That is also why on October 14, following a decision to send Tom Bornson back to jail for at least 15 more months, one of

the Parole Board members explained how "we are trying to make an example of him and therefore what we did was correct."

### The Struggle to Free Bornson and Davis

The response of Bornson and Davis, of UWOC and the Committee to Free Bornson and Davis, has been to draw the links between the action they took and the situation faced by millions of unemployed workers. As Bornson himself said in confronting the judge in the original trial, "Do you think you have enough jails to hold all the Tom Bornsons there are out there?" UWOC and the Committee to Free Bornson and Davis have built strong support from the working people in the Portland area through several demonstrations and thousands have come forward to sign petitions, seeing the fight to free the two men as part of their own struggle for what they need—jobs—or enough income to live until there are jobs.

The struggle has already resulted in one victory. Tommie Bornson, the 18 year old son of Tom, was charged with "kidnapping, menacing and robbery" for his part in the takeover. But when his trial came up at the end of August UWOC and the Committee to Free Bornson and Davis had broadened the struggle. Earlier that month 125 people had marched through Portland and telegrams and letters of support came in from across the country. Tommie took a fighting stand despite the attempts to pressure him into pleading guilty. As a result, the judge let him off with only one year's probation, admitting he "feared bad publicity and a packed courtroom." This was bad enough for the "crime" of demanding food, but a great victory considering the charges he was faced with.

Since then these two committees have continued the struggle, taking it out broadly to the working class and fighting a toe to toe battle in the courts. On September 27, unemployed and employed workers picketed the Portland, Oregon Unemployment Office and caravanned to the state capitol to confront Governor Straub, demanding the Parole Board release them and demanding "Jobs or Income." Governor Straub had said he wouldn't meet with them that day because he was campaigning with Jimmy Carter. But the demonstration on the capitol grounds changed his mind. He landed in a National Guard helicopter and rushed into the capitol building to meet with a workers' delegation, although all he would commit himself to was to "look into it."

Despite this growing struggle the Parole Board met on October 14 and refused to set Bornson free. Lonnie Davis has also had parole denied. UWOC and The Committee to Free Bornson and Davis now plan to focus the struggle on the demand for bail during appeal. A "writ of habeas corpus" has been filed in court and plans are being made for rallies and other actions around this.

### Build the Fight Nationwide

The nationwide support that has already been built, including mailgrams, letters of support and articles in *Worker* newspapers have been real instruments in building the fight so far. They have given real encouragement to the family and the campaign locally, and at the same time given the capitalists real cause for alarm. The Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee is calling on all working people and workers' organizations to help make the struggle to free Bornson and Davis a real nationwide campaign. A petition is being circulated in almost every major industrial city. A slide show focusing on the development of the campaign so far is being prepared by UWOC for showing to

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125 demonstrate in Portland August 21st to free Bornson and Davis. UWOC has launched a nationwide campaign demanding their release from prison.

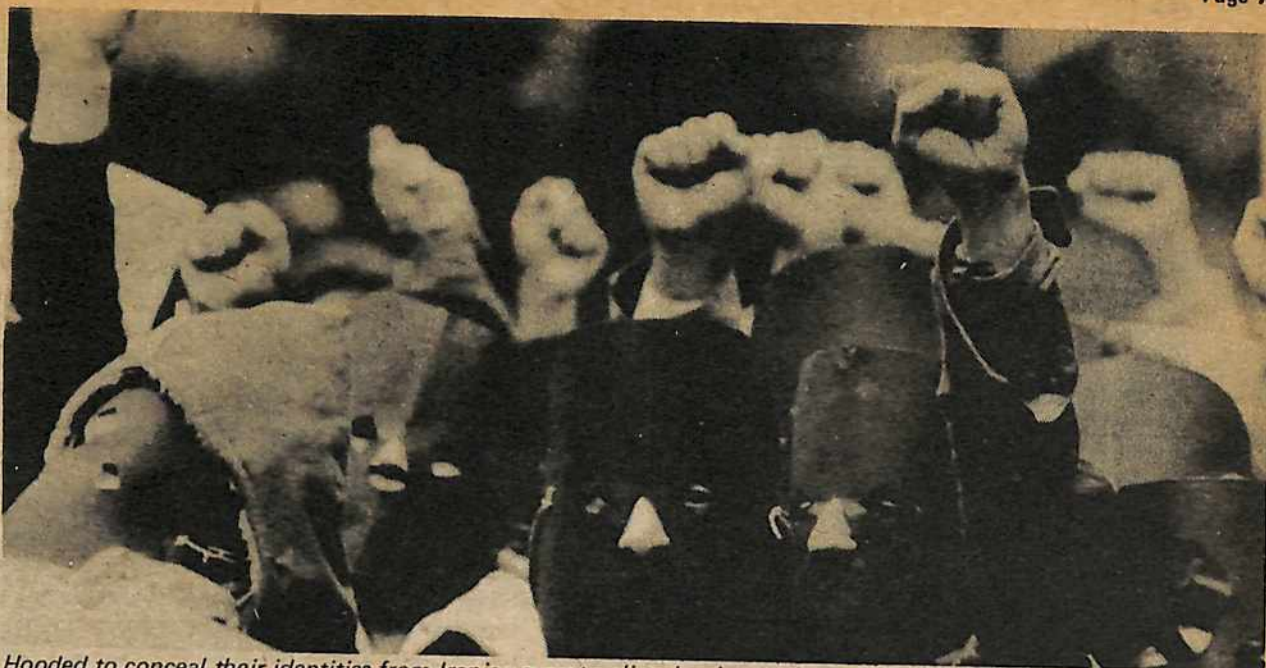
# Attack On ISA by Shah And U.S., French Imperialism

Iranian students are under attack. In France, two leaders of the World Confederation of Iranian Students are facing trumped up charges of shooting an Iranian diplomat. In the U.S., 92 members of the Iranian Students Association (ISA) were jailed in Houston after a demonstration to protest the French incident was ruthlessly attacked by police and Iranian secret police (SAVAK) operating in the U.S.

Events began on November 2, when an Iranian diplomat was shot and wounded in the streets of Paris. Responsibility for the shooting was claimed by an organization called the "International Brigade," which has claimed responsibility for other attacks on diplomats. In spite of the communique, the next day French police raided the home of the International Affairs Secretary of the Confederation and arrested everyone there. Four of the Iranians were immediately deported to Sweden and three of them are facing a possible further deportation to Iran. Two of the arrested students, Nader Oskoui and Reza Takbiri, are in a French prison and are facing immediate deportation to Iran.

Membership in the Confederation or any of its affiliated organizations, like the ISA in the U.S., is illegal under Iranian law. Punishment is severe and often includes torture and death. If the Iranian students are deported they will face harsh repression at the bloody hands of the Shah of Iran and his Gestapo-like SAVAK.

Immediately on hearing news of this attack, the ISA mobilized actions across the U.S. in protest. On November 9, in Houston, members and supporters of the ISA began a 24-hour demonstration outside of the French Consulate. An Iranian student was arrested for "jay-walking" and another was attacked for taking pictures of the demonstration and police in the area. The next day, as the demonstration continued, uniformed Houston police began to cordon off the area around the con-



*Hooded to conceal their identities from Iranian secret police, Iranian students in Rome demonstrate against Shah. Iranian students in the U.S. and other countries have put up courageous resistance to the Shah's reactionary rule.*

sulate as plainclothesmen, including SAVAK agents, in large numbers loitered in the crowds.

Around noon, without warning, all the streets around the consulate were closed to cars and pedestrians and all possible witnesses were whisked away as the police and SAVAK gathered. After giving a two-minute warning to disperse, the police attacked. Many wore gloves lined with iron strips and used brass knuckles, brutally beating the students. Ninety-one were arrested. The next day an ISA member went to bail out the students and was also arrested. The bail was set at \$180,000, enough to keep the students in jail for a while.

The cases of the arrested Iranians were turned over to the Department of Immigration and so these students also face deportation and the terrible consequences of falling into the grip of the Shah.

The Confederation has long opposed the reactionary regime of the Shah and contributed to the struggle for revolution in Iran, by its work among Iranian students studying in other countries and by building support for that struggle among students and others in Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere. Because of this, the Shah and his long arm, SAVAK, have been trying for years to crush this resistance. The recent incidents are part and parcel, and a step-up, in this campaign.

The Shah of Iran is a vicious reactionary, oppressing and enforcing the exploitation of the masses of people in Iran by both his U.S. imperialist backers and also the ruling class elite in Iran. President Giscard d'Estaing of France spent four days in October conversing with the Shah. The French imperialists are trying to curry favor with the Shah's regime in hopes of \$8 billion in contracts. Apparently, part of the price is cracking down

on the Confederation.

The U.S. imperialists, of course, brought the Shah to power in the first place through a CIA-instigated coup in 1953. Their cooperation with the SAVAK in attacking the Houston ISA demonstration is just one more of the many bloody crimes they have committed to keep the Iranian people in chains so that U.S. capital can plunder them.

In this country and internationally, progressive and revolutionary forces must defend the Iranian revolutionary student movement now under assault by the combined forces of the Shah's regime, U.S. imperialism and French imperialism. ■

## Vet Speaks...

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ary flag instead of a live shell...

I was wondering if the FBI or SWAT team would come in and blow me away. I thought about all the times I risked my life (as a medic) in the Nam picking up the bodies of my maimed, mutilated and slain countrymen while the Fat Cat Chessie System was picking up the profits of a war stimulated economy and then the policy makers say I can't have the GI Bill because of some complicated business procedures...

I was thinking about old Cyrus Eaton owning the Chessie System which owns or controls large amounts of the mineral wealth and land of my Almost Heaven State of West Virginia. I was thinking about Logan County, where coal mining is king and how 90% of the mineral rights of that county were owned by corporate interests like Chessie...I thought about how old Cyrus Eaton is always talking about the virtues of social systems and forms of government that have a more equitable distribution of the wealth and resources while he (via the Chessie System and his other corporate conglomerates) was scarfing up all the wealth and resources he could get his hands on for himself...

The more I thought about all that kind of stuff the more I knew I was not only doing the right thing, but the more resolved I became to see that a little bit of justice was done in this country....

**Question: How has Chessie mistreated vets?**

**Leach:** Any Vietnam veteran who has received educational assistance benefits from the VA knows that he must sign a card once a month to receive his benefits. Well, the Chessie System has refused to fill out those cards for those veterans of the war in Vietnam, although they did cooperate and fill out those cards for those veterans of World War 2 and Korea....

I suppose corporate officials figured it might cost a couple of extra bucks for a clerk to fill out these cards for the veterans, so if they don't have to do it they won't do it. Besides the war is over and the Chessie had got all it could out of that episode of stimulated economical growth so why worry or care about the veterans....

It is simple, the Chessie does not wish for the Vietnam veterans to get the on the job training/apprentice training section of the GI Bill so they don't get it.

Chessie has not only mistreated the Vietnam veterans but it has used the VA and leaders of veterans organizations to support them and applaud them such as is shown in this recent planned campaign to congratulate themselves for their wonderful treatment of Vietnam veterans. It is a clear example of how a giant corporate conglomerate can get away with such a flagrant abuse of the people.

They use the people, they take our money (tax money via government subsidies) and then say they are a private company and don't have to let veterans have the GI Bill if they *don't want to*. If we are going to pay for it, we should own it. We the people, *not* the vested special interest groups. Power to the people, not to the corporations. ■

# Students Hit Shah, S. Africa Rulers

On November 21, students and youth held a national demonstration in New York City to support the struggles of the people of southern Africa and to protest the arrest of Iranian students in France and the U.S. The demonstration was called by the Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB), Youth in Action in New York-New Jersey and the Iranian Students Association (ISA). Many of them had stayed over from the Conference on the International Situation held on the previous day.

At noon, over 600 students and youth, including a contingent of 125 Iranian students, assembled and formed into contingents and unfurled banners with the demands: "U.S. out of South Africa," "Down with White Minority Rule," "Down with Apartheid," "Stop Harassment of Iranian Students" and "No Deportations." Through speeches and chants, the protestors declared their support for these struggles and their determination to oppose all moves of both superpowers—the U.S. and the USSR—to dominate people of other countries.

As the march passed by the offices of Air France it stopped and a member of ISA spoke about the recent arrests (see accompanying article). The speaker pointed to the Shah's reactionary regime and his crackdown on the Iranian students as evidence of the growing struggle against the Shah and that his desperate attempts to curb it were going to fly up in his face. The demonstration chanted a message for Air France to carry back to the French ruling class: "France, France, set the Iranian students free!" After 10 minutes the demonstration continued on to the rally site about 20 blocks away, chanting and marching in step the whole way.

The rally was held across from the United Nations. Speakers from Youth in Action and the Vietnam Vet-

erans Against the War spoke out on the demands of the demonstration.

A member of the RSB from New Jersey gave a speech pointing to the role of the U.S. in propping up the governments of Rhodesia and South Africa and the rising struggles of the people there to throw off white minority rule and imperialist domination.

A second RSB speaker talked about the links between the fight of the workers and peasants in southern Africa and Iran and the fight of the working class in this country and how these were directed at a common enemy.

As the Brigade member talked about the end in store for the Shah, our own capitalists and all the exploiters and bloodsuckers, an effigy of the Shah was brought out. As it was set on fire the crowd roared with chants of "Down with the Shah."

After the rally the demonstration moved over to the offices of the *Daily News*, the biggest daily paper in the country. The *Daily News*, with a history of staunchly defending such blatant ruling class policies as the bombing of Vietnam, is today openly supporting the Shah of Iran and the white minority regimes of southern Africa. There was a brief picket line and speech given in front of the main entrance.

This action came at an important time in the struggle of the people of southern Africa and Iran—a time when their struggle is advancing and they are meeting increased repression. The students and youth who came out made clear their determination to fight side-by-side with the working class of this country and the oppressed peoples of the world in the fight for revolution. ■

## Rank & File Resist Sellouts

# Settlements at GM, Chrysler Bad News

Following the national Ford settlement in October, the '76 auto contract fight shifted to Chrysler, then GM. As the companies and UAW International sought to use the "pattern-setting" Ford agreement as a club over Chrysler and GM workers, the rank and file forces tried to build off the other pattern established—the pattern of struggle and resistance of the Ford workers.

At Chrysler and GM plants all across the country there was widespread disgust at the Ford contract, especially right after ratification at Ford. The narrow margin by which it passed strengthened people's determination to fight against the same terms imposed on them.

The International UAW fully understood the damage to their prestige and credibility on this point. They dragged things out from October 14 (the day the Ford contract was signed) to November 5 (the strike deadline for Chrysler). By doing this they hoped to take the edge off the anger felt at the Ford sellout and, not incidentally, help focus attention away from the contracts during the elections. This delay put people in a worse position to fight by bringing the strike deadline dates closer to the holidays. Holiday pay has always been used by the companies and the International leadership as part blackmail, part bribe, to discourage strike sentiment.

In addition GM and Chrysler laid off at the beginning of November in several plants, and the International was quick to pick up on this as another threat to hold over the heads of rank and file workers, using it to reinforce its line that the workers are basically powerless and can only advance through the brilliance and sophistication of their negotiators.

### Chrysler Walkouts

Against this treachery the walkouts of Chrysler workers on November 5 stand out. First the International sent out the word that even if there was a national settlement plants without local contract settlements would walk at 6 PM. Then they waited till ten minutes to six for a phony eleventh hour agreement and instructed everyone to stay on the job, local contract or not. For many this was the last straw, and 30,000 walked out in protest, as a way of demonstrating, if only for a day, that they were simply not yo-yos on the International string, to be taken out and drawn in at will. More significantly, at a number of plants the rank and file saw these walkouts as more than a one-shot deal. They tried to seize the opportunity to force real strikes.

That Friday night picket lines sometimes numbering in the hundreds were set up at Chrysler's Trenton Engine (in the Detroit area). Local officials set up lines at other Detroit area plants but pulled them down the next morning, despite rank and file opposition. A rally of over 200 was held at Chrysler Sterling Stamping after the walkout and about a hundred workers went over to the local hall where they confronted the local hacks over setting up pickets lines. At a Chrysler plant outside Toledo, Ohio workers kept up the strike till after noon shift on Monday. And at the Belvidere, Illinois assembly plant workers walked out at 5 PM and demanded a local union meeting that Sunday to organize a strike. When the local President did not show up for the meeting a rank and file delegation went to his house and hauled him out.

At the Brownstown export plant outside Detroit, workers walked out at 6 PM Friday and prepared to stay out. Police arrived on their picket line and busted some people for drinking, but instead of spreading confusion and breaking the picket, they only succeeded in making workers more angry and determined. Brownstown workers built themselves a lean-to and manned it all that cold weekend. Members of Auto Workers United to Fight (AWUF) from several plants joined the Brownstown picket lines, summing up their experience from the Ford strike to help Brownstown workers get better organized, spreading the spark to other plants. Monday morning the police kept Brownstown workers from picketing but the 15 or so workers who stood by the road with their picket signs grew to 200 that morning as day shift workers turned away and many joined the lines. "We did what was right, we won some respect," was the battle cry striking workers threw back at their local leadership.

Brownstown workers stayed out all day Monday, holding out longer than any other plant, setting an example for all workers. The UAW leadership knew very well that a wildcat, especially at the home local of UAW Vice-President Doug Fraser, could spark an explosion so they brought everything they had to bear on the Brownstown workers on Monday night. Willie Stonewall, the International rep, told the workers they were powerless, that he

had biscuits on his table and that if they wanted some on theirs, they'd better go back, threatening them with massive firings if they didn't return. He said nothing about uniting the workers to fight the firings and Chrysler's further threats, nothing about authorizing a local strike. Brownstown workers went back in on Tuesday, but not without summing up that they had made their point and that it was clear, as they said in a leaflet, "Stonewall and the International were colluding completely with the company and their only purpose was to get us back to work."

### Ratification Votes

Faced with this upsurge, the International UAW Vice-President Douglas Fraser put off ratification until November 15, stressing the need for better preparation inside the UAW than had happened at Ford. Spending this time to unify all levels of the leadership, this stalling was also designed to once again drag things out for the rank and file, hoping the momentum for a "no" vote would get lost in the shuffle. The results of this vote were 33,000 "yes" to 18,000 "no" among production. The contract barely got passed by 622 votes among skilled tradesmen nationwide (who vote separately on the contract).

This was actually a higher percentage for ratification than at Ford, although the votes for ratification were somewhat inflated by cheating and ratification procedures. In part this is due to the various maneuverings of the International in selling the contract. They were also successful in exploiting many of the more backward sentiments of workers. Most workers thought the contract was rotten, and dissatisfaction with conditions and the treachery of the union officials was widespread. But many were afraid of the consequences of a "no" vote and hoped for an easier way to fight the company. They felt that at best it wouldn't do any good—the International would just turn around and put the same thing up for a revote—and at worst, it would be used against them. In a desire to "teach the workers a lesson," the International would likely pull a phony strike, perhaps around holiday time, with still no further concessions from Chrysler to show from it, and this possibility weighed heavily on the rank and file.

These sentiments reflected distrust for the union leadership, but they also point to a lack of faith in the ability of the rank and file to organize their own strength and overcome these obstacles. At the bottom of a lot of this sentiment was also the view: "What's the point of hitting them if we can't win anything," a defeatist and narrow view reinforced time and again by the UAW leadership. But while it is a fact that the International still holds many cards in the auto industry and that all the rank and file is not united around a fighting program, it is also true that these problems developed in the course of overall advances for the rank and file struggle.

For the first time, auto workers saw a nationwide rejection as a real possibility. While the contract fight brought out contradictions in the workers' understanding, it also sharpened up the basic antagonisms they feel with the companies and the union leadership.

### Role of AWUF

The work of Auto Workers United to Fight in '76 (a national rank and file organization which established itself as a center of opposition to the International's treachery) was of great importance. Throughout these battles at Ford and Chrysler, AWUF has fought to sharpen up the real issues of the strike, going beyond simply emphasizing the real demands of the rank and file vs. the International's shorter work time smoke screen. Because the UAW International is interested in more than just selling the rank and file a lousy contract tailor-made for the companies' profit needs, they would like to use the contract this year as yet another opportunity to strip auto workers of their militant traditions, replacing the workers' sense of purpose, and their consciousness of their interests, with confusion and demoralization. Every act of rebellion aimed at the International's sellout helped to defeat the leadership's attempts to demoralize and further shackle the workers, and every act of resistance left the workers in a stronger position for future battle.

With this in mind, AWUF used leaflets, press statements, demonstrations and plant gate agitation to try to sharpen up basic questions. A "vote no" leaflet passed out at Chrysler the week of ratification is an example: "...everything is not settled at Chrysler. No matter how much they try to hide it, the fact is that the rank and file has the power. Not just the power to turn down a

lousy contract, but the power based on the fact that without us and our labor the Chrysler corporation ain't nothing. Without us to mislead, Doug Fraser and his kind have no comfortable careers to call their own. The choice is ours—not theirs—what kind of contract we want to live under the next three years. A no vote turns the tables on them—shows they don't have a loyal membership sewn up in their back pocket but a rank and file that is sticking up for itself. A no vote shows we're not going along with their program—that we are ready to give Chrysler a full taste of our power."

### Focus Shifts to GM

On the heels of the Chrysler settlement the International moved immediately to GM. But GM had made it clear that it had no big objections to the Ford settlement. The International made a limp-wristed effort to inject a sense of confrontation into what were essentially hassle-free negotiations. Playing off a real threat to all workers with GM's six nonunion shops in the South, the International came up with a ridiculous demand that GM sign a "letter of noninterference" with any future union organizing attempt. How does an employer not "interfere" with a union organizing effort? Once again the International was trying to deal with a company attack by pleading with it to change its very nature.

In opposition to this approach AWUF raised the demand "Extend the national contract to the six nonunion shops"—a demand in the interests of workers nationwide against GM's attempts to undercut their power. In addition, AWUF anticipated the mini-strikes that occurred on the eve of the strike deadline. In leaflets passed out around the country beforehand, AWUF stated, "They claim these mini-strikes are using surprise divide and conquer tactics against GM. In actual fact, we've seen these mini-strikes used to divide and conquer the workers. In '72, locals all over the country were pushing to strike against GMAD's vicious speed-up and harassment. As GM made a united assault against workers all over the country, the International sat on our grievances, sat on our strike votes until they came up with this mini-strike idea which let them take out a lot of locals one at a time, instead of all together. 'Mini-strikes' mean telling the company ahead of time exactly when we're going back.

"The so-called mini-strike strategy takes one of our most important weapons—the strike—and turns it into at best a minor annoyance to the company. If it was such a good idea, why is it that the International only uses it at GM? The answer is simple. The UAW International is scared of GM and afraid to really take them on. GM is big and really has a lot of power. But 400,000 GM workers united have even more potential power. And we demand the International stop playing games, holding us back from using that power. Our union was founded at GM and our forefathers weren't afraid of its size. In fact, they took it on because it was the biggest, and therefore the most important to hit." At a GM parts warehouse outside Atlanta one brother got over the sound system and read this section of the leaflet over and over again during the working day.

The International badly needs to do something, to try to restore some of its badly battered prestige. In addition the mini-strikes had the added advantage of creating a lot of confusion while not hurting GM at all. In fact, the night of the mini-strike GM tried scheduling overtime in several of the plants not affected.

With these mini-strikes the International hopes it will be better able to sell the agreement, claiming that "after all we shot our best shot and this is what we came up with." But what's most important is that while much confusion was spread, most workers showed nothing but anger and contempt for this mini-strike, and all over the country these actions gave rise to militant confrontations with the leadership.

While the International hopes it will have a more substantial "vote of confidence" with the ratification at GM, many workers are organizing to show them wrong. AWUF and other rank and file workers are concentrating on the fight over the local contracts—as well as fighting for a "no" vote on the nationwide contract. The local contracts are important not only because they deal with working conditions in the plants, but also because a strike around GM local contracts would be a way of hitting back at the whole sellout pattern set by the International.

The terms of the contract so far announced are a carbon copy of the other settlements. And as far as the "letter of noninterference"—the hot and emotional issue particular to GM—the International got what it wanted. "The good faith and integrity of the General Motors Corporation is behind this commitment," Woodcock said. Then Bluestone, who admitted that violation of the letter isn't a strike issue, said the union is relying on the "honor and integrity of GM." There you have it. While the UAW International's class collaboration has sunk to new lows in this Fall's round of negotiations, the struggle of the rank and file and the development of organized, more conscious leadership in that struggle, has been sharper than before.

Like the contract fights in trucking and rubber earlier this year, one cannot judge the results of this struggle in terms of the immediate settlements, but in the rank and file initiative and organization in which lie the seeds of an even stronger movement to take a tougher stand in the battles to come. ■





(Left) Palestinian fighters in Beirut this year. The intervention of the Syrian Army, which makes up the bulk of Arab League peace keeping force (right), resulted in a serious military setback for Palestinian Liberation forces.



## “Peace” Imposed In Lebanon War

The recent summit meeting of the Arab League held in Cairo on October 24 and 25 has succeeded, at least for the present, in forcing an end to the bloody, bitter war in Lebanon. The meeting, attended by the heads of almost every Arab state and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), ratified the agreement worked out a week earlier in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, between Syria, the PLO, Egypt and Elias Sarkis, the new president of Lebanon, under pressure from oil rich Saudi Arabia. The terms of the current settlement reflect the military situation in Lebanon after 19 months of warfare and point to the political solution in the Middle East that more and more it appears Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria would like to bring about: a negotiated settlement with Israel that would recognize Israel's right to exist as a state on the territory of Palestine and effect the return of land occupied by the Zionists since the 1967 war, while playing lip service to the political role of the Palestinians and their rights.

The obstacle to such a settlement has been an independent Palestinian liberation movement capable of waging continued military struggle against the Zionists, together with the militant sentiments and actions of millions of other Arab people. Despite the fact that the PLO was recognized as the only representative of the Palestinian people at the Rabat summit in 1972 and given full voting rights in the Arab League earlier this year, continued efforts have been made to bring the Palestinians under the control of the “front line” Arab states and eliminate the basis of their independent role. This was a key goal of the Syrian military intervention in Lebanon. Under the influence of Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt, the Arab kings and presidents at the Cairo summit pressured the PLO to recognize that it had to give up its military role and to be satisfied with a “political” role instead.

### Syria's Invasion

Syria's invasion of Lebanon in support of right wing Lebanese forces at the end of May has resulted in a serious military setback for the Palestinians and their Lebanese allies.

Large scale fighting erupted in Lebanon in the spring of 1975 after the government and private militias of sections of the Lebanese ruling class generally identified as the “dominant Maronite Christian wing” attacked predominately Moslem Lebanese workers in the port city of Saida and in Beirut. The fighting escalated as this dominant wing resisted subsequent demands and efforts of other sections of the ruling class to force a realignment of power (see *Revolution*, Vol. 1, Nos. 2, 9). The Palestinians were drawn into the battle when the Lebanese reactionaries expanded their efforts to maintain the status quo in Lebanon into an effort to drive the Palestinians out of the country.

Until the Syrians intervened, the Lebanese reactionaries were dealt a series of sharp defeats by the combined Palestinian and progressive Lebanese forces that for a while seemed likely to result in a new government in Lebanon sympathetic to the Palestinians and more hostile to the interests of western imperialists.

Syria's invasion brought about a reversal of this situation. The Palestinians and their Lebanese allies

were forced to give up virtually all their strategic positions in Lebanon and suffered large casualties. Syria now controls about two thirds of the country and the Lebanese reactionaries, armed by Israel, the United States and Syria, occupy key positions in southern Lebanon on the Israeli border as well as their strongholds in the north. The PLO was urgently pressing the other Arab governments to force the Syrians to halt the attack. In this sense the Riyadh and Cairo agreements have meant the lessening of the immediate military pressure on the beleaguered Palestinian and Lebanese progressive forces.

But while the Lebanese rightists would like nothing better than to see the Palestinians and their allies wiped out altogether, the Syrians were primarily interested in destroying the independence of the Palestinian resistance and asserting their dominance in Lebanon. On the basis of their military success the Syrians sought to present the Palestinians with the options of military disaster or accepting Syrian imposed restrictions on their operations.

In essence, this was the option presented to the Palestinians at the Riyadh meeting. Egypt's president Sadat had tried to give the appearance of being a firm supporter of the Palestinians against the Syrian invasion. But their military aid was carefully measured and Sadat was quick to embrace Syria's president Assad and approve his role in Lebanon once it became clear that Syria would recognize Egypt's unilateral agreement with Israel (the Sinai agreement) and would unite in an overall move towards a negotiated settlement with Israel.

### U.S. and Israel Gain Through War

The U.S. imperialists, who behind the screen of official silence gave support to Syria's invasion, are quite satisfied with these developments. And Israel, though it has had some worries about Syrian troops on the Israeli-Syrian border, has been positively gleeful as Syria, supposedly the staunchest ally of the Palestinians, turned its guns on the liberation forces. The Lebanon war has created great difficulties for the Soviet Union which has long tried to pass itself off as the great friend of the Palestinians but also looked to Syria as its most important base of influence in the Middle East, especially after Sadat turned on them. But while the U.S. imperialists stand to gain the most from recent developments, their imperialist rivals will continue to fight for every opening to reassert their influence and gain hegemony in the Middle East.

Despite the setbacks suffered by the PLO, the hopes of the Arab governments, the Zionists and the U.S. imperialists to impose a “final solution” on the Palestinians will prove illusory. The millions of Palestinians driven from their homeland by the Zionists have withstood serious reverses in the past and have risen again to fight more strongly. Even as Israel crows about the military defeat suffered by the PLO in Lebanon, Palestinians in the West Bank and other Israeli occupied territory have stepped up their struggle. In the end it will not be the schemes of the superpowers or the deals of the Arab ruling classes, but the masses of Palestinian people and the people of Lebanon and the Arab countries who will determine the course of events. ■

## Castro's Cure For Sugar Woes: More Sugar!

In a speech to the Cuban people on September 28, Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro gave an accidental lesson by negative example on the logic of imperialist economic enslavement. He warned that the country was faced with “an unfavorable economic situation” which would require great sacrifices and hardships for the masses. Castro has demanded sacrifices and tried to excuse hard times in Cuba many times before, usually because of a bad sugar harvest. But this time the problem is not too little sugar, but too much of it on the world market, which has brought the price from 65½ cents a pound two years ago to only 7½ cents a pound today.

This amounts to a big disaster for the Cuban economy, bringing a drastic cut in its income from sugar, while at the same time, Castro points out, the price of Cuba's imports (including oil from the USSR) is rapidly rising. This blows a hole in Cuba's first five year plan, meaning that much of it will have to be abandoned less than a year after it was concocted. In addition to the overall setbacks this means for Cuba's economic development, Castro warns that there is one sacrifice effective immediately: the present ration of four ounces of coffee a month will have to be cut back.

Why do Cubans have to cut their coffee consumption? Because there's less coffee? No—the problem is that Cuba has to export even more of its large coffee crop to pay for the imports which the government had hoped to pay for with its profits from sugar. And why does Cuba have to rely so much on imports, including much of its food and raw materials, when most of the agricultural products it imports could be grown in Cuba? Because so much of the island's resources go for sugar. And why does Cuba grow so much sugar, instead of developing the economy to meet the people's needs? Let's let Fidel answer that in his own words:

“Sugarcane is the agricultural product from which we profit most. We must not forget that the growing trade between Cuba and the USSR and other socialist countries is chiefly based on sugar; all the oil, wheat and scores of other things we consume are purchased with sugar.”

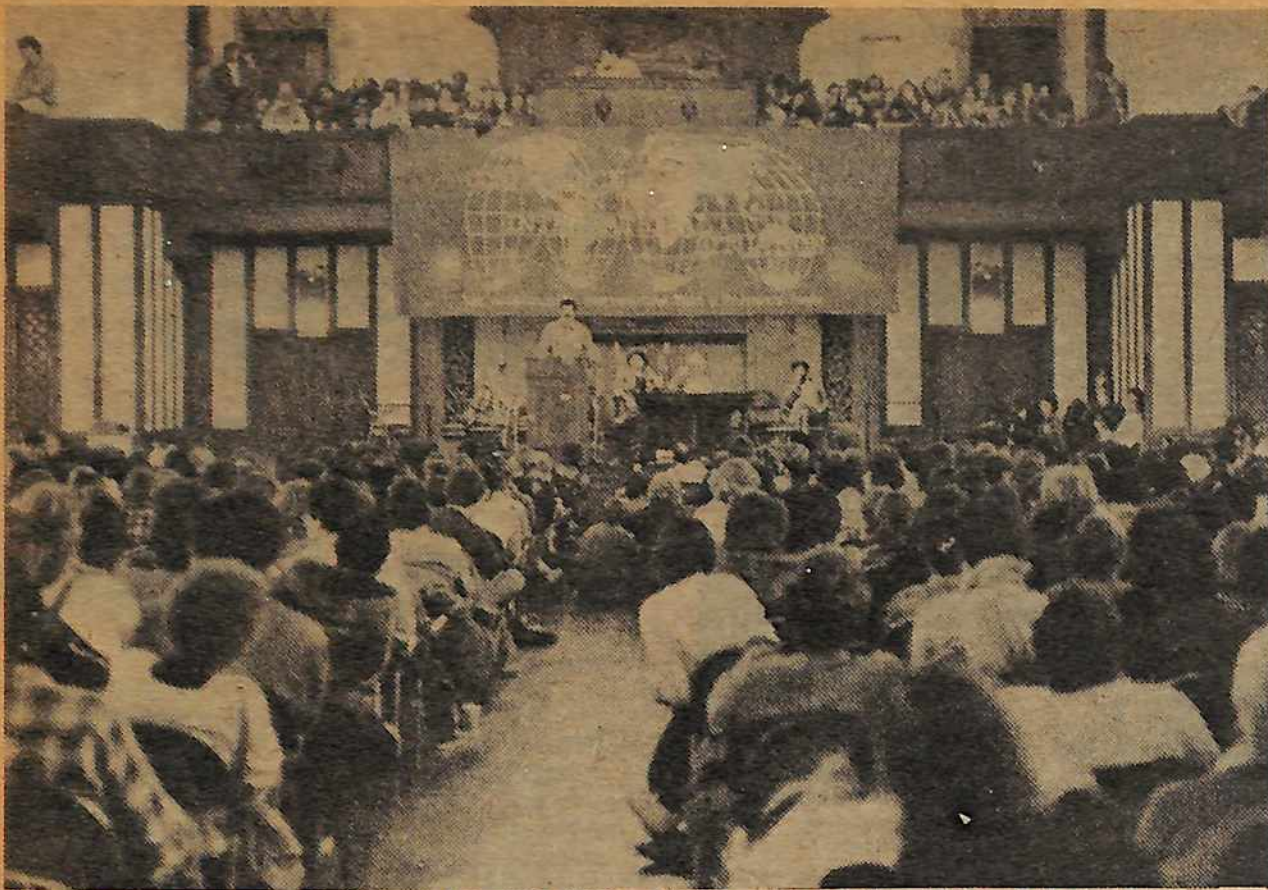
“Even though our problems are in large measure due to sugar, this does not mean we should develop an anti-sugar attitude—quite the contrary,” Castro explained. The solution, he said, is to grow even more sugar, and to increase the amount of sugar traded with the USSR, with Cuba's economy planned to dovetail into the Soviet Union's in planned steps through the year 2000.

This is truly the logic of imperialism, that recommends more poison as the cure for poison. For whom has Cuba's dependence on sugar been so profitable? At first, for the U.S. imperialists who kept Cuba as a giant sugar plantation for their own profits, stunting the island's overall development. Now it's to the great advantage of the USSR imperialists, and to the new Cuban bourgeoisie which works for this new foreign master.

For the past few years, while sugar prices were high, Cuba increased its trade and loans from the various European imperialists. Now that the bottom has dropped out of the world sugar market, Castro announced, Cuba will have to sell the USSR even more sugar and other crops to pay its debts. The Soviets buy Cuban sugar at a fixed price of 30 cents a pound, but they still do all right on the deal since it's the USSR which fixes the prices of goods traded for sugar with Cuba.

In the article “Cuba: The Evaporation of a Myth,” in the February 15 issue of *Revolution* (later reprinted as a pamphlet), it was shown how the USSR used its “aid” to Cuba to turn Cuba into its own neo-colony after Castro's revolution in 1959 forced out the American imperialists. What was presented as a “generous” offer by the USSR to buy Cuban sugar at a fixed price has led to the situation of today, where Cuba's economy is as dependent on sugar as ever and he who buys the sugar calls the tune.

Soviet “aid” is like U.S. “aid”: it is poisoned bait. The struggle of the world's people is not alongside one or another of these superpowers, but against them both. Cuba's suffering at the hands of the imperialists of both superpowers is proof of that fact, and an exposure of the whole imperialist system. ■



Morning presentations by Nick Unger of the RCP, William Hinton and Egbal Ahmad laid out the three main lines debated at the Conference on the International Situation. The conference was characterized by the serious and principled participation of the vast majority of the 2300 people in attendance.

## Bob Avakian, Chairman of Central Com., RCP

# Excerpts From Conference Speech

Following are edited excerpts of remarks made by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, during the November 20 debate with William Hinton and Dave Dellinger at the Conference on the International Situation. Full transcripts of the major speeches and debate will be available after January 1st for \$5.00 from the conference organizing committee, P.O. Box 20, Bronx, N.Y., 10468.

### On the USSR

Krushchev had made a mess of things, he unstabilized things, he banged his shoe too much and didn't get down to the serious business of consolidating capitalist relations. So other revisionists pushed him aside and moved to consolidate these relations and moved to consolidate capitalism. But having done so, they were bound by the very laws of capitalism, especially in its imperialist stage. They are driven to push out and try to grab up everywhere they can in the world. To plunder wherever they can while robbing and exploiting the people within the Soviet Union itself.

They've turned most of Eastern Europe into essentially dependencies or colonies of the Soviet Union, which became clear in 1968 in Czechoslovakia, and especially in recent years, have reached out to all parts of the world to try to grab control away from the U.S. imperialists and to crush the struggle of the people at the same time.

But, in recent years, as they more and more geared up and became more and more bold and been more and more driven to contend with the U.S. imperialists and as the U.S. imperialists have been more on the decline, the Soviet social-imperialists have got a new wrinkle (by social-imperialist I mean socialism in words, imperialist in deeds). Now they come on as seemingly less conservative and cowardly, now they bang their fist and talk more militant, they even talk again of the dictatorship of the proletariat, how they are going to in fact dictate over the workers in the Soviet Union and everyone else internationally. At the same time they talk about supporting struggles against imperialism.

But this new militancy doesn't mean they have gotten less "conservative" and more "revolutionary." All it means is that they have gotten more bold, more brazen and are driven more desperately.... Is what the Soviet Union is doing in relation to these different liberation struggles actually support or an attempt to use them for actual takeover? Any examination of any particular struggle shows that it is always the latter. This is an old game played by imperialism. Hell, go back to 1898 when the U.S. grabbed Cuba, the Philippines and Puerto Rico, they did it in the name of liberating them from Spain... So this is an old trick and the Soviet social-imperialists are playing it and people are seeing more and more through it, but they are still many who don't and this leads to complications, confusion and even to wrong policies....

I would like to speak to our position on NATO and

some of these other things. But first, I want to say something about where emotionalism can lead you. About five years ago I was in a debate like this and there were a bunch of Trotskyites up there screaming about Bangladesh and how the Chinese and other people were opposing liberation. If we look at Angola today we can look back and use Bangladesh as one yardstick and remember that the Cubans, who some say were playing an internationalist role in Angola, also supported that and also supported the Czechoslovakian invasion by the Soviet Union. People at the time of the Bangladesh events were very emotional. But look at what's happened since then. There aren't too many who will argue any more that the people in Bangladesh were really liberated in 1971—in fact, if anything, conditions got worse and they were brought under the rule of a new master. There have been some events that have changed things since then; the "great leader" Mujibur Rahman was executed and there have been a few other things. I think it's clear we should sum up some experience. We can learn some things—that emotionalism, however well intentioned, just won't do it. We need science, we need a deep understanding of the laws governing things.

### On the "Main Danger"

NATO, (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) first of all, what does it mean for U.S. revolutionaries, the working class and people in the U.S. to so-called "fight appeasement" and fight against a section of the ruling class that carries out so-called "appeasement" policies, etc., the way it is being raised by some like Hinton and the OL and others today. It means urging our own imperialists to be more vigorous in carrying out their own imperialist aims and intentions and their own imperialist drives, to be more vigorous in their plunder and in their contention for domination, exploitation and oppression.

Now Bill Hinton says, for example, that we're feeding and nurturing a Frankenstein monster, the Soviet Union, which he says will turn on us. The problem with that, what he leaves out, is that we've already got a Frankenstein monster that's "turned on us" and has been riding our backs and sucking our blood every day—that's our own ruling class. And we don't intend to change one for the other, have one monster come and replace the other. What we intend to do is smash down the monster that's now ruling over us and then, as I said, to protect ourselves and to protect the socialist state we're going to create from enemies both internal and external.

Second of all, I think we ought to get to the heart of this on "main danger." There is one thing that Bill ought to be commended for, at least to a certain degree, and that's that he comes straight out and gets to the heart of the matter,...as opposed to the OL and some others. What is really being said by the Soviet Union "main danger" really comes down to the fact that the Soviet Union, at the present time, is the main danger

to China. And the position that we have to unite all who can be united against the Soviet Union on a world scale revolves around the fact that China is mainly endangered now by the Soviet Union—and it is true that the Soviets are overall the main threat to China, although the possibility of an attack by U.S. imperialism on China should not be ruled out.

But let's examine this deeper. World War 2, when it began, as Mao pointed out and as other communists pointed out at the time, also began as an inter-imperialist war. Mao himself said there was no basis for unity with or supporting either side in that war at that time, and that was said not once but more than three times by Mao Tsetung between 1939 and 1941.

The fact...is that the imperialist war at that time was a war of imperialism on both sides. As we pointed out in *Revolution* articles, and a long article in the theoretical journal of our Central Committee *The Communist*, which is now out—World War 2 *did* change its character. But it changed when the principal aspect of that war became an attack by some imperialist powers, headed by Germany, on the Soviet Union and the defense against this attack. That did require a change in the tactics of Marxists-Leninists and the working class and the masses of people around the world.

But what Bill is saying, and he said this this morning, is that that's bound to happen anyway, so we ought to start preparing for it *now* and to prepare for it now we ought to go about uniting with our own ruling class. This at best comes down to fortune telling and Mao, whom he rightly respects, said very succinctly Marxists-Leninists are not and should not be fortune tellers.

What we have to do is analyze the actual situation before us now, basing ourselves on it, keeping in mind what might happen. But we can't *a priori* determine what might happen, nor does the mere existence of a socialist country, nor even the fact that an attack comes down on a socialist country *necessarily* mean that the character of a war changes. For example, if in the course of a new world war Albania were attacked and not China, that might or might not change the character of the war.

If China was attacked, it might depend on who attacked it and what the balance of forces was—if we were on the verge of making revolution in the U.S., the correct thing to do, in my opinion, would be to carry it through and that would be the best aid to China. If we weren't, we might have to make adjustments. But to start making them *now* is a very dangerous line. And what it leads Bill to is to support things like NATO, support other aggressive moves by the U.S. to tighten up their own bloc—which is an imperialist bloc and that can never be forgotten.

Bill talks about arms. He said that we can't have a one sided policy towards U.S. arms and arms sales any more. Arms for suppression, he says, have to be opposed, but arms for defense are OK. Well unfortunately, things don't work like this. There was this movie "West World" where they had robots and they shot each other and the guns would only go off if they were aimed at robots; they wouldn't go off if any human heat was given off.

Well, unfortunately, arms in the real world don't act like that. You can't have arms that when they're aimed against anti-imperialist fighters don't go off and

Continued on next page



Volume 1, Number 1  
October, 1976

## the COMMUNIST

Theoretical Journal of the Central Committee  
Of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

- Commodities, Capitalism, Class Divisions—  
and their Abolition with the  
Achievement of Communism
- Social-Imperialism and Social-Democracy,  
Cover-Up of Capitalism in the USSR  
(or How Martin Nicolous and the October League Have  
"Restored" Socialism in the Soviet Union)
- Bourgeois Democracy and the  
U.S. Working Class
- On the Character of World War 2
- Bourgeois Right, Economism, and the  
Goal of the Working Class Struggle

\$2

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Continued from previous page

when they're aimed against the imperialist go off! You can't have arms that have "mood ring" triggers—so that if the person is a genuine anti-imperialist pulling the trigger, it'll shoot, but if they're an imperialist or fighting for suppression, it won't go off!

We have to make an analysis of the actual character at any time of what's going on. And the actual character of the U.S. is that it is trying to shore up and is shoring up its imperialist bloc. While there are reasons why China is making use of contradictions and on a world scale is trying to direct those forces mainly against the Soviet Union—acting according to similar tactics to the Soviet Union before World War 2 when it was a socialist country—this is not a reason for us to adopt the same policy. Mao Tsetung warned against this. In 1946 when the Soviet Union was making certain necessary compromises after the war with different imperialist countries, Mao wrote very sternly in an essay (because the same mistake was being made then) that because such compromises were being made it does not mean that the people in the capitalist countries should follow suit and also make compromises with their rulers at home. The people of those countries, he said, will continue their struggles according to their own conditions. And that's exactly what we have to do and we have to continue aiming them towards revolution!

### On Unity

**From audience:** *We've seen a lot of factionalism among the left, with many groups accusing each other. What principles can the left unite on and which groups are likely to lead in the unification?*

**Avakian:** The question of unity is one that has to be examined from different aspects and on different levels. Our basic strategy for making revolution in this country in the context of the worldwide struggle against imperialism, aimed principally at the two superpowers, is the United Front against our imperialist rulers led by the working class and its Party, which is the RCP in this country. On the other hand, what that does not mean is that we only seek unity with those who agree with us in our entire program on how to make revolution, or even in particular cases that we need to make proletarian revolution.

What we seek to do is unite with all those who are struggling against, genuinely struggling against, and aiming their efforts against this ruling class and against imperialism. Even if they are not doing so consciously, so long as the main thrust of what they're doing is to rise up and fight back against the real enemies, we believe it's our duty and the duty of every genuine revolutionary to unite with them.

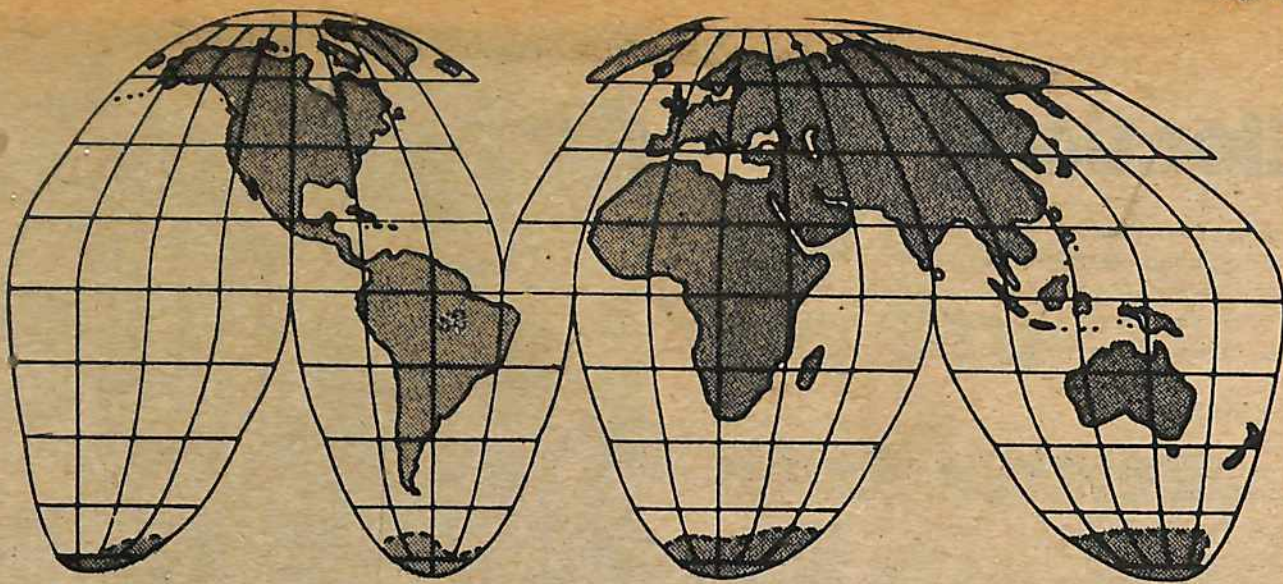
At the same time, any united front implies that there must be struggle. There must be struggle, not to establish who's right and who's wrong in the abstract, but there must be struggle because there is only one correct line that can lead us forward. That line is not the private property of any particular individual, group or organization. Neither does the RCP or any genuine communist organization want to see the correct line remain in the hands of a small number of people—exactly the opposite. We believe that only by the masses of people becoming armed with an ever deeper understanding of the actual correct line and correct road forward can revolution be achieved.

But to say that there is only one correct line means simply this: there's only one reality out there, not ten realities. There's only one correct analysis and only one correct method, which is the method of Marxism—dialectical materialism—to understand that, and there's only one correct political line, one programme for how to change that reality in accordance with those laws in order to make proletarian revolution, which is on the historical agenda.

That's what we mean when we say that there's only one correct line. The correct line is not something that you write down and then fondle. It's something that has to be developed in the course of struggle. But there are certain basic principles that have been worked out by the great leaders of the working class internationally—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung. We can learn from the mistakes, but mainly we have to learn from the achievements of the revolution where it continues to go forward, as in China. Nobody is perfect, the proletariat is not perfect. That's not the point.

The point is that there is a science and that, when we make mistakes, we have to use that science to sum up the basis of them, we have to use that science to avoid mistakes and to correct them quickly. Most of all, we have to use that science to guide our struggle in order to make revolution.

So as to the question, who can unite—all those should unite, can unite, and eventually will unite who are opposed to imperialism, exploitation and oppression which is the great majority, over 90% of the people in this country and all countries. And as to who will take the lead in doing that—the working class and its Party will take the lead in doing that, not by declaring it but by joining with people in struggle and through the course of struggle learning from the people first, helping them to sum up their own experience, using the science of revolution and on that basis, developing the line and policies that will lead us together forward to the revolutionary goal. ■



## Conference...

Continued from Page 1

way as to hold back the discussion and struggle over what political stand to take on these questions.

The *Guardian* newspaper, for instance, which recently called for a debate on different lines on the international situation, refused to participate in the conference. In light of this refusal, and in light of the fact that the *Guardian's* call for the opening of a debate has been the excuse for opening a sewer of slander against China and its foreign policy, many people, including supporters of its political line, have begun asking if the *Guardian* has raised these issues in order to build the struggle, or only to peddle their papers and serve their own narrow interests.

Then there was the October League, which refused to take part in the conference on the grounds that the conference organizers did not distinguish between what the OL called "Trotskyites and revisionists" and what the OL called "genuine Marxist-Leninists," namely the OL. They argued in effect that to mix the two together in debate only provided a cover for revisionism.

What's wrong with this argument is two things: the overwhelming majority of the conference participants, while not all Marxists, were certainly not revisionists or Trotskyites, and it was a very good thing that different kinds of forces with a real desire to fight imperialism came together to discuss and debate on these issues. Secondly, the October League has long ago proved that they are not Marxist-Leninists, and as for failing to distinguish them from Trotskyites and revisionists, their own antics at the conference certainly led even more people to wonder if there is any difference at all. After denouncing the conference in a conference organizing meeting and in their paper, the OL was forced to come anyway because the conference was an important political event that couldn't be ignored, but they came with the single purpose of disruption. In neck and neck competition with the Trotskyite Spartacist League, they popped up in succession, repeating their latest list of

memorized slogans and phrases and trying to turn the workshops into shouting matches. That they tried to associate themselves and their sectarian and reactionary carrying-on with Marxism and China only served to throw mud on these things in the eyes of some politically inexperienced people, just as the Trotskyite Progressive Labor Party played a similar role in feeding anti-communism in the early days of the antiwar movement.

The people who came were almost all concerned with how to build struggle against imperialism and its crimes. In fact, although a panelist in one workshop turned out to be a Trotskyite, his repeated attempts to turn the workshop into a forum to attack China finally led to a mass walkout, emptying the room.

When the conference organizing committee first began its work, some people predicted that either no one would come or nothing would be accomplished. Although there was a lot of enthusiasm about the idea of the conference, there were also some real difficulties, as some forces tried to organize a boycott, and a few pulled out. On the eve of the conference, the *New York Times* denounced the conference and tried to scare people away by redbaiting it as a front for the RCP.

But because of the way many people worked and struggled hard to overcome all this, to build the conference and take it out as broadly as possible among the people, and because its theme really put its finger on issues that are becoming increasingly deeply felt by more and more people, the conference was a success. Many people came, and they participated in a constructive way, to discuss and learn and struggle for a correct stand to guide action. That's why the conference generated so much enthusiasm.

The issues and lines were brought out far more sharply to broader masses of people, advancing the struggle on this front. It brought out the need for further discussion and struggle on these questions, going into the basic outlines and significance of events and into their many particularities. Further, the conference made it clear that it is necessary and possible to find ways to unite all who can be united to carry out concrete actions opposing the aggression, interference and war preparations of the U.S. imperialists in this country and both superpowers internationally and support the struggles of the peoples of the world, such as right now in southern Africa. ■

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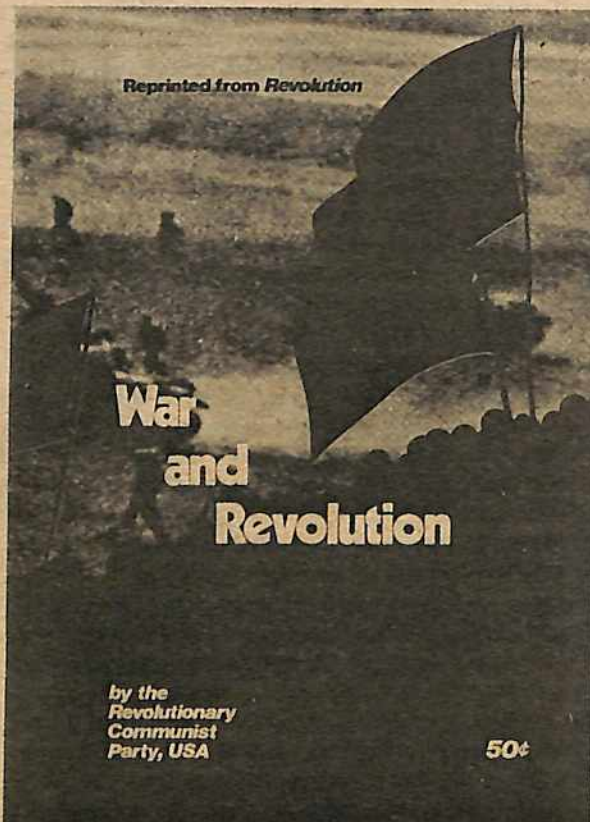
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# Elections ...

Continued from Page 1

the masses of people that he could claim to represent their interests. After the primary elections, in which a host of Democratic senators applied for the job, Jimmy Carter, "the man from nowhere," got the nod.

## Carter the Savior

From the beginning, Carter tried to present himself as the real alternative for the working people, trying to lay claim to the "heritage" of Franklin Roosevelt, appealing to the well-constructed and widely held myth that FDR fought for the little man and singlehandedly brought an end to the Great Depression. In appealing to Blacks, Carter and his image-makers added a new twist—he was the representative of the "New South," the opponent of segregation and discrimination who was perfectly willing to lie to Black voters as well as white.

Carter got plenty of help in trying to sell himself to the American people. Almost all of the top union leadership got into the act. According to the UAW, workers "could lose in the White House what they gained on the picket line." (Exactly what "gains" they are referring to isn't exactly clear.) The United Mine Workers officials turned their union newsletter into a Carter campaign brochure complete with pictures of John L. Lewis (long time leader of the UMW) standing together with Roosevelt, which supposedly was the key to the miners advances in the '30s. A host of Black "leaders," centered mainly in Carter's home state of Georgia where the Black bourgeoisie is particularly strong, came out as if Carter was salvation itself for Blacks. And in one of the most disgusting examples of this type of treachery, the leadership of the United Farmworkers Union pulled out the stops to get farmworkers to cast ballots for a big grower. (See article on page 13.)

But despite all the buildup, Carter never caught on among the workers the way the rulers hoped. Though many voted for him, few workers had any overwhelming enthusiasm for Carter, and his pious generalities about all the good things he was going to do for the people got vaguer and vaguer.

Carter campaigned against unemployment, claiming he would provide jobs for everyone willing to work. But how? Gerald Ford was quick to point out (and the only time these politicians tell the truth is when they tell about each others' lies) that this was a fraud and that anyway the government would be unable to employ the vast millions that were out of work without greatly increasing inflation and throwing the entire economy into a shambles.

Carter promised a "Marshall plan for the cities," that somehow he would reverse the pattern of decay in the big cities of the Northeast and Midwest. But how? Where was the money to implement his fine sounding proclamations? Already he has begun to hedge.

Ford, on the other hand, tried to present himself as "experienced," "capable," "firm," the man who had taken the reigns of power in the dark hours of Watergate and steered the country back onto the right course. But for workers Ford's claim had a hollow ring. After all, the "record" on which Ford was running included presiding, along with Nixon, over the worst economic crisis since the 1930s.

Carter was quick to point out what Ford was saying: that things are basically all right the way they are, that unemployment numbering in the millions is "acceptable." And in 1976 the status quo is one thing that isn't selling.

When it came to foreign policy, Carter also tried to have his cake and eat it too. He was for "trimming the defence budget" but at the same time make sure that America was the strongest military power on earth. Ford, on the other hand, pointed out the obvious, guns and bombers aren't free. Henry Kissinger's name got dragged into the mud, with Carter accusing him of a "lone ranger style of diplomacy" etc. But after the election Carter was quick to kiss and make up with "his good friend" Kissinger, who returned the compliment by calling on all Americans to support the foreign policy of the president-to-be.

During the campaign, each tried to outdo the other in posing as the great liberator of East Europe (liberating it from Russian imperialism into the tender clutches of American capital). All their rhetoric only showed the growing preparation for war on the part of the whole capitalist class.

As election day drew closer, big efforts were made to drum up interest in the elections. Three debates were held to, in the words of their sponsor, the League of Women Voters, combat voter apathy. All of a sudden Ford was moving up fast in the polls. The election was "too close to call," "every vote counts" and the word went out: unless the masses turn out in large numbers it's going to be Jerry Ford.

Throughout the whole campaign, working class organizations were taking up the struggle. The Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee, which called the election night marches, met Carter and Ford in many



Over 200 people marched in the election night demonstration in Chicago.

cities across the country when they showed up campaigning. Picket lines ringed the sites of the first two debates with the slogans Jobs or Income, We Won't Be Kicked by the Donkey or Stepped On by the Elephant, and Politicians Fight for Moneyed Interests, We Must Fight for Our Own.

## Lesser Evil?

Among the working class few really bought the line of Carter being a savior and response to the elections generally broke down along three lines. A lot of people including quite a few workers active in struggle figured that Carter couldn't be *any worse* than Ford and why not put him in there since one of the two had to be president. In addition, a large number of workers weren't about to vote at all, mainly as a result of a very cynical attitude about the possibility of real change coming no matter who got in. Unfortunately this cynicism, a result of the political crisis and decay of the capitalist system, often also included the possibility of change through struggle. Among a small but important section of the class, there was agreement with the line that UWOC and other forces were putting out: that workers can influence the affairs of state, can win advances, but only through relying on their own efforts and building up their own movement and organization.

The real significance of the election night demonstrations was not in aiming at an election boycott, simply at encouraging the broad "it doesn't matter, why vote?" sentiment among people, but in posing a clear answer to the question how *do* we change things?—by taking matters into our own hands and struggling against the capitalists and their political system whose workings lead to ruin and misery for people.

As people building for these actions put out this view, which represented a radical break with much past thinking, a lot of controversy and questions were raised up. This spread far beyond those who actually came out to the demonstration, as others read and struggled over leaflets, wore buttons and some signed banners later carried by their fellow workers in the demonstrations. All this brought out ideas which, though not fully convincing to all, will remain to be checked out in comparison to the performance of Jimmy Carter and the rest of the capitalist politicians.

A series of forums held by the Revolutionary Communist Party in a number of major cities before the election, helped deepen these points and put out the communist view that the goal of the working class struggle must be the overthrow of the capitalists' rule of society.

When November 2nd rolled around all the stops were out. Soundtrucks manned by the AFL-CIO cruised through the major industrial centers; Mayor Daley's Chicago machine was in high gear; and New Yorkers were reminded that Ford told the city to "drop dead." The message? If Ford stays in the White House and if the country goes to hell for four more years, it's your fault for not voting.

But the fact of the matter, as borne out by all the campaign arguments and Carter's early backtracking on promises since the election, is the country will continue to go to hell, even though Jimmy Carter will preside over the process from the White House. No doubt the working class will now be asked to hold its struggle in abeyance until Carter has a chance to "deliver" on his promises. And no doubt this period will grow longer and longer, and excuse after excuse will be found about why things continue to get worse. Already Carter, not yet even inaugurated, is making a big effort to explain away his pie-in-the-sky about bringing unemployment way down. Carter is now saying that unemployment will continue to hover at 5 or 6% for several years but "sometime" in his administration it will be brought down.

## Smile Going Flat

And no doubt when Carter's smile and double talk go completely flat we will be told to wait until 1980 to take our struggle into the ballot box and give him the boot, only to be replaced, of course, by another capitalist politician with a new set of gimmicks.

But the experience of the masses provides the basis for more and more to see, with the help of communists and other advanced forces within the class, that the system has its own dynamics, its own laws, which operate no matter who is in the White House, and in fact *dictate* what policies the government will follow. Now that Carter will preside over the machinery of government, he will have no more ability to do away with unemployment, curb inflation, restore America's "respect" (read domination) in the world than did his Republican predecessors. What is also true is that the workers will continue to struggle as the crisis continues to deepen.

The working class is not predestined to be chained to the treadmill of the capitalists' "democratic process." As the crisis deepens and the struggle intensifies, more and more workers can be drawn into the political struggle, not as an appendage of the bourgeois parties but in the workers' own political interests. And as this movement develops the real alternative to the policies of the bourgeois parties and the capitalist crisis will emerge—working class revolution. ■

# USCPFA ...

Continued from Page 4

members who wouldn't kowtow to to them.

From the formation of the first local friendship groups in New York, Chicago and San Francisco over five years ago members of the RCP and its predecessor organizations, especially the Revolutionary Union, have been involved in the Association. The Party has never concealed its active participation in building the USCPFA, never tried to dominate the Association by force of numbers, and never wanted or tried to run the Association.

At every point, Party members have sought to make the USCPFA a broadly based mass organization which could not be "run" by any group or clique, and they have fought hard against lines and positions that would hinder this happening. On the organizational level, the RCP has opposed schemes like "candidacy" periods that would limit membership. On the political level, we have opposed any number of proposals which would have directed the Association away from building people-to-people friendship, such as holding Marxist-Leninist study sessions and a demand that the Association devote much of its efforts to fighting discrimination and prejudice against Asian Americans.

One of the most persistent struggles the RCP has waged is to insure that the Association defend China and put forward its true nature and interests as the best and only possible foundation for real friendship. The most recent form this struggle has taken is over China's foreign policy. Some relatively isolated forces have been clamoring that the Friendship Association should be a forum to openly debate, by which they mean criticize, China's foreign policy. Another more underhanded attack has come in the guise of defending China's foreign policy. This line claims that China bases her foreign policy not on proletarian internationalism, but on the five policies of peaceful coexistence. Such a "defense" in effect denies the revolutionary character of the People's Republic and makes China indistinguishable from other countries. Under criticism, its proponents backed off, a victory which will help Association members build the work by really supporting and defending China.

Despite the efforts of a small minority and the setbacks their opportunism have caused, the majority of members of the U.S.-China Peoples Friendship Association, and great numbers of future members who have not yet joined, want to build true people-to-people friendship with China. The RCP will continue to work within the Association to help unite the maximum possible number of people to develop and carry out the kind of programs that will reach out broadly to the American people and make the Association a center to which everyone interested in building friendship with the Chinese people can rally. ■

# UFW Ballot Defeat In California

In California in the recent elections one issue which became the focus of some class struggle was Proposition 14. Initiated by Cesar Chavez, President of the United Farmworkers, the bill was sponsored by several notable politicians including Mayor Moscone of San Francisco and Mayor Bradley of Los Angeles, along with a number of church dignitaries of various denominations. During the elections the UFW made passage of the bill the focus of its activities and generated quite a bit of support, especially among other working people who side with the struggle of the farmworkers against California's big capitalist growers. Its defeat was a setback to the struggle of the farmworkers and the rest of the working class, although in the long run neither the victory or defeat of the farmworkers struggle hinges on any particular law.

## Proposition 14

Proposition 14 would have given the farmworkers certain legal rights if passed. Mainly it would have guaranteed secret ballot elections in the fields, supervised by the state. Farmworkers won many such elections held last year under the California Agricultural Relations Act, which for the first time allowed farmworkers to vote for a union like other workers. But these legal provisions ceased in February when, after a great deal of back and forth political maneuvering in the State Legislature, the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) went out of business when the Legislature refused to fund it. The proposition would have made the law under which the ALRB was created a state constitutional provision, so funding the ALRB would not have been subject to the politics of various state legislators and lobbyists.

Also, the law would have given farmworker organizers access to the property of the growers. This would have made it easier for organizers to reach workers, many of whom must live in camps on "company property" and are bussed to and from different fields, making it difficult to approach them without going on the growers' sacred "private property." In addition, the law would have provided for three times back pay for people fired for union activity.

The bill was defeated primarily because the biggest growers and landowners in California—Irvine Ranch Corporation, Bank of America, and Tenneco, to name a few—put on a vast campaign centering their attack on Proposition 14 on the question of "private property." Small farmers were featured on prime television advertising warning of the threat of attacks on "private property" should the proposition pass.

What all the hue and cry about private property failed to point out is that it is the system of private ownership that is concentrating greater and greater land and wealth into the hands of monopolies thus giving rise to the farmworkers struggle and ruining small farmers alike. And what they surely don't mention is that California's vast and fertile fields are private in ownership only; it is the socialized labor of thousands and thousands of workers that have turned California's valleys into the fruit and vegetable garden of the nation.

This campaign was compounded by a general confusion among many people who didn't understand the purpose of the law since the previously passed California Agricultural Relations Act already granted the farmworkers the right to vote in union elections (although this right was rendered meaningless when funds for the ALRB, which was charged with calling the elections, were cut off). The Proposition 14 issue was muddled, the sides not drawn sharply.

The defeat of the bill is sure to signal further attacks on the farmworkers as the growers stiffen their opposition to organization and struggle. But this defeat would not have been nearly as significant if Cesar Chavez and the top leadership of the UFW didn't present it as if its passage was the key to further progress for farmworkers.

## Advances Won through Militant Struggle

The struggle of the farmworkers had advanced a great deal in the last 15 years. In the face of vicious attacks perpetrated by the giant growers and aided more recently by the Teamster union leadership, the farmworkers have fought a heroic struggle, becoming more organized, standing up time after time to the high and mighty, in



Coming off fierce organizing struggles in the fields, thousands of farmworkers came into the cities of California in 1972, united with their supporters and built a strong drive that defeated Proposition 22 which would have crippled the UFW by outlawing strikes during harvest time.

many cases forcing them to concede better working and living conditions.

The farmworkers struggle has advanced, and won the greatest victories, precisely when farmworkers have taken matters into their own hands and waged fierce struggle against the growers. As farmworkers have gone into battle, millions of working people have drawn inspiration from their struggle and have supported the UFW in various ways, including the powerful boycotts the union has waged.

In 1972 California voters defeated a reactionary law (Proposition 22) that would have all but outlawed the United Farmworkers Union. Proposition 22 was defeated because the farmworkers' struggle was at a high tide and, on the basis of the struggle against the giants of California agriculture, millions were able to see that law for what it was—a vicious assault by the growers against the workers. But this time around, when the struggle of the rank and file has been at a relatively low level and when the fight over the law has been used as an excuse by Chavez and company *not* to pursue the struggle in the fields, it was difficult for other workers to see the connection between law and the actual class struggle, to see why they should stand with the farmworkers, and many fell for the grower-inspired propaganda about "private property" and the like.

Along with the upsurge of the farmworkers a number of laws have been passed which do strengthen the position of farmworkers: unemployment insurance, pesticide laws, safety laws, and last year's Agricultural Relations Act. These rights, most of which were won by the rest of the working class in the 1930s, were not passed out of the kindness of some politicians' hearts; they were passed only when farmworkers themselves became organized and pushed the struggle forward.

## Labor Laws No Salvation

Nor did the passage of these laws end the class struggle. The California Agricultural Relations Act passed in 1975 only to fall under immediate attack by the growers, whose efforts undercut its practical importance. And both that law and Chavez' rewrite of it contained provisions that could be used to stifle the struggle, including limitations on the right to boycott and strike. Some powerful sections of the ruling class (California's governor, Jerry Brown, for example) hoped that the overall effect of agricultural labor laws would be to take the sharp edge off the farmworkers' struggle and usher in "peace in the fields."

The farmworkers have had to wage a blow for blow

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struggle to defend every gain as the growers try to chip away at them and turn things around. The class struggle necessarily continues because the growers are driven by the laws of capitalism to try to maximize their profit by maximizing their exploitation, and will never grant farmworkers even the meager standard of living and rights of collective bargaining of workers in industry unless it is wrung out of them through protracted struggle. For all of these reasons, making the passage of labor laws the focus of the struggle, implying that their passage alone would guarantee success, means spreading false illusions and disarming people in the face of new attacks that the future will surely bring.

This is in fact what Caesar Chavez and the top UFW leadership did in making the campaign for the passage of this bill the focus of the union's activities for the past several months. They channeled the union's activities into support for Democratic Party bigshots like Tunney and Carter, tying the passage of the bill to their endorsement. At a rally in Belvedere Park in East Los Angeles, Jimmy Carter was introduced as "the man who will let the farmworkers fight the system." But farmworkers do not need the approval of politicians before they can fight the system. It is ironic, as well as treacherous, that the UFW leadership would give the endorsement of the union, whose members have fought so valiantly against the growers and who have suffered so greatly at their hands, to a grower who himself has made a fortune by exploiting farmworkers.

The passage of the California Agricultural Relations Act last year was a victory for the farmworkers in that it helped break the hammerlock on contracts held by Teamster-grower sweetheart deals and dealt a blow to the growers' efforts to crush the UFW. But since it was made the centerpiece of activities by the UFW leadership, it also stopped the momentum of the strike and boycott movement, tying things up in a legal spider web of hearings, arbitration and appeals.

The passage of Proposition 14 this year would have been a victory also, but it was defeated. And now, because the UFW leadership has again relied on legal and political maneuverings rather than building on the initiative of the rank and file, farmworkers find themselves confronted with new attacks by the growers, in a weaker position in some ways to hit back.

According to Chavez, the road out of this weaker position his "leadership" has led to is more of the same. The defeat of Proposition 14 doesn't mean the struggle is over, he recently said, there's still the elections of 1978, 1980....

Of course, the defeat of the bill does not mean farmworkers will lose what they've already gained nor does it mean they cannot continue to advance. But these advances can only come, as they have throughout the inspiring history of farmworkers' struggle, through mobilizing the rank and file in the fields and waging a strong fight against the growers there and on this basis rallying support from the rest of the working class and others. ■

# Bornson...

## Continued from Page 6

Interested groups. Mailgrams demanding their freedom can be sent to Governor Straub at the State Capitol, with copies to the Committee to Free Bornson and Davis and the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee at Post Office Box 14712, Portland, Oregon 97214. Letters of support can also be sent to Tom Bornson, No. 38268, 2605 State St., Salem, Oregon and Lonnie Davis, 3-67-A, 3405 Deer Park Dr. S. E., Salem, Oregon 97310.

As the crisis deepens this campaign is a fighting example that working people will not be crushed, will not sit idle and watch everything they have worked so hard and long for be taken away, their families faced with starvation. As Tom Bornson said, "Why I done what I done was simply to say that this can't go on. You can't put people in a corner like that and not expect them to come out. They're going to come out." ■

## Woody Allen in *The Front*

# New Movie Dumps On '50s Red Hunts

Woody Allen's latest movie *The Front* is probably the best Hollywood treatment to date of the McCarthy era "communist baiting" in the film, TV and radio industry that resulted in the blacklisting of hundreds of actors, directors, writers, producers and stage hands. The scope of the film is limited and because of this it is relatively accurate. It does not attempt to analyze the whys and wherefores of blacklisting or the role of communists in the industry, although the Communist Party members and sympathizers portrayed in the film are not figures that elicit much admiration. They are a confused and vacillating bunch for whom you are more likely to feel sorry. Unfortunately, this image, while a distortion, has some historical basis.

Allen plays a two bit bookie working as a cashier who is approached by an old friend, a blacklisted TV script writer, asking him to pretend to be the author of his scripts in return for a percentage of the royalties. Allen sympathetically reminds his friend that he'd warned him to forget about all his "causes" and "start looking out for number one," but quickly agrees to be his front. In short order he sees how financially rewarding his new role can be and signs on to front for two more blacklisted writers. He rockets to fortune and fame.

### Blacklisting

As Allen's success story unfolds, the film focuses on the role of one of the ruling class' most despicable forces in the blacklisting period. The film's Freedom Inc. had its real life counterpart in organizations like Aware Inc., professional blacklisting services which compiled dossiers on thousands of people. Working hand in hand with the FBI (many of the operators of these agencies were ex-FBI agents), the House Un-American Activities Committee and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, they became the arbiter of who could work in the industry and who couldn't. Searching the pages of the *Daily Worker* and other CP publications, poring over petitions signed in support of the Spanish Republic or in opposition to racial discrimination, etc., Aware Inc. issued cross indexed lists of anyone who had ever been associated with or accused of being associated with any left organization or progressive cause. Appearance on such a list was often the kiss of death for a career.

For a hefty fee and further information—true or fabricated—on other people, Aware Inc. would also arrange for a person's name to be cleared, although this did not always guarantee that the studios would hire them back. Zero Mostel, himself blacklisted in the 50s, poignantly portrays an actor blacklisted because he once marched in a May Day parade in New York. Desperate for work, he grovels before the unctious superpatriot who directs Freedom Inc., pleading that the only reason he marched was because he was trying to score with a girl who was a member of the party. But the slime demands proof of sincerity. Mostel writes a "confession" denouncing communists, but this is not good enough. He is told that if he wants to be cleared he will have to spy on Woody Allen and try to come up with useable information against him. This situation eventually drives Mostel to commit suicide.

Allen has no intention of jeopardizing his new high living life style and risk exposing his lucrative role as a front. This leads to a break with his girl friend, a studio script editor who resigns her job in protest of blacklisting and writes a pamphlet telling what she knows about the studio's complicity with the blacklisters. But eventually he is called to testify before an executive session of a congressional committee.

Disregarding the advice of a party member to take the Fifth Amendment, Allen attempts to double talk his way through the committee hearing. But finally, he rises and tells the committee in three words to go have knowledge of itself in the biblical sense as the musical score breaks into the '50s hit tune "Fairy Tales Can Come True."

### Attack on CP Part of Drive for World Domination

Studio blacklisting was probably the most notorious area of the capitalists' postwar attacks on the working class movement and the Communist Party, but it is barely the tip of the iceberg. The bourgeoisie was determined to crush the workers movement and hobble the trade unions and other organizations which had been built through mass class struggle in previous decades. By the early '50s, the U.S. imperialists had already seen large sections of the worldwide empire it hoped to control after the war lost. The Chinese revolution had given birth to the People's Republic, socialist states were es-



*Demo to defend the Hollywood Ten. Thousands rallied in '50s demanding abolition of HUAC, opposing blacklisting and other repressive measures.*

tablished in Eastern Europe, and in Korea and Indochina the people were waging armed struggle to drive out the imperialists. The Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership stood as a bulwark against the U.S. hopes for world hegemony.

Despite the fact that a reformist and revisionist line dominated large sections of the leadership, the Communist Party was active in leading the postwar strike wave and in opposing the Marshall Plan and U.S. intervention in Asia. The ruling class launched an all out political and ideological effort to destroy resistance to its plans. The Taft-Hartley bill and other reactionary legislation were passed to destroy the effectiveness of labor unions. Communists were driven from the unions, most of which passed constitutional clauses banning communists from membership. Many thousands of people were blacklisted from employment—workers, teachers and other professionals alike.

The capitalists were sure as hell not going to let communists or opponents of U.S. imperialism operate freely in the mass media, one of the most important tools they have to reinforce and prop up their rule. And precisely because movie, radio and TV personalities were well known, the anti-communist campaign here had tremendous propaganda value in creating "public opinion" for U.S. imperialism's drive for world domination and spreading an atmosphere of fear and intimidation far beyond Hollywood.

For the hundreds of blacklisted who saw their careers destroyed and for thousands more who lived in constant fear that they were next, these years were a nightmare. People were blacklisted by the studios for no other reason than that they happened to have the same last name as somebody already on the list. Some like Dalton Trumbo, one of the original Hollywood Ten (the first people called before HUAC and who courageously refused to cooperate with the witch hunt and were subsequently thrown in jail), managed to survive. Trumbo, who wrote numerous screenplays, even won an Academy Award under an assumed name while on the blacklist. Other one time party members like Elia Kazan and Lee J. Cobb confessed their sin of affiliating with the party and fingered their former comrades. (Kazan directed *On the Waterfront*, a film ostensibly written about gangster influence in the unions, but actually made to justify those who informed to the investigating committees and specifically written in opposition to Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, which blasted stool pigeons. The film's high point comes when one of the longshoremen testifies against the racketeer.)

But the party cadre in Hollywood and New York media centers or those who had sympathized with struggles led or promoted by the party were ill prepared politically or theoretically to grasp the real nature of the

attack coming down on them, even when they stood up to the blacklisting and investigations. By and large the party had failed to arm them with a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the class struggle and their work had never been really anchored in the working class and its struggle against the bourgeoisie.

This was certainly reflected in the films, radio and TV programs influenced by the party. There were obviously a lot of difficulties in this area of work. It could hardly be expected that communists would be able to make Hollywood movies that openly called for the defeat of the U.S. bourgeoisie or clearly labeled the capitalist class as the enemy of the masses of the people. But with some exceptions, like *Salt of the Earth*, made by another of the Hollywood Ten after he was blacklisted, there is little trace of working class stand or outlook in most of the work guided by the party.

There were films which, like *The Front*, could be called progressive because they exposed reaction, opposed the fascists in World War 2, exposed corruption in government, or described the plight of the masses of people driven into the dirt by the depression. But, to the extent that they did deal with the cause of the oppression that the masses suffered under capitalism, they implied that the evils and abuses of the system, usually portrayed without real class content, could be remedied through reform or through the actions of a few honest men. They did little more than promote illusions about bourgeois democracy.

In the last scene of *The Front*, as Woody Allen is taken off in handcuffs for his contempt of the committee, supporters are clustered around, carrying signs that proclaim him to be the "Real American" and denouncing HUAC for being "Un-American"!

### Lessons of McCarthyism

But the bitter lesson of the McCarthy period is very different from what the movie implies. The movie correctly calls on people to stand up to McCarthy-type attacks but, like the CP leadership in those times, indicates the resistance can remain in the framework of defending and appealing to bourgeois democracy. Furthermore, the film implies that McCarthyism could not have run wild if "decent people" (like the producer portrayed in the film who cowers before the committee) had not caved in.

Under attack from the bourgeoisie, the top party leadership increasingly abandoned attempts to expose American democracy for the class dictatorship that it is, and instead took refuge in calling themselves the best democrats and most loyal to "American" principles. But this political capitulation did not appease the bourgeoisie, nor could it, because in fact the bourgeoisie had no choice but to clamp down on the masses of people in this country and therefore attack the CP and everyone even remotely associated with it in order to terrify the masses and stifle even the most lukewarm rebellion.

In fact, the McCarthy period, the blacklist, etc. is a tremendous exposure of the democracy by which the capitalist class rules. It shows how the ruling class considers bourgeois rights no more than a veil to be dropped when their interests demand it. Freedom of speech, freedom of association, the Fifth Amendment and so forth do not in themselves threaten the system of class exploitation. But even these rights the bourgeoisie has trampled under its feet time and time again.

*The Front* raises many questions that it leaves unanswered—why was the opposition against it so weak, especially from the party that was at the center of the attack? But it does expose some things about McCarthyism, it mocks the Congressional Committees and the professional patriots, and better yet, its protagonist is a man who learns to stand up to this attack. ■



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Flatbed trucks became moving demonstrations throughout working class areas of Philly. Correct tactics, developed through application of the mass line, were crucial to successfully waging the Battle of the Bicentennial.

## Some Lessons of July 4th

# The Mass Line in Political Struggle

This article was submitted by comrades in Philadelphia, on the basis of discussion of the "Mass Line" articles in *Revolution* and summing up work done around the Rich Off Our Backs—July 4th Coalition Bicentennial demonstration.

The Battle of the Bicentennial, which culminated in the July 4th demonstration in Philadelphia, was rich in experience of applying the *mass line*, especially in political struggle with the bourgeoisie at close quarters.

The ability to wage this political battle lay in the fact that the slogans and the thrust of the demonstration reflected, in a higher and more concentrated form, the growing sentiments of millions of workers and others. The crisis of U.S. capitalism requires increasingly vicious attacks on the working class, to dump the whole burden of the crisis on the backs of the masses of people. At the same time, increasingly intense competition from imperialist rivals abroad, especially the "New Czars" of the Soviet Union, requires the U.S. bourgeoisie to try to rally the proletariat around them, to win its support for their foreign adventures and wars necessary to prop up their tottering empire against these attacks. Both their internal and external needs require that the workers be *politically disarmed*, to accept capitalism as the "natural order of things," that workers be willing to sacrifice for the "common interest" of labor and capital alike, and identify their future with the future of the bourgeoisie.

This was the basis of the bourgeoisie's *political attack* of the Bicentennial. But, unfortunately for the capitalists, the very conditions of deepening crisis and intensified struggle which compel them to launch their political offensive against the workers are the very same conditions that give rise to the increased questioning among the masses of the nature of the system that breeds hardship, misery and war; and the reality that the workers and capitalists have opposite and antagonistic interests constantly asserts itself in a thousand ways. This was the basis for the forces of the working class to apply the mass line in challenging the capitalist Bicentennial offensive.

### Political Struggle

But the Battle of the Bicentennial was not merely a defensive battle, parrying their attacks in the political arena so we could continue to build economic struggles. We are the *political* party of the working class because we recognize it is the political rule of the bourgeoisie that enforces their domination of society—and that the only solution is proletarian revolution, establishing the political rule of the working class. The working class must be armed with this understanding. And to do this we cannot limit ourselves to the fight around wages, working conditions, etc., where workers are mainly fighting today. We have to take on the bourgeoisie in the political arena as well.

But it is not enough to simply conduct propaganda or demonstrate against bourgeois rule. As Mao Tsetung wrote in "On Contradiction," the universality of contradiction resides in the particularity of contradiction. The contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, for example, universal to the period of capitalism, is revealed in the thousands of particular struggles it spawns. It is by taking up these actual struggles that the masses can begin to grasp the fundamental contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This is true in the political arena, as in the economic.

Like it says in the article "Mass Line Is Key to Lead Masses in Making Revolution" (first in a series on the *mass line*) in the December 15 issue of *Revolution*, "Propaganda, while an extremely important vehicle for the Party to lay out the whole situation and the scientific basis for revolution to the masses, cannot by itself develop revolutionary understanding. For that the masses must have their own experience." Experience, in this case, of actual struggle against the bourgeoisie in the political arena, struggle against actual *political* attacks.

Marx and Engels pointed out in the *Communist Manifesto* that "The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all times with the bourgeoisie of other countries. In all these battles it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for its help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena." (emphasis added) By "dragging the proletariat into the political arena," by undertaking to whip up a storm of patriotism around the Bicentennial in order to win the masses politically to a program of sacrifice and support for their wars, the bourgeoisie provided the working class and its Party a sharp opportunity: to call into question the direction on which they have set society, and even their entire political rule.

The bourgeoisie's Bicentennial offensive represented an opportunity as well as an attack. But an opportunity is one thing and using it is another. Our plan to join with others in rallying thousands of workers in Philadelphia on July 4th saying "We've Carried the Rich for 200 Years, Let's Get Them Off Our Backs!" cut through the whole thrust of the bourgeoisie's campaign. While they talked about "one nation, united" we prepared to plant the banner of the proletariat to expose their unity celebration as an attack by their class on the working class and masses of people.

What we wanted to do ran straight up against what they wanted to do. The bourgeoisie understood this and were determined that our demonstration would not take place on that day. Into this struggle they threw the organized force of their state—permit denials, court orders, a request for 15,000 troops, Senate hearings, etc. Their press repeated their slanders. They used hidden agents in the communities, the left movement, and so on, to attack us from within. And they used the opportunist coalition's planned march on the same day to try

to isolate us and paint us as "radicals." "The other coalition agreed to march outside Center City;" "the other coalition behaved itself and has a permit." And, of course, the "other coalition" didn't say anything about who rules and what we've got to do about it.

Against this we had the growing anger of the working class and masses at the thousand and one abuses we face everyday. People are fed up with attempts to make them live like animals and are looking for the enemy behind this condition—as we found when we took out the slogan. But our Party is young and inexperienced. The working class movement is at a relatively low level. Given this relative weakness, how could the Party and the working class take on the bourgeoisie in political struggle?

### Advanced Action

The political attack of the bourgeoisie around the Bicentennial brought forward the need for an advanced action. But like it says in the second Mass line article in the March 15 issue of *Revolution*, taking an advanced action "does not mean that a handful of communists and advanced forces should try to take on the enemy all by themselves or to act as 'individual heroes,' substituting their own actions for the struggle of the masses, or initiating struggle that the masses do not yet see the need to take up." In fact, it could not be the action of a handful. We did not have the ability to act in such a way. To reduce the thing to a battle between two "superpowers"—us slugging it out with the bourgeoisie to appeal to the masses as "condescending saviours," could only end in defeat. We had to develop people's understanding of the Bicentennial as a political attack coming from the capitalist class and their state and draw them into the battle. Not us against Philadelphia Mayor Rizzo but our class against theirs.

To do this we had to correctly analyze the real attack coming from the enemy, understand the mood of the masses and apply the mass line. The Party had done this in summing up the need for the demonstration and formulating the slogan "We've Carried the Rich for 200 Years, Let's Get Them Off Our Backs!" in the first place. Now we had to repeat the process to deepen our understanding at each step of the campaign. We found early on that the slogan really spoke to people's aspirations. But people often dug it as a "good idea" without grasping the importance of the demonstration or their role in it. In particular, most people didn't understand from the beginning the Bicentennial as a political attack. We could see this in the early days of the campaign when we tended to take it out as a great time to "do the dog" in Philadelphia—a chance to bring our forces together to demonstrate against the capitalists and "build our movement"—instead of an actual struggle against an actual political attack. When we did this we provided no basis for the masses to take it up, and were, in fact, conducting it like "superpower contention." We had to find the ways to bring out the Bicentennial as a political attack and make this real. We had to hit at the thousands of abuses people face—to get at the source: bourgeois political rule. And through this, help people see the Bicentennial as an attempt to shore all that up and come up with the bourgeoisie's *political* answers—"national unity, national chauvinism and the spirit of sacrifice"—brought to you by the same people who bring you war, unemployment, discrimination, exploitation and city cutbacks!

### Correct Tactics Bring Out Political Line

By correctly analyzing the nature of the attack and the mood of the masses and applying the mass line we were able to develop tactics to make the overall political line come alive, to make it understandable to broader sections of the masses and enable them to act.

The Tent City of the Unemployed was one such tactic. The very idea of thousands of unemployed workers parking themselves on the doorstep of the bourgeoisie's celebration of the "land of opportunity" and asking for jobs brought to life the whole question of unemployment. Every attempt to prevent us setting it up only raised the question more sharply and provided more opportunities to expose the nature of capitalism. The four days of activities leading up to July 4th—demonstrations at an unemployment office, a city hospital scheduled to be shut down, etc.—served the same purpose.

In Philadelphia we printed a poster to put on abandoned houses: "1/3 of construction workers unemployed, 50,000 abandoned houses, 50,000 families needing homes. This House: Another Bicentennial Monument to 200 Years of Rule by the Rich"—another way to brand the ideas the bourgeoisie was selling with the mark of their class.

At the same time we had to guard against the right error of reducing the demonstration to simply a protest against particular abuses of the system thereby cutting the political heart out of the slogan "We've Carried the Rich for 200 Years, Let's Get Them Off Our Backs!"

In the beginning the City simply denied our permit requests and ignored the demonstration, hoping to minimize its effect. But taking it out broadly to the masses, making it a broad social question and winning support

# Mass Line...

Continued from Page 15

for it, forced them out from behind this wall of silence. Growing support in Philadelphia and evidence of organizing going on around the country made it clear that thousands of workers were preparing to go up against their sham national unity on the Fourth. The last straw was the billboard we put up three blocks from City Hall, announcing the demo and calling on people to gather at City Hall at 10 AM, July 4. From that point on the bourgeoisie spared no effort to smash our demonstration. Only by applying the mass line daily, to each new attack, were we able to mobilize the broader and broader numbers of masses we needed to withstand their assault.

Like it says in the second Mass Line article, the mass line "applies *within* each battle—each of the thousands of skirmishes as well as major encounters. If at any point during the development of the struggle, we depart from these principles, fail to deepen our application of the mass line in any respect, including the aspect of determining the correct forms of struggle, we are bound to make mistakes, and the struggle is bound to be set back." At the same time these attacks provided fresh opportunities to unmask the political attack behind the Bicentennial celebration. The contradiction between their theme of national unity and our class interests revealed itself anew in each particular attack they threw at us.

The attempt to call out 15,000 troops and brand us as "terrorists," for example, was a serious attack, but it also called forth people's outrage and raised new opportunities to expose the overall political attack they were launching. To do this successfully, however, we had to make a correct analysis of the attack, the situation and the mood of the masses.

When the troop request hit the papers we already had a number of advanced forces who had come forward around our work in taking the demonstration out to plants, unemployment offices, shopping districts, car caravans and slide showings in people's homes. They didn't believe that the Rich Off Our Backs Coalition was looking for a physical confrontation on the Fourth. And they were angry as hell. Off of this there was some initial tendency to strike a bold stance: "We'll be there no matter what."

## Advanced, Intermediate and Backward

But, as the second Mass Line article pointed out, "Whether or not a particular advanced action should be taken depends on whether or not it will accomplish the goals summarized by Mao Tsetung," which are that: "The masses in any given place are generally composed of three parts, the relatively active, the intermediate and the relatively backward. The leaders must therefore be skilled in uniting the small number of active elements around the leadership and must rely on them to raise the level of the intermediate elements and to win over the backward elements."

If we weren't just going to rally a handful of the advanced around the Party and wage "superpower contention," we had to arm the advanced to win over the intermediate. It wasn't enough to know the mood of the advanced. We had to apply the mass line on the troop request much more deeply to the masses.

When we did this we found that the response of the intermediate was two-sided. People still united with the slogan and were outraged at the troop request and denial of permits. But in the absence of any clear idea about who "was behind this thing" they had real questions about whether the Coalition was looking to manipulate people into a confrontation with the police and the official celebration. Even more they feared that Mayor Rizzo would provoke something whether we wanted it or not.

We correctly analyzed that this was the real aim of the troop request. Not merely an attempt to physically prevent our demonstration, but a political attack to isolate us from the masses by branding us as a bunch of terrorists and misfits. They had to proceed this way because the situation around the Bicentennial didn't offer the bourgeoisie complete freedom to smash us. They initiated their campaign in the first place because they needed to win the support of the people. They couldn't smash the forces of the working class on their day of "freedom, justice and unity" without exposing



Only by applying the mass line was it possible to wage the political struggle against the bourgeoisie that culminated in the July 4th demonstration.

the real basis of this "celebration." They had to first prepare public opinion, try to separate us off from the working class: "These aren't workers, they're radicals. They have nothing to offer the working class."

We had to take up the attempt to brand us as terrorists in the same way we took up the campaign as a whole—as part of an actual class struggle, as part of the political attack they were waging on our class around the Bicentennial. We couldn't make the main thrust of our response, "this is unfair, we're being repressed," without falling into the trap of isolating ourselves from the masses. The tactics we developed to fight the toe-to-toe battle had to express the overall political line of the campaign and make it real to people.

The fight for the Workers' History Pavilion for example, offered lots of opportunity to do this. The Pavilion united with large numbers of honest forces who were drawn to the bourgeois Bicentennial by the historic nature of the occasion. At the same time it raised the question of the class nature of this history and the real history of this country, putting the bourgeoisie on the defensive. To let us erect the Pavilion with hundreds or thousands of people coming through everyday would have made it more difficult for them to isolate us and focussed attention on the different stand on the Bicentennial of the working class. On the other hand, to suppress it as they did helped bring home to people in a very sharp way that the real question wasn't terrorism or disruption but a political battle between two different lines representing two different class forces.

By scheduling it for several weeks before July 1-4, we were able to force much of the fight over permits to take place around the Pavilion—the most favorable grounds for neutralizing the "terrorist" question and putting the burden of being disrupters on them. In doing this we had to apply another lesson of the second Mass Line article: that this "requires repeated experience on the part of the masses of workers and their Party, and the constant summation of that experience by the Party to forge and illuminate the revolutionary road." To that it must be added that not only repeated experience, but *comparison* is required for the masses to gain this understanding, comparison—in the course of the actual struggle—of the lines, policies, tactics, etc., of the two fundamentally opposed forces, the proletariat, represented by its Party, and the bourgeoisie, with all its various representatives, in their various forms, open and concealed."

In the fight for the Pavilion we applied for permits and took it to Federal court when they were denied. By taking the battle out to the masses everyday and explaining the nature of the struggle we were able to win the support of thousands of people. This restricted the freedom of the bourgeoisie and forced the judge to order we be given a site for both the Pavilion and demonstration, although outside of Center City. We attacked their attempt to drive the working class exhibit out of the spotlight, but accepted a site in Norris Square Park for the Pavilion, demonstrating our seriousness in putting the thing on and not just trying to disrupt.

When the bourgeoisie put new conditions on us (building permits which couldn't be approved until after July 4th, and \$1 million insurance) we tried to meet these too, while we exposed these outrages to the masses. We put on mini-exhibits with 3'x5' panels, giving people the opportunity to compare what was said about us with what we were doing. We conducted press conferences, held street corner rallies and car caravans and put out almost daily leaflets. Each new attack was taken

out to the masses as a part of the larger political attack on the working class. And by doing this on the basis of a correct analysis of the attack and the mood of the masses we were able to "create favorable new conditions" for struggle. To the point that when we finally tried to build the Pavilion without a permit and the police confiscated our supplies, the mass response was not that we were disrupting but spontaneous outrage: "They even stole your lumber!"—and a growing understanding of the battle.

This same process of providing the masses with repeated experience and comparison was followed throughout the toe-to-toe battle. Around the question of unemployment and the Tent City, around the demonstration itself, and around each new attack—Senate hearings, press slanders, attempts to link us with the opportunist coalition and all their flakey contingents and demands (homosexuality, pacifism, etc.)—around each of these we found dozens of ways to take the questions to the masses and release their initiative by exposing the basis for each attack in the overall political attack of the bourgeoisie around the 4th.

## Isolating Enemy Agents at Close Quarters

The open attacks by the bourgeoisie were followed by others where they fired from concealment. Like it says in the second Mass Line article, "It is bound to happen that in any decisive struggle agents of the bourgeoisie surface and work to wreck the struggle from within. It does not matter whether such people are directly in the pay of the bourgeoisie or not...but the key thing is that they have the same *class outlook* as the bourgeoisie and on this basis represent and actively promote their interests within the struggle."

Once again the key was to go up against these attacks as part of the overall battle against the political attack around the Bicentennial. Early in the battle, for example, Muhammad Kenyatta—formerly a Black radical, now either a police agent or a good imitation—testified in court that we were planning violence, that we had been a part of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP)-led opportunist demonstration and had split because they didn't want violence, and a whole assortment of other lies.

To have responded by just calling him a liar and so forth would have made the fight one between him and us. At best we win some sympathy, at worst we come off like a bunch of crybabies.

What we had to do was bring out whose interest was served by his attack—how it fit into the overall attack on the working class. That in fact, it served our enemies like other positions he had fought for: more police in the Black community, higher taxes, etc.

The problem of dealing with enemy agents at close quarters was raised in even sharper form when the bourgeoisie unveiled the second half of their strategy. Unable to ban the march and rally altogether, they forced it out of Center City into several mainly Black and Puerto Rican communities. Then, a week before July 1, they paraded out an assortment of political hacks and poverty pimps posing as community leaders. Unable to attack the political content of the demonstration which clearly united with the aspirations of people in those communities, they attacked the demonstrators as "white outsiders" bringing in trouble and demanded the permits be revoked.

Each tried to put himself forward and make it a question of them as individual leaders against the Rich Off Our Backs outsiders: "What have these people done for us? I gave the community a child care center," for example. Against this cheap opportunism we had to speak to people's broadest class interest. The fight for Norris Square Park, the site of the demonstration, was a key point in the Battle of the Bicentennial. We sent special Spanish-speaking teams out in the neighborhood to win people to the political struggle against the bourgeoisie's political offensive. We put out leaflets almost daily. We held a concert in the park and a mini-exhibit of the Pavilion. And at each point we drew out how the demonstration was in their interest as part of the working class.

And so it went throughout the whole Battle of the Bicentennial, choosing targets for demonstrations and planning actions on the basis of applying the mass line—actions which would speak to sentiments and experience of the masses and focus it against the bourgeoisie. By so doing, the advanced forces were able to defeat the attempts by the ruling class to portray the Rich Off Our Backs—July 4th Coalition as something alien to the interests of the working class, and unite greater and greater numbers of people around the slogans and demands of the demonstration.

Despite the objective fact that the working class movement in this country is at a relatively low level, the working class' counteroffensive during the Bicentennial succeeded in reaching hundreds of thousands of people and mobilized many thousands to take action, culminating in the demonstration in Philly.

During this whole campaign our understanding of the mass line was greatly deepened. By making a Marxist analysis of the situation, correctly understanding the nature of the bourgeoisie's political attack and the mood of the masses, and by applying the mass line, we were able to lead the masses in carrying through an important political battle and winning important victories. ■

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