

# Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions:

Part 2: Revolutionary War and Military Line

See Second Section



# REVOLUTION

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

50¢

Vol. 3, No. 9

June 1978

## Capitalists Hit Back With Heavy Charges

# Mass Uprising In Houston Against Police Terror

On May 7, the last day of this year's Cinco de Mayo celebration (Mexican national holiday), the burning hatred of the Chicano people in Houston for the oppression they face exploded into a powerful rebellion that shook up Houston to a degree unseen for many years. When police moved into Moody Park to bust some people during Cinco de Mayo they ran smack up against the full fury of the masses. Fed up with the police terror they have to live with every day, hundreds stood their ground against the cops.

Police cars were smashed into scrap metal and put to the torch as four cops were sent to the hospital. By the time the rebellion had ended the following night, May 8, people of many nationalities, young and old, had given the pigs a righteous dose of the people's justice as cries of "Viva Joe Torres!" rang in the streets.

The rebellion was a fitting continuation of the year-long struggle to win justice for Joe Torres. Torres was a 23 year old Chicano Vietnam vet who was beaten unconscious by six Houston cops and thrown in a bayou to drown. His case has become a symbol of police repression in Houston and a symbol of the capitalist system of "justice" that has twice let his cold-blooded murderers off the hook. (See REVOLUTION, November 1977 and April-May 1978)

Petrified with fear in the wake of the uprising, the capitalists have launched an all-out assault to make people pay for this "outrageous act of rebellion" against their blood-soaked rule, including threats of death against leaders of the struggle. Three leading activists in the struggle against police brutality were hauled away by police and thrown in maximum solitary confinement.

The three arrested are: Travis Morales, a steel worker and spokesman for People United to Fight Police Brutality; Tom Hirschi, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB); and Mara Youngdahl, a member of the National United Workers Organization (NUWO) who was fired shortly after the Moody Park rebellion from her job at Texas Instruments for passing out People United leaflets. They are being held on \$500,000 bail, prisoners of the same bourgeois "justice" that slapped a \$1.00 fine on Joe Torres' killers.

### Celebration Becomes Rebellion

As 3000 gathered on Sunday, May 7 for the Cinco de Mayo celebration, People United to Fight Police Brutality, an organization that has given leadership to the fight around the Torres case and against police terror in the community, came into Moody Park to pass out leaflets demanding "Justice for Joe Torres!"

Self-styled "community leaders"



Flames light up the sky as Chicanos in Houston strike back against national oppression and police terror. Cop cars were burned and numerous uniformed thugs were injured. 50 people were arrested during two nights of fighting and in the aftermath.

who had been appointed to keep the celebration a party without politics had goons on hand to stop People United from entering the park. But when these rent-a-pigs swooped down with their hands on their guns to block the leafletting, dozens of people in the park surrounded them and forced them to back down.

People took the leaflets and went back to the celebration. But later in the day Houston police, who perch like vultures around Moody Park, moved

into the crowd to bust some people involved in a minor hassle.

Immediately, hundreds began to gather to free the brother being arrested. Covering like frightened dogs, the cops radioed for reinforcements. It was then the anger of the people exploded. Rocks and bottles thrown by hundreds drove the cops out of the park. Police in full riot gear and armed with automatic weapons poured in to clear the park, but the battle was far from over. Hundreds continued to mass

at both ends of the park, taunting and jeering the cops and showering them with rocks and bottles. Barricades were thrown up to prevent police from entering the area. Slogans like "Cops Are a Tool of the Rich Man's Rule" and "Justice for Joe Torres!" appeared in spray paint all around the park. One old man came running out of his home to yell at police, "We should throw you in the bayou!"

Continued on page 6

# Imperialists Claw at Zaire

For the second time in slightly over a year the central African state of Zaire has been invaded by a Katangese mercenary army. This army has been used by one imperialist power after another in the region for over 15 years and is now armed, trained and backed up politically by the Soviet social-imperialists and their Cuban front men.

The response from the U.S. and Western European imperialists to this new threat to Zaire's comprador bourgeois government was swift. They used the pretext of rescuing Europeans and Americans trapped in the area of fighting, to drop French Foreign Legion paratroopers and Belgian army units near the key copper mining town of Kolwezi.

They were supported by U.S. cargo jets ferrying ammunition, fuel and other equipment. The French and Belgian troops seized the Kolwezi airport from the mercenaries and began intensive fighting that drove them from the town back towards the Angolan and Zambian borders.

These moves by the U.S. and the

Western powers in its bloc are every bit as reactionary as the Soviet backed invasion and must be opposed.

The nucleus of the so-called "Congo National Liberation Front" that invaded Zaire's Shaba province (formerly known as Katanga) is the old Katangese Gendarmes. They are former policemen for Belgium who were organized into a secessionist army by Moise Tshombe at Belgian instigation after Zaire (then known as the Republic of the Congo) won its formal independence from Belgium in 1960.

Belgium had hoped to use the secessionist movement to hold onto mineral rich Katanga province, the heart of the Congo's economy. But Belgium's designs were opposed by the U.S. imperialists, who were making a big grab for the dominant position in the Congo as well as in the other former colonies of the Western European imperialists.

The U.S. used the cover of UN intervention to break the secessionist movement and move full steam into the Congo. At the same time the CIA arranged the assassination of Prime

Minister Patrice Lumumba, the leader of the Congolese people's struggle against Belgian colonialism, who had made clear his opposition to allowing a new colonial master replace the Belgians.

The Katangese Gendarmes were driven into Angola by the UN-U.S. forces, where they went to work for the Portuguese colonialists, fighting to crush the growing national liberation struggle of the Angolan people.

Shortly before the Angolan people's victory over the Portuguese in 1976, the Katangese mercenaries saw the handwriting on the wall and shrewdly switched sides, going to work for Agostinho Neto's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), principally fighting against the MPLA's rival, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola, which was supported by Zaire and the U.S.

As the Soviets moved into Angola, consolidating their imperialist hold there with Cuban puppet troops, the

Continued on page 10

## Uprisings Intensify in Iran

# General Strike in Tehran

In recent weeks, millions of people have taken to the streets of every major city and town in Iran to strike new blows against the reactionary regime of the Shah. The movement led to a general strike in Tehran on May 15.

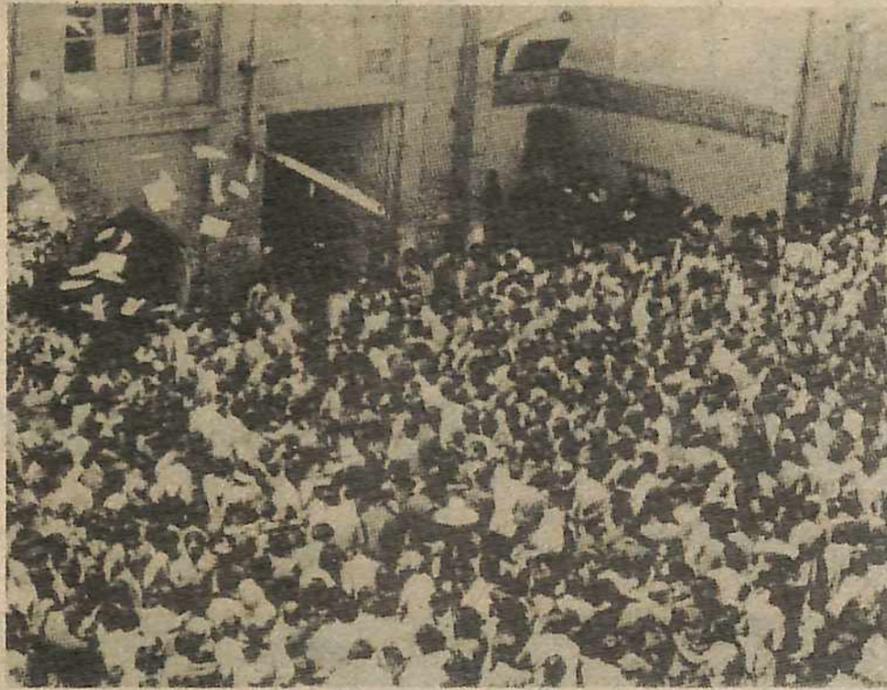
With a growing consciousness of the revolutionary goal of their struggle, the Iranian people are setting their sights more clearly than ever before on the fascist regime and its main backer, U.S. imperialism.

Every 40 days since the massacre in Qum on January 9, wave upon wave of protests, strikes, and mass uprisings have swept through Iran. Whatever represents and carries out the vicious rule of the Shah and U.S. imperialism is facing the just wrath of the Iranian masses.

Press reports from Iran have admitted that hundreds of police stations, foreign-owned banks and government buildings have been attacked. SAVAK cars and U.S. army jeeps—belonging to the 30,000 U.S. military technicians and "advisers" stationed in Iran—have been overturned and burned in the streets. And in several cities, organized groups of workers and students have seized trucks carrying weapons to the government's military bases.

From one end of Iran to the other, striking workers have shut down their factories. In a significant development, the workers are joining marches and demonstrations in their own organized contingents for the first time. Qum and Tabriz particularly have been effectively shut down for days at a time by tens of thousands of people, while the Shah's troops have been ordered to "shoot to kill."

After a mass meeting on May 9 in a local mosque, the people of Qum took to the streets. Police stations, SAVAK cars, and foreign-owned banks were especially targeted for destruction. In a



Tehran, Iran, May 11. Anti-government leaflets distributed as crowd gathers to denounce the Shah's blood-soaked rule.

daring move, they stopped a train for two hours and distributed leaflets denouncing the Shah and U.S. imperialism to all the passengers.

The next day, this revolutionary upsurge spread more powerfully than ever before to the heavily guarded capital city of Tehran, right under the nose of the fascist regime. Thousands fought for nine hours with police and regular army units. During a bold attempt to seize the city's main radio station, the Shah's stormtroopers opened fire with heavy machine guns directly into the crowded streets, killing and wounding hundreds. Marching in the main battle area, several hundred revolutionary

students from Tehran University carried a huge banner that said, "Long Live the Unity of Working People, Students, and the Revolutionary Movement of Iran!"

### Tehran Shut Down by General Strike

From Tehran and dozens of other cities, the call went out for a general strike on May 15. Despite cars of SAVAK agents roaming the streets and arresting, beating and often murdering revolutionary students and workers, millions of leaflets and even tape recorded speeches have been distributed all over Iran. As the momentum for the

general strike built up rapidly, the Shah himself got on national radio to announce his new "ultimatum": "Several thousand people have threatened the security of 34 million people! The government will not tolerate more disorder! Authorities will use full force and full powers against these inhumane and anti-national acts!"

The regime immediately set out to demonstrate its "full force" by declaring martial law in Tehran. Tanks and thousands of heavily armed troops rolled through the streets of dozens of major cities and took up positions near key government buildings. In Tehran troops ordered people to go to work at gunpoint.

Nevertheless, on May 15, Tehran—a bustling city of over 4 million—was completely closed down! Shops, schools and offices were empty. The regime immediately attempted to reassert its control by ordering everyone to "stay at home." However, hundreds of demonstrations erupted all over the city. The government was so panicked that it took control of the telephone exchanges and cut off all phone conversations from outside Tehran as soon as the general strike began to be discussed.

### New Uprisings Planned

Already, Iranian revolutionary organizations and the broad masses of the people are building for even more massive demonstrations and uprisings on June 5—a day of great political significance in Iran. On June 5, 1963 hundreds of thousands of people in Tehran and other cities poured into the streets, demanding political liberties and the end of fascist repression by the regime. On that day, 15,000 of the heroic Iranian people were shot down in cold blood by the Shah's troops. The ISA is initiating a call for nationwide demonstrations on June 5 in Washington D.C. and San Francisco in solidarity with the just struggle of the Iranian people.

As the Shah's reactionary regime faces the just wrath of the Iranian masses and as U.S. imperialism sinks its claws into Iran, it becomes more important than ever for revolutionaries in the U.S. to build active and militant support for the Iranian people and their revolutionary struggle. ■

kept up a militant picket line, and thousands of people in the downtown area stopped to watch the demonstration and read the leaflets.

### Victory Won

That evening a decisive victory was won when the Immigration Service was forced to release all the students. After more than 24 hours in custody, without food or sleep, the ISA members came out and reformed their picket line in front of the Federal Building, rubbing salt into the wounds of the U.S./SAVAK conspirators.

THE WORKER for the Chicago-Gary area, put out under the leadership of the RCP, distributed a leaflet to thousands of workers in the plants the morning after the mass arrest, and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade passed out leaflets on the college campuses. The leaflets were enthusiastically taken up by workers and students, with a great deal of discussion about the ISA, why they were demonstrating, why the U.S. media was hushing up events in Iran, and the relationship between the U.S. government and the Shah of Iran. Several workers angrily compared Iran to Vietnam.

The outcome of this attack was a victory over the repressive moves of the U.S. government and SAVAK, and an advance in building support for the struggle of the Iranian people. Through lively and immediate exposure of the event, new advances were made in arming broader sections of the American people with a clearer understanding of the nature of the Shah and his U.S. imperialist backers and the revolutionary stand and interests of the working class.

The attacks have only redoubled the determination of the ISA to continue its work in this country in solidarity with the revolutionary struggle now raging in Iran. ■

## ISA's Courageous Stand Beats Back Attack

# Chicago Cops Bust 173 Iranian Students

Using a known SAVAK (Iranian secret police) agent to provoke a fight, over 200 Chicago police swooped in and arrested 173 members of the Iranian Students Association (ISA) who were demonstrating in front of the Iranian consulate on May 16 to focus the attention of the American people on the new wave of mass upsurge in Iran. This carefully planned operation was the largest political mass arrest in Chicago since the 1960s.

The Chicago action was part of a week of organized ISA marches and demonstrations from coast to coast. The tremendous revolutionary upsurge of mass struggle in Iran, which has been directed squarely against the Shah's fascist regime and U.S. imperialism's plunder of Iran, has been all but blacked out in the news in the U.S. The ISA particularly pointed out the need to build massive opposition to the growing possibility of U.S. armed intervention in Iran.

The arrests in Chicago were clearly part of a nationwide attack on the ISA by the U.S. government in collaboration with SAVAK. During the same week several ISA members in Berkeley, Calif. were brutally attacked by police during a march in support of the Iranian people's struggle and were hospitalized with serious injuries. In other

cities police and immigration harassment and surveillance has intensified. On May 19, up to 800 marched in Los Angeles in protest against the Chicago and Berkeley incidents, and eight were arrested.

These attacks and the open collaboration between police and SAVAK expose again the relation between U.S. imperialism and the Shah's fascist regime. With the intensification of the revolutionary struggle of the Iranian people, the U.S. ruling class and the Shah's forces work hand in glove to attack the struggle both in Iran and the U.S., in a good example of reactionary bourgeois internationalism.

### Attack Backfires

But the mass arrest in Chicago was a classic case of the imperialists "lifting a rock, only to drop it on their own feet." Because of the courageous and uncompromising stand of the ISA in the face of this attack, and because of the political work of revolutionary forces in Chicago, who boldly took the incident out to thousands of workers and others in the city, this incident gave rise to a broader understanding of the Iranian people's just struggle and the real nature of the Shah's regime and U.S. imperialism.

The ISA met the attack head-on and refused to capitulate at any turn. In this way, the ISA not only turned this attack around, but also conveyed to the American people the revolutionary spirit and determination of the Iranian people who are rising up against the Shah's regime.

Hundreds of thousands of Chicago TV viewers saw paddy wagons loaded with Iranian students rocking with thunderous chants of "Down With the Shah!" At the police station, nine ISA members were charged with assault on police (a felony) and with disturbing the peace, then released on bail with the others. However, the Chicago police "released" all the Iranian students directly into the custody of the U.S. Immigration Service, where they were illegally detained, photographed for SAVAK's files, and threatened with deportation.

At the U.S. Immigration office, the Iranian students refused to give their names or show their papers, and declared themselves on a hunger strike. As one, they began chanting slogans and singing revolutionary songs. They created such a disturbance that three entire floors of the Federal Building were closed. Meanwhile, outside the Federal Building several hundred Iranian students and American supporters

## Two-Line Struggle Deepens Understanding Sharpen Weapon Of The Party's Press

As was pointed out in last month's *REVOLUTION* in the article on "The High Road Vs. The Well-Worn Rut," one of the main characteristics of the Jarvis-Bergman revisionists recently defeated in a major struggle in the RCP was their economism and more general pragmatism. For them it was not only unnecessary but wild "left-idealism" for the Party to carry out broad political work aimed consciously and consistently at the revolutionary goal of proletarian revolution. Instead, all that was necessary was narrowly "promoting the struggle"—seen by them as whatever was going on this morning or could be led by them this afternoon. Such a line would rob a revolutionary Party of its very reason for existence.

Not surprisingly, one important way the revisionist features of this clique became concentrated was in struggle over the role of the Party press. This struggle, and the rupture with their revisionist line generally, has enabled us to get clearer on this role. While the Jarvis-Bergman headquarters never dominated our Party's propaganda work except in a very few local areas in their grip, they interfered with this work and in addition their revisionist, narrow rightist line had a tendency to fuse with spontaneous rightist tendencies in the work of the Party generally. Not only has the defeat of these teachers by negative example removed an obstacle, it has helped the Party begin correcting errors in our own ranks.

This has laid the basis for important advances to be made in our Party's press—in *REVOLUTION*, in our theoretical journal *THE COMMUNIST*, and especially in the local editions of the *WORKER* newspapers (17 of which are now published with plans underway to begin several more soon). Starting with the May 1st issue, several of these latter papers have begun publishing every two weeks instead of monthly, and the majority will be doing so in the months ahead. And in every area the Party is beginning to take important and needed steps to strengthen the *WORKERS'* role in putting out our Party's line to the broad masses of workers, in more clearly, consistently and forcefully putting forward the Party's revolutionary line, strengthening the various foreign language sections, significantly expanding distribution and making the *WORKER*, and the Party press generally, a more integral part of our Party's daily work.

### A Revolutionary Weapon

What was the content of the struggle with these revisionists over the Party press? In the broadest sense it came down to the question—was the Party press going to be a revolutionary weapon in the class struggle or was it not? Was it to be seen and used as a crucial weapon, or was it simply a kind of garnish—necessary only for decoration alongside the "real" meaty work of promoting the daily struggle. (According to the Mensheviks, we needed such decorations because, after all, every Communist Party is "supposed" to have a paper—including the old CPUSA after which these top ex-CPers sought to model their thinking and actions.)

If we could get verbal agreement that the press was to be a weapon, there was no agreement as to what kind of a weapon the press, particularly the *WORKERS*, should be. Was it, as these pragmatists would have it, to be essentially a tool in simply building today's struggles into tougher fights, or a revolutionary weapon which, while promoting and strengthening such struggles, concentrated on exposing every aspect of oppression and exploitation coming down from the imperialist system and thus helping broaden today's movement and pointing to proletarian revolution.

In the Fall of 1977 when the struggle between the revolutionaries within the Party leadership, headed by Comrade Avakian, and the revisionist Jarvis-Bergman headquarters was becoming very sharp on all fronts, an internal bulletin on the *WORKER*, "The *WORKER* and Our Party's Tasks," was written under the leadership of the Party's revolutionaries. This bulletin spoke to the Party's line on the *WORKER* papers and many other questions and summed up erroneous tendencies which—as has now become

clear—were being actively promoted in a factional way by the revisionists.

While these top revisionists hated this bulletin, they did not openly oppose it when it was discussed on central leading bodies; in fact, they even voted to approve it. Especially by this time, their factionalizing was very developed and they were laying low on these bodies on many questions, hiding in wait for a more favorable time, place and subject on which to leap out and try to carry the day in the Party.

The Jarvis-Bergman gang have never yet written down anything of substance in opposition to the Party's line on its press. This is characteristic of their particular form of opportunism and rightism. It makes polemicizing against them more like squeezing a handful of slime than grabbing hold of a consistent—if opportunist—political line. But their line on the press, especially the *WORKERS*, is clear enough. All one has to do is look through the two issues they have so far published of their paper, which they call "The Worker."

If one manages to stay awake, the general impression that comes through is that the basic purpose of this paper is to combine rah-rah for the spontaneous struggle with writing about particular activities they are involved in and organizing this month. It is in this narrow, reformist way an attempt to "organize the struggle."

From all this it is clear that what was involved in the struggle around the Party press was at bottom a question of what kind of Party are we going to have—a reformist or a revolutionary Party. The introduction to the *WORKER* bulletin made this clear when it said, "Big changes are called for. This means further changes in the content of the papers as well as greatly stepping up their distribution and use. But more fundamentally it means changes in how we view and carry out our role as communists in today's conditions, and how the *WORKER* fits into that."

Whether all the Party's work should contribute to building a revolutionary struggle or mere reform, narrow and immediate results—this has been a basic dividing line between our Party and these revisionists on all questions, including the Party press. Lenin put it quite clearly, "The movement is everything, the final aim nothing"—this catchphrase of Bernstein's expresses the substance of revisionism better than many long arguments. To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the chops and changes of petty politics, to forget the basic interests of the proletariat, the main features of the capitalist system as a whole and of capitalist evolution as a whole; to sacrifice these basic interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment—such is the policy of revisionism." ("Marxism and Revisionism," *Collected Works*, Vol. 15)

### Tribune of the People

Our Party was founded in opposition to such a reformist line. Again at the 1976 Central Committee meeting it was emphasized, "We must conduct all our work, in every struggle, among all social forces and movements, as part of building toward the revolutionary goal." Of course saying this in general is not the same thing as carrying it out. Both the 1976 CC Report and the *WORKER* bulletin gave direction to implementing this revolutionary principle. As the latter document put it, "This is not just a moral injunction, it expresses a very clear political task—a task most clearly expressed in exerting every effort to be tribunes of the people."

This task, one closely connected with the tasks of the Party press, was spelled out clearly by Lenin when he wrote that a communist's "ideal would not be the trade union secretary but *the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalize all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat." (*What Is To Be Done?*, Chapter 3, E)

Hitting at the pragmatism and economism promoted by the Mensheviks, as well as at spontaneous rightism, the *WORKER* bulletin posed the question, "In our daily work among the masses of workers, how do we mainly want to be seen by them—as militant fighters or as 'tribunes of the people'? We clearly must be seen as both, but it is important to understand that the second—tribune of the

people—aspect is overall principle and why this is so."

Of course there was no original stroke of genius in all this. This was a point Lenin had made long ago, and it was a point that the Revolutionary Union (which formed the core of the RCP) had returned to and developed throughout its existence—in struggles against both "left" and right opportunism. But this didn't faze Jarvis and Bergman. They had little use for the theoretical contributions of the Revolutionary Union, or the Party for that matter.

Jarvis had a history of shunning Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* like a plague. Around the time of the Party's formation he had scattered around the notion that this book wasn't really applicable to our conditions because Lenin was writing about a two stage revolution with the first stage being a democratic revolution against Czarism. According to Jarvis, all of Lenin's emphasis on political struggle, as opposed to emphasizing the economic struggle, was determined by these specific conditions. While Lenin was writing under different conditions than ours, these principles which Jarvis was attacking are clearly applicable to our struggle.

In customary form, a hatchet woman closely linked with Jarvis in this revisionist clique openly screeched at a major meeting she had responsibility for, "I wish I could burn *What Is To Be Done?*!" She endorsed the idea of "lending the economic struggle a political character" (explicitly attacked by Lenin) while saying people shouldn't "use those words."

As struggle was developed against economism (which sees the struggle for economic reforms, especially trade union skirmishes, as the most important struggle of the working class) the Jarvis-Bergman bunch abandoned such openly economist positions. But they never made any serious effort to understand and apply the revolutionary principles Lenin was advancing. This is clear both from their downplaying of the importance of the *WORKER* and their view that its main task should be to promote today's struggles, and in the most narrow way.

The *WORKER* bulletin put forward a different line, "The *WORKER*, as a newspaper, is a potentially wide-reaching weapon of the Party in society as a whole. In the day to day work of Party comrades, while the *WORKER* may assist in organizing a particular struggle, that is not its main role. In such work its primary importance is to assist Party members, advanced workers and other supporters in being 'tribunes of the people,' as they sell the paper broadly to fellow workers." And, "as applied to the papers' content, this means that while they must write about major campaigns and battles we are involved in, we must break with the tendency to write mainly about ourselves. Their prime aim is to create public opinion through exposures of the forces at work behind every feature of political, economic, cultural, scientific life."

Without the aid of such a newspaper, under today's conditions at least, it would be impossible for our Party to carry out revolutionary work. It enables Party members and supporters to "live in controversy" as they should—standing together with fellow workers in their struggles and actively struggling to advance their consciousness of the interests of the working class around all of the key social questions.

From the time of the 1976 Central Committee on, when the task of putting out the *WORKERS* more frequently was set, the Party's line was clear that the main task of the *WORKERS* (and their main weakness) was in carrying out political exposures. And that this would make these papers *interesting*. As Lenin said,

"Working class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all* cases, *without exception*, of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected. Moreover, to respond from a Social-Democratic [communist], and not from any other point of view. The consciousness of the masses of workers cannot be genuine class consciousness, unless the workers learn to observe from concrete, and above all from topical [current], political facts and events, *every* other social class and *all* the manifestations of the intellectual, ethical and political life of these classes; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and materialist estimate of *all* aspects of the life and activity of *all* classes, strata and groups of the population. Those who concentrate the attention, observation and consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone are not Social-Democrats." (*What Is To Be Done?*, Chapter 3, Section C)

And even this, of course, is not an end in itself. For as the Party also pointed out, this is all part of preparing for the actual overthrow of the capitalist class.

### Mensheviks' View of the Worker

These Jarvis-Bergman revisionists never made any thorough break with their economism, or any attempt to grasp the essence of Lenin's or the Party's line, except to oppose it. As if to confirm this, in the few written pieces they have produced on the Party's line since their split (including an editorial "Introducing the Worker" in Vol. 1, No. 2 of their

Continued on page 12

## Revolution

*Revolution* is the organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA (RCP, USA). It is published monthly. All correspondence to the Party should be sent to RCP, USA; PO Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654.

## Mensheviks Teach by Negative Example

# RCP Coalfield Work Advances in Struggle

The recent two line struggle in the Revolutionary Communist Party against the revisionist, reformist line consolidated in the Jarvis-Bergman Menshevik headquarters was clearly reflected in the Party's work in the coalfields. The struggle waged against the Menshevik line in this area was significant not because of the influence of the handful (or more closely, a fingerful) of Mensheviks themselves in the work. Their actual role was negligible. It is significant and merits review because the line that was crystallized in the one or two Menshevik followers there did reflect certain erroneous tendencies in the work as a whole. And it was as the Party's revolutionary leadership intensified its efforts to combat and root out these tendencies in the work overall and as they were being corrected in the work in the coalfields that the Mensheviks were forced to jump out more openly to oppose the Party and its revolutionary line.

In a certain sense, the two line struggle against the Menshevik line came out so clearly in the coalfields because the level of struggle of the miners themselves posed some very sharp questions about the road forward and brought into sharp focus the different lines being put forward by the conscious forces. Time and again, in literally thousands of wildcat strikes, and most recently in the '77-'78 contract fight, miners have waged a determined and militant struggle against the profit drives of the capitalists. They have stood up against cops, courts, injunctions, and to a large extent have rolled over union hacks who have tried to block their way. At the same time, communists have played a growing role, linking up with this mass upsurge of struggle, building rank and file organization and helping to give leadership to these battles, while openly targeting the capitalist system itself as the enemy and pointing to proletarian revolution as the goal of the workers' struggle.

But despite the overall strength of the Party's work and the advance for the class represented by the fact that communists and other conscious forces were playing an active role in the miners' struggle, there has been a tendency to get swept up in the pull of the spontaneous upsurge. This went along with a tendency in the Party as a whole to get bogged down in the day-to-day economic struggle.

The two line struggle began to come to a head at the Second Plenary Session of the First Central Committee in 1976, which issued the report: "Revolutionary Work in a Non-Revolutionary Situation." For the majority of RCP cadre and other conscious forces working in the coalfields, the '76 Central Committee Report was a breath of fresh air. Struggle to understand and deepen the line it represented was taken up enthusiastically, and people got a better understanding that it was not the task of communists to be simply the "best fighters around," to go from wildcat to wildcat being the best organizers of pickets or rallies.

As Lenin stressed, left to themselves the day-to-day struggles lead to the rudimentary class understanding that workers need to unite and fight back against their immediate employers. This understanding, while it in some ways may represent an advance, is not in itself a break with the outlook of the capitalist system. And therefore spontaneous struggles like this "naturally" develop as struggles over the terms of the sale of labor

power, not in opposition to the whole wage slave setup. Certainly the working class has to wage the day-to-day economic battles against the capitalists to keep from being driven down to a "mass of broken wretches," as Marx put it. But as Marx says, workers "ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not the causes of these effects"—the whole capitalist system.

In direct opposition to the advances represented by the CC Report were the errand boys for the developing Menshevik headquarters in the Party who called for a retreat. Their fundamental orientation was to pimp off the massive militant struggle of the miners and they saw the Report as a threat and obstacle to their line and their careers. They consciously tried to sabotage its implementation in the work on a daily basis and claimed that the CC Report had "two different lines in it." One "correct" line promoting linking up with the day-to-day struggles, and one "left idealist" line promoting theory over practice—standing on the side and preaching to the masses.

As far as these Mensheviks were concerned, putting forward a revolutionary political line meant that they would be "isolated from the masses." In opposition to the line of the Party they promoted pragmatism—whatever works is what's correct, judge everything by the immediate results. For these people, the masses can learn all they need to know through their particular, economic struggles. Advanced ideas were the exclusive property of a few "hotshots" and "organizers" destined to lead the masses to salvation. Underlying all this was their firm belief that the working class is just too backward to grasp advanced ideas, let alone to make revolution.

In the past year the struggle against this countercurrent to the overall advances of the Party's work in the coalfields grew sharper, as it reared its ugly head in every major development of the miners' struggle.

### Mensheviks "Prepare" for Contract Fight

Over a year ago, the Miners Right to Strike Committee, in which Party members have played an active and leading role, began building for the contract battle. Party members united with other members of the Committee around the significance of this battle, why it was important to the capitalists and why it was important to the whole working class. Committee members united around what demands would be stressed, particularly the right to strike, and what forms of agitation would be used.

There was considerable discussion and unity around why the main demands of the rank and file put forward by the Committee were key. But from the beginning of the work around the contract battle—even before the first national rank and file contract meeting was called by the Miners Right to Strike Committee in March of 1977, those who eventually landed with both feet in the Menshevik swamp actively tried to sabotage the thrust of the Committee's work.

In building for this national meeting the Committee put out a call in its publication, RANK AND FILE UNITY, which laid out its line on the contract fight. To the Mensheviks, even using a publication with the Miners

Right to Strike Committee's name on it—let alone with its line—was said to be "too advanced" for the masses in their home UMWA district. They thought the Committee's reputation was too hot and wouldn't unite the biggest number of workers possible. They couldn't see the essence of the controversy around the Miners Right to Strike Committee: that in the last four years it has been the one rank and file organization consistently fighting in the interests of rank and file miners; that it was "hot" exactly because it had a reputation of consistently building the fight against the companies; because it raised the larger questions facing miners and all workers; and because some of its members were communists. So instead of using RANK AND FILE UNITY, these guys published a rag called THE MINER.

Not only did this publication turn its yellow back on the Miners Right to Strike Committee, it turned its back on the overall correct political line the Committee represents. THE MINER put forward the upcoming contract fight as just another battle. "Well, it's contract time again..." they said. The demands of the rank and file were put forward as a hodge-podge wish list and the key importance of the Miners Right to Strike Committee, of which they were allegedly a part, was not stressed at all. It was just another ho-hum fight on the endless treadmill.

After sharp struggle went on around the publication of this rag and what it stood for, the Mensheviks finally agreed to use RANK AND FILE UNITY, but their line was far from smashed.

### The Fight Against Health and Welfare Fund Cut

The 40% cutback in miners' medical coverage which came down in July 1977 was a major attack on miners and their families, pensioners and widows. The UMWA Health and Welfare Funds' trustees blamed these outrageous cuts on "losses in coal production due to wildcats." The anger of the rank and file over this attack exploded into a powerful wildcat of over 90,000 miners. The Miners Right to Strike Committee played an important role, not only in building the strike, but in getting out the truth about the fund cuts. It exposed the lies of the capitalists that the miners were to blame.

Committee members got out the facts that the contract negotiated by the union and the companies did not come close to guaranteeing royalties to cover the skyrocketing cost of medical care and the increased number of beneficiaries—that bankruptcy was written into the funds from the start. But even more important, the Miners Right to Strike Committee, and the Party members within it, exposed the fact that the real aim of the cuts was not simply an attack on miners' rights to health care, but was an attack on their rank and file movement, and their very ability to fight back. The capitalists were using the funds to blackmail miners into knuckling under to the companies' efforts to stop the wildcats and increase productivity at any cost.

Again, the Mensheviks found this analysis just too controversial. They claimed they needed a "local supplement" to RANK AND FILE UNITY to pass out in districts near them because the UNITY didn't deal with enough "particulars," a favorite Menshevik term for narrowing the scope of the struggle. Now the Committee members didn't think there was anything wrong with members from different districts using a local supplement, but these guys ended up not passing out UNITY at all, only using their "supplement" which didn't put out the Miners Right to Strike Committee's analysis of the cuts. They said the cuts were simply an attack on health care—going right along with other "cutbacks in social services." Nothing about the blackmail that the cuts really represented.

The fact is that these were controversial questions. The bourgeoisie in general—and especially during the health benefits strike—worked overtime to spread their summation of the wildcats: that miners only hurt themselves by these strikes. These ideas are bound to get over with a sizable number of miners, which is exactly why it's crucial for conscious forces to get out as boldly as possible with a correct analysis of the situation, to arm the masses so they can combat these capitalists' lies. But that was just too hard for these Menshevik cowards.

The sickening ending to this one episode of Menshevik betrayal of the working class came when their chief follower in the coalfields arrogantly responded to what he had to admit were correct criticisms of their line by saying: "When you work with workers, sometimes you have to sacrifice line." In other words, to this so-called Marxist, you can't struggle politically with workers to grasp anything but the narrowest outlook. To top it off, it later came out that it was this creep himself who had written the "supplement" and that he was trying to blame his own backwardness on the masses.

### Menshevik Line on Building the NUWO

In the work to form the National United Workers Organization (NUWO) the Menshevik headquarters in the Party jumped out further to oppose the revolutionary line of the RCP. All along the leading Mensheviks in the Party, who styled themselves heavy working class organizers, opposed the formation of the NUWO. They claimed it was "too early," that



Workers demonstrate at the State Capitol in Indianapolis, organized by the National United Workers Organization in support of the miners strike. The NUWO chapters had to fight and break the Mensheviks' opportunist obstructionism in building class-wide support for the miners.

Continued on page 5



(left) May Day demonstration in Cincinnati. (right) Felix Ayson, a veteran class fighter and activist in the International Hotel struggle at May Day march in Oakland, Calif. May Day this year was characterized by a clear revolutionary thrust, sharpened in the struggle against revisionism.

## May Day Charts Revolutionary Course

Workers gathered in dozens of cities across the country to celebrate May Day, 1978, International Workers Day. The celebrations brought together workers from the front ranks of many of the key battles against the capitalist enemy. In Madison, West Virginia, 50 people, including miners who had been in the forefront of the recent four month miners' strike, attended a rally. In the San Francisco Bay Area, fighters active in the long battle around the International Hotel (including one 80 year old tenant who was very sick, but refused to miss May Day) came forward to participate along with 400 others in the march and rally.

But as important as the linking together of the various fights of the workers and oppressed is, May Day has always meant something more. It represents the workers uniting as a *class*, taking into account their shared position in society and their common history.

Most importantly, it means looking to the future of their struggle, not only over the next immediate period for which the working class maps out its battle plan, but beyond to the revolutionary struggle to smash the rule of capital and remake the world.

It was this clarity of purpose that stood out most sharply at this year's May Day events. This was a direct result of the victory won by the Revolutionary Communist Party over the Jarvis-Bergman revisionist clique which tried to capture the Party and turn it away from its revolutionary course. And at the rallies Party speakers reported to the workers about this struggle and the victorious Second Party Congress.

The political line of the revisionists was to narrow the scope of the workers' horizons to what is immediately in front of their noses. Thus it is no surprise that they dropped the slogan "Workers Unite to Lead the Fight Against All Oppression" from their own

May Day celebrations.

It was the struggle to repudiate this revisionist line which made it possible to build the May Day celebrations on such a revolutionary footing. Not only has the Party grown stronger in the course of the two line struggle, but the other sponsoring organizations of May Day such as the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee, the National United Workers Organization and Vietnam Veterans Against the War have also accumulated valuable understanding and experience in the recent months in the course of beating back the wild efforts of the revisionists to seize these mass organizations and turn them into weapons in the service of their anti-working class line.

Indeed, this year's May Day celebrations reflected the spirit of class conscious workers seeing their role in taking up the fight against the various manifestations of the capitalist system and the many ways it grinds down and hammers at the great majority in society. In Houston, for example, the importance of the Joe Torres case and the struggle against police repression was stressed. The workers at the celebrations see the need not only to support or participate in these different battles, but are becoming increasingly aware of why their class alone is capable of leading these fights forward as part of the revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie.

It was with this understanding of the need for the working class to take its rightful place at the front lines of the people's resistance to capitalism, and in so doing become conscious of its role as capitalism's gravedigger, that May Day was revived as a working class holiday in the U.S. in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1971. That demonstration, which was initiated by the Revolutionary Union (an organization that played the key role in forming the RCP), was also a direct

told. But that is not the essence of the significance of the miners' struggle. What holds important lessons for the rest of the working class is the extent to which the miners' struggle has broken through the limits the bourgeoisie tries to place on the workers' struggle, including the fact that a rank and file mass organization which has the aim of uniting miners to take up the fight against all oppression is playing an important role in these battles.

In addition, it is significant that the Party is playing a leading role in these battles and in the course of them raising the class consciousness of the rank and file and pointing out the historic mission of the working class.

Workers assembled at the founding convention of the NUWO voted to make building support for the upcoming miners' contract battle one of the new organization's first major campaigns. But as soon as the convention was over, a couple of the Menshevik opportunists who held important positions within the leadership of the NUWO tried as best they could to sabotage actually taking up this campaign.

At the National Steering Committee meeting of the NUWO in November 1977, representatives from the Miners Right to Strike Committee made a report further developing the reasons why the miners' contract battle which was shaping up was crucial for the whole class and why broad numbers of workers should be mobilized to stand with the miners. But to the Mensheviks, this was just more "left idealism."

The flip side of their line that the miners' struggle is significant because the miners are "ba-a-ad" led to their arrogant position that if the members of the Miners Right to Strike Committee could not guarantee that there would be a strike and that it would be "big and militant," the NUWO couldn't promise to put out a lot of effort into it! If the miners can't deliver, to hell with them. The self-appointed NUWO president warned against the "idealism" that the miners strike would "automatically" be a major battle for the working class. "We can't set up the NUWO [and my career, of course] for a failure by agreeing to make a campaign out of this battle before we know for sure that it will

result of a major two line struggle in the ranks of communists.

That celebration came on the heels of the struggle against the "left" adventurist line represented by Bruce Franklin, an early leader of the RU. May Day was a direct refutation of the Franklin line which held that the working class was *not* the truly revolutionary class, and that to find the force that could be the backbone of the revolutionary movement, communists would have to look elsewhere—to the lumpenproletariat (criminal elements), the permanently unemployed, radicalized students and so forth.

That first revolutionary working class May Day demonstration in decades was attended by only 150 people and took place in only one city in the U.S. But it represented, in embryo, the growth of a class conscious and revolutionary section of the working class and the commitment of communists to play their vanguard role in leading the working class in a revolutionary direction.

Similarly this year's May Day demonstrations were generally small, reflecting both the fact that the class conscious section of the U.S. working class is still small and, especially in a few areas, the temporary disruption in the revolutionary ranks caused by the Jarvis-Bergman clique.

But just as the revival of May Day in 1971 was a watershed in that it was based on the recognition of the working class as the revolutionary class in society, so too this year's May Day celebrations reflected a great advance on the part of the Party and other class conscious workers—the defeat of those who would separate off the current workers' struggle from the goal of revolution. May Day reflected the deeper understanding that the working class must and will bring forward a whole new world through revolution.

In the New York-New Jersey area, stronghold of the Menshevik clique, 60 celebrated May Day in unity with their class brothers and sisters from Boston to Hawaii. They ran a red flag up the flag pole of Research Cottrell Inc., the capitalists responsible for the recent death of 51 construction workers in West Virginia. This was an act of defiance not only of the bourgeoisie, but also of those deserters from the revolutionary ranks who would have trampled the red flag into the dirt.

It is in this light that two of the common features of this year's May Day celebrations take on particular significance: the honoring of the revolutionary battles of the working class in the past, and the emphasis given to the fact that May Day is an *international* holiday of the working class.

In Chicago, 100 workers went on a car caravan to Haymarket Square, where a few days after the May First strike in 1886 for the 8 hour day began, workers were gunned down by the police. This resulted in the frame-up and hanging of the leaders of the 8 hour day movement.

In Detroit, 100 marched to the grave site of four workers who were killed in the hunger march of 1932, and in Gastonia, North Carolina, workers caravanned to the old Loray Mill, site of the bitterly fought Gastonia Textile Strike of 1929. These and similar actions in other cities brought home the fact that the working class has a long and proud history of class warfare against the U.S. capitalist class.

The other outstanding feature of the rallies was the solidarity expressed between the workers in this country and the exploited and oppressed around the world. At several of the rallies representatives of the Iranian Students Association spoke and brought with them the revolutionary spirit of the mass rebellions presently battering the reactionary regime of the Shah. In many cities speakers told of the growing revolutionary struggles in Africa amidst the turmoil of the contention between the two imperialist superpowers and their growing preparations for world war.

As the strains of the *Internationale* concluded the May Day rallies from coast to coast, workers left more determined to fight for the revolutionary future that May Day represents. ■

## Coalfields...

there was no basis for it, that workers couldn't possibly be united around such an advanced organization.

But when it was clear that there was momentum developing behind building the NUWO and that it would grow despite their opposition, it was an easy flip for them to jump on and try to lead the bandwagon, especially when they saw there was the potential to grab up some good positions to build their own personal careers. Above all they jumped on to make sure the NUWO would not be an advance for the working class. They even tried to use the NUWO to liquidate the Miners Right to Strike Committee, arguing that it should be known just as the miners' section of the NUWO, thus hoping to get around and bury the Miners Right to Strike Committee and its "too hot" reputation.

Their line on what the NUWO should be boiled down to making it a more militant AFL-CIO instead of an organized center uniting active fighters among the workers who see the need to take up the battle against the capitalists on all the major questions in society.

On the speaking tour to build for the NUWO in the East before the founding convention, this line came out clearly in relation to the miners' struggle. The Mensheviks promoted the miners' struggle as important mainly because the miners are "tough fighters" who turn over trucks and use guns. The Miners Right to Strike Committee was given importance not because of the political line it fights for and the leadership it represents, but mainly because it had led a lot of tough fighters. Speakers on the tour from the Committee were told by these Menshevik hotshots to "talk more about small forces leading big battles," and "tell more gun stories"!

The militance of the miners is something which is and should be an example and inspiration to other workers and the stories of their militancy should be

Continued on page 15

## Houston . . .

Continued from page 1

Later, when People United marched up chanting "Justice for Joe Torres!", a resounding cheer roared out from the crowd. More chants rang out: "Joe Torres Dead—Cops Go Free, That's What the Rich Call Democracy!" Two people grabbed a banner and planted it in the middle of the street. According to the HOUSTON CHRONICLE, when cops moved in to arrest the people they were met with a barrage of bricks and bottles, one officer taking it in the face. They abandoned the "suspects" and ran for their lives as their patrol car was smashed to pieces, overturned and set on fire. Attendants at a first aid station said they were "passing out bandages right and left. Every policeman that came running up to us had cuts and blood all over him."

Finally, when they saw they could do nothing to stop the aroused anger of the people, police withdrew from the area completely. Mayor McConn—who used the retreat to piously claim police were exercising "restraint"—sent SWAT teams into the community that night to brutalize anyone they could get their hands on. On the pretext of searching for stolen loot, they dragged people from their homes, charging them with felonies. The rebellion continued into the next evening as police entering the community met stiff resistance from large groups of people attacking with rocks and bricks.

Filled with fear, Houston's ruling class unleashed their press media to paint the rebellion as "a senseless and tragic act of violence" started by "outside agitators." The Houston authorities blew out of all proportion the looting and burning of a few stores, mainly by 8-10 year old kids who saw the rebellion as a chance to get what they never had. Of course, there was no mention of the fact that members of People United and many of the crowd tried to stop the looting which hurt several small businessmen. But as one small businessman said on TV, "What do you expect? You deny people's struggle for justice time and again and they will do something to get justice."

### Red-Baiting Frenzy

Meanwhile the capitalists paraded their stooges and agents posing as community activists to spout lies on TV about how the people really want *more police* to defend their community from hated "outsiders" like People United.

Having tried in the past to paint People United as a "Mexican-American group" to prevent different nationalities from uniting to fight police repression, now suddenly authorities were saying People United was made up of "white agitators." The capitalists and their flunkies are making a big deal about discovering communists in People United, hardly a shocking revelation since the Revolutionary Communist Party openly helped form and build that organization.

Of course, the purpose of all this hysteria was to obscure the daily terror the capitalists heap upon the Chicano people in Houston. And more than that, its purpose was to squash all resistance to their bloody rule and derail the struggle of the masses by singling out mass leaders for political attack.

As the week dragged on, it was clear the lines were being sharply drawn in Houston. You were either for the police or you were for People United and the struggle for justice for Joe Torres.

### Community "Leaders" Side With Enemy

Houston's rulers have received much help in this campaign from the bourgeois elements who pose as "leaders" and "saviors" of the Chicano community. These traitors—like State Senator Ben Reyes, who praised the police and the mayor for doing "a hell of a job" during the rebellion—have been all over the airwaves denouncing People United as "extremists" and "communists" and blaming them for the outbreak in

## Denounces "Adventurists"

# CPML Takes Side Of Houston Police

As the Houston ruling class authorities unleashed a vicious assault and hysterical red-baiting on People United to Fight Police Brutality and the Revolutionary Communist Party, they found some "surprising," if puny, support from the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist.)

The May 22 issue of the *Call* accuses the RCP and People United of "playing right into the hands of the Houston police." They even go so far as to invent a quote attributed to a People United spokesman that, "We don't care how many Chicanos get hurt in the struggle," a label that would be truly criminal if it were not so transparently absurd. Further, they accuse the Party of denying the revolutionary potential of the Chicano national movement.

But fabricating lies is only half the story. What they don't mention is also revealing:

- No mention of the fact that it is against People United and the RCP that the red-baiting is directed. (In fact they leave their readers with the definite implication that perhaps the CP(ML) is being attacked, which of course is not the case at all.)

- No mention of three leaders of the struggle arrested for responsibility for the rebellion who at the time of the *Call* article were in jail with one half million dollars bail each.

- No mention of the march led by People United the week after the rebellion in the face of grave danger.

- No mention of the fact that it has been People United which has been keeping the struggle for "Justice for Joe Torres" alive, long after the CP(ML) and a host of other opportunists lost interest.

Of course revolutionaries have come to expect the CP(ML) to turn reality on its head in a pathetic effort to discredit communists and other genuine fighters against oppression and promote their own puny sectarian interests. Indeed their article might have passed without comment from us were it not for one statement in their slander sheet that went beyond mere opportunism and lands them in the ranks of police informers and active agents of counter-revolution. The *Call* accuses the RCP "and its front group [!] People United" of being "isolated adventurists."

Evidently, for the CP(ML) who played no role in the

rebellion whatsoever, it is "adventurist" to actually be in the thick of the struggle, to stand with the masses against their oppressors. It was "adventurist" to stand up to the capitalists, "adventurist" to openly defend the masses' actions, especially their attacks on the pigs. And it was especially "adventurist" to do this right after the rebellion—when the heat was on and the lines were drawn.

For these bourgeois "communists," it is infinitely preferable to let others do the "adventuring" and take the risks. Then, when the danger has subsided, it is safe to leap out and flex your puny muscles as if you had carried some weight in the struggle, while attacking those who actually and actively took the side of the masses against the bourgeoisie and its vicious, violent repression.

Some of the very "isolated adventurists" the CP(ML) is attacking face 20 year sentences precisely because the capitalists have singled them out as revolutionary leaders in this struggle against national oppression.

The cowards who run the CP(ML) are content to trash the struggle from the safety of their reformist nest—a nest populated with the likes of State Senator Ben Reyes and other community misleaders who they make a half-hearted pretense of criticizing. The CP(ML) ends up praising these reformist buzzards for "seeing through the red-baiting" and "changing their tune." But Reyes and Co. were the ones who trumpeted the crescendo of red-baiting in the first place! And far from changing their tune, they played a tear-filled lament for the Houston police and openly begged them to attack the leaders of People United.

Perhaps most revealing is the CP(ML)'s feeble assertion that they are "stepping up their efforts to lead the masses in a revolutionary direction." They are evidently desperate to explain to their membership why they are simply carping from the sidelines while the "chauvinist, adventurist" RCP is out there in the heat of the struggle.

CP(ML) has insisted, as they always do, on lending whatever little weight they have to the capitalists' attacks. As the consequence it is absolutely certain that the masses will see and treat them in the same light, and that they will suffer the same fate in the end. ■

Moody Park.

These *vendidos* (sellouts) are endorsing the capitalists' threats to "take the gloves off" and stop "acting with restraint" (!!) against this "band of agitators." Some even openly called for police action against People United.

Reyes stated, "When they start hitting, I'm going to be there to make sure they hit the right people." Another flunky, Florencio Reyes, past president of the Association of Spanish Speaking Organizations, said, "Enough is enough. As long as they [police] direct their force against the element in question, I have no quarrels." These "leaders" who have betrayed the struggle for justice for Joe Torres many times in the past are rapidly earning for themselves the hatred of the Chicano people in Houston. (See REVOLUTION articles cited earlier.)

### People United Leads Struggle

In contrast to these faithful servants of the capitalists, People United has boldly stepped out to say Moody Park was a tremendous victory and point the finger directly at the enemy. Travis Morales courageously told the press that: "I think it was great what people did to the police. The police got a little bit of the justice they deserve. The people will never forgive and never forget what happened to Joe Torres. I don't think this will be the last time."

Party members along with non-Party activists in People United summed up that it was important to turn the capitalists' lies and slander around and say to people—"the fight will not be stopped." It was also summed up that the people in the mainly working class Northside community around Moody Park hate the police and see the attack

on People United as an attack on the whole struggle for justice for Joe Torres and the movement which has been built against police repression, mainly through the efforts of People United and the Party. It was decided to call a march at Moody Park on May 13 to demand all charges be dropped and to make it clear to Houston's rulers that the struggle against police brutality would continue.

### Wave of Terror

In the meantime, the capitalists intensified the reign of terror, attempting to crush the struggle once and for all. Six people, members of People United and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, were arrested at a local high school when they passed out leaflets defending the rebellion and answering the slander against People United. Immediately, the reformists in the Chicano community lept out to denounce the planned march, saying that it would create "a backlash against the Mexican-American community" and "discredit the reform mood within the police department."

Speaking of Travis Morales at a meeting of McConn's business cronies, Mayor McConn revealed the vicious nature of the capitalists' "reforms" when he said, "I just hope he gets out of here as quickly as he can." This thinly veiled death threat declared open season on Travis Morales for the trigger happy goons that make up the Houston police department. For protection, Morales was escorted on his way home by fellow workers in his plant who drove their cars alongside him.

On Friday, May 12, People United called a press conference to denounce these statements. Undercover agents of

the Criminal Investigation Division of the Houston P.D. along with FBI agents suddenly appeared and grabbed Travis Morales, refusing to identify themselves or what the charges against him were.

Simultaneously, squad cars surrounded a home on the North side where the RCYB was meeting to plan for the march Saturday. They burst into the house and hauled off Tom Hirschi, and RCYB member. A short time later, more undercover pigs arrested the third activist in the struggle, Mara Youngdahl, as she picked up people who were leafletting.

The three were charged with felony riot, a crime invented in 1974 after 3000 demonstrated in Dallas against the police murder of 12 year old Santos Rodriguez. This law says that if crimes are committed during a "riot" (defined as seven or more people committing unlawful acts) everyone participating is equally guilty. The indictment, based on secret testimony of undercover pigs, lists nine offenses including arson, which carries a maximum 20 year sentence. It specifically does not charge any of the three with actually committing any of the offenses listed.

### March a Big Victory

In the face of all this, the march held on Saturday, May 13 was a tremendous victory for the people and a big defeat for the capitalists. For a week the ruling class had made it clear that to march would be for people to put their lives on the line. Because of this intimidation many people did not attend, and those that did knew the great likelihood of being arrested and beaten that day. Still, 150 people showed up to the rally and over half of these marched with

## Some Call Them "Proletarian"

# "Blue Collar" Movies Do O.T. for Bourgeoisie

Hollywood is offering a new ride in the Bourgeois Film Amusement Park. You pay four bucks to get slammed against the wall. Actually it's an old ride in new coveralls. The theater marquee announces: *Saturday Night Fever*, *Blue Collar*, *F.I.S.T.* They promise a look into the lives and struggles of working class people, but there is an unseen barker. "Step right up, step right up! And for no extra charge we will smash your hopes on the Rocks of Reality." Reality? We beg to differ.

### Illusion of Reality

There is the illusion of reality, scattered perceptions, superficial glimpses into working class life, even a taste of struggle. The scenery is right. The factories look like factories. Some of the characters look and talk like people you might know.

The people have problems. They're up against it. They got trouble with the companies, the foremen, the union hacks, and the government. The youth got problems with their parents; they got no place to go with their lives. The actors are skilled, the music is popular and for a change the stories feature working people as the main attraction.

A lot of people are going to see these new movies and they have stirred up quite a bit of discussion and controversy. What's going on? How come Hollywood is putting the working class on the screen? Do the new films "tell it like it is"? And just what does this trend represent?

The new trend of films reflects something going on in the world but it does not reflect the interests of the working class. These movies do not portray reality. In fact, this so-called "realism" conceals the actual situation with a slick veneer of perceptual images of working class life, popular music and dancing, fancy camera work and "living color."

Irregardless of what the self-declared

intentions of individual writers, actors and directors may be in initiating these films, the movies objectively serve the interests of the ruling class, including of course the giant corporations and Wall Street financiers which put up the money for these shows and rake in the profits off them.

"In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes or art that is detached from or independent of politics." (Mao Tsetung, "Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art") The latest wave of films from Hollywood is no exception. Bourgeois ideology and politics is bourgeois whether it's wearing overalls or a three-piece suit!

The raw material for these films is drawn from the lives, struggles and the history of the working class, but it is shaped and formed by the ideology of the bourgeoisie and in the process, twisted and deformed.

"In the last analysis, what is the source of all literature and art? Works of literature and art, as ideological forms, are products of the reflection in the human brain of the life of a given society." (Mao, *ibid.*) The new "realistic" films are the products of the reflection of the life of the people in the USA 1978 in the brains of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois artists and writers. Of course, they must be able to sell their works to the captains of industry, who then have to sell it to the masses. They've got to keep coming up with new stuff and this year the working class is "in."

### Forced to Take Note of Working Class

These bourgeois artists are forced to recognize that people do not have the same high hopes of making it big, that it is a fight just to get by, to keep from

being driven down by the capitalists. The "American dream" of rocketing to success like "Superfly" just won't cut it these days. They see that there is something stirring in the working class, the situation is marked by conflict. The workers are beginning to rebel, to break through the limits imposed on their struggle by the two-headed monster—the capitalists and the traitors in high union office. This is a period marked by struggle but of scattered struggles.

While there are big upsurges like the recent miners' strike, the farmers' strike, the Houston rebellion, it is not a time of mass revolutionary upsurge. The masses of people are not in a revolutionary mood, and there's a lot of confusion, but there is a growing sense that the system is messed up and things aren't getting any better. In fact, they're getting worse.

The writers and artists of Hollywood see the effects of the downward spiral of capitalism in crisis and many even feel the effects of the crisis themselves to some extent. But the limited perceptions which they dish up as the "actual situation" of the masses of people, in spite of what their "sympathies" for the "common people" may be, only adds to the confusion.

The bourgeoisie is only too happy to promote this stuff and shove it onto the masses of people at four bucks a head. The "slice of life" they serve up to the masses is cut from the dark side of life. The picture they present is one-sided, subjective and not "reality," but a damn lie.

### Three "Working Class" Flicks

In *Saturday Night Fever*, the most backward aspects of working class youth are presented as typical. The hero sums up that his parents and friends are all a bunch of jerks and the only solution is to try to get over by getting out of the working class, but the message of

the movie is that there is really no way out.

And in case you didn't get the message in the film, the CHICAGO TRIBUNE recently revealed that: "John Travolta has become a superstar, the BeeGees are millionaires, and *Saturday Night Fever*" is a runaway hit. But Eugene "Tony" Robinson is still back in Bay Ridge Brooklyn, delivering groceries at \$180 a week. Robinson, on whom the Tony Manero character in *Fever* was based, says that his lifestyle hasn't changed much and his bank book hasn't changed at all."

The new movies let a little of the class struggle slip out, but just recognizing that there are classes and class struggle in society is no great revelation for the bourgeoisie. In *Blue Collar* the anger and frustration of the workers is expressed in individual acts, and when the little group of "heroes" do unite, they unite to rip off the union safe because "the money is ours."

Kotto is murdered, Pryor sells out to the hacks with the line that "If I got to kiss somebody's ass, at least I'm gonna pick which ass I kiss." His friend Keitel cops to the FBI and the two "fighters" end up at each other's throats, while the voice of their murdered buddy sums up the situation: "Everything they do—the way they pit the lifers against the new hires, the old against the young, the Black against the white—is all meant to keep us in our place." The message is that the working class is divided, the capitalists are responsible, but there is no mention of what the workers can do about it or what, in fact, growing numbers of workers are doing about it.

*F.I.S.T.* brings us a romanticized version of the life of Jimmy Hoffa, alias Johnny Kovacks, a union organizer who rises from the ranks of the workers to the top of the International under the banner of Jimmy "took" but he "took" for us! Kovacks sells out to the Mafia, but he gets the workers "what they want"—higher wages at any price, including giving away the right to strike.

The only opposition to Johnny's sellout is a feeble group on the West Coast led by his old friend, portrayed as an impotent reformer who ends up squealing on Kovacks to the government. In the beginning, Kovacks is portrayed as a "fighter." In one early scene, he and few other guys stand up to the foreman and pelt him with crates

Continued on page 8

People United, the NUWO and the RCYB three miles in the community around Moody Park.

The capitalists had issued a challenge, and the people hurled it back in their face. The march was marked by people's spirit and discipline and was more multinational than past marches, with Blacks and whites as well as Chicanos participating. The march raised the four slogans around which the struggle must be built: Free the Moody Park 3; Drop the Charges Against All Those Arrested in the Rebellion; Stop Police Terror; and Justice for Joe Torres.

In a swift tactical maneuver, People United had leaked to the press that people were going to march to downtown Houston. Police were mobilized, waiting to attack the march. Then People United quickly changed the march route to Moody Park where the ruling class had less freedom to attack, fearing it might spark another rebellion in the community.

The real success of the march however was the tremendous response from the people in the Northside community, where People United was supposed to be a "hated outside group." People rushed out of their homes and stores to grab leaflets. Many honked their horns in support and gave the fist. The support from the people was more enthusiastic than on any recent Joe Torres march, showing that in fact the march concentrated the real sentiments of thousands in the community and their hatred for the police. In contrast to this, a Mother's Day March for Peace, organized and promoted in direct opposition to the struggle by the Catholic Church, was attended by only 50 people, mostly old women, children and priests.

Since the march, People United and other groups have continued to build support for the Moody Park 3 and the others arrested during the rebellion, as well as carrying forward the fight against police brutality and for justice for Joe Torres. On Saturday, May 20, People United and the National United Workers Organization held a car caravan that went through many Houston neighborhoods in an effort to further broaden the base of support among working people of all nationalities.

### Struggle Will Grow

The Moody Park rebellion is an event of great significance. It is perhaps the sharpest struggle by the Chicano people in several years against their national oppression. Due to the sharp political nature of the arrests and the severity of the charges, the need and potential exists to build a nationwide movement to defend the people arrested. The National United Workers Organization has already sent a message of support, and in several cities—Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area and Chicago—the WORKER newspaper printed a special leaflet and took it into the Chicano communities to build support for the struggle in Houston raising the four slogans People United is putting forward.

What is particularly significant about the Moody Park rebellion is that it was an outgrowth of a year long struggle led by a correct working class line against police repression. The rebellion was consciously directed against the police, the bourgeoisie's tool for enforcing their system of oppression. It was a dramatic rejection by the masses of the reformist line that bourgeois "justice"

will somehow address their grievances. This is something the capitalists can't stand, and that is why they are in a frenzy, going hog-wild to stop the struggle and attack its political leadership.

Even in peaceful times under capitalism, there will be upsurges such as this one, revolutionary outbursts through which the masses learn where their strength lies, who the enemy is and the different roads put forward by various class forces. The rebellion in Moody Park is a vivid example of the revolutionary potential of the struggles of the oppressed nationalities, which are bound by a thousand links to the struggle of the working class, with a common interest and directed against a common enemy—the capitalist class.

It points to the extreme importance of the working class and its Party being at the forefront of such struggles, pointing the spearhead directly at the capitalists and helping to weld a power-

### FLASH!

As we go to press the Moody Park 3 have been released on \$25,000 bail each, after the bail was dropped from the original one-half million dollars each. However, they still face the same extremely serious charges—possible 20 year sentences.

At the same time, the authorities in Houston have increased the charges on Rogelio Castillo from felonious assault to attempted capital murder. Castillo had been driving through the Moody Park area the night of the rebellion when a policeman smashed in his windshield in an unprovoked assault. Unable to see, Castillo hit the cop, whose leg was broken.

On release, the Moody Park 3 held a press conference at which they vowed to continue the struggle. They pointed to the class nature of bourgeois "justice" which let off the killers of Joe Torres with a \$1.00 fine and comes down so ferociously at those who stand up against them. The attempt to frame up Castillo for attempted murder was strongly denounced at the press conference.

Send messages of support and contributions for the legal defense of the Moody Park 3 and others who were arrested to: PUFPPB, Box 87016, Houston, TX 77087.

Free the Moody Park 3!

Drop the Charges Against All Those Arrested in the Rebellion!

Stop Police Terror!

Justice for Joe Torres!

## Culture...

Continued from page 7

of fish—the audience cheers. But it's all downhill from there.

When it comes down to the real nitty gritty in their first strike, Kovacks' militant shoe banging isn't enough and the masses can't stand up to the company. The only scene of mass rebellion in the film is sparked when the Mafia infuses its muscle into the otherwise impotent and futile struggle of the workers. The title of the movie itself, short for Federation of Interstate Truckers, takes the clenched fist symbol, and slams it right in the face of the working class, as it comes to symbolize, not the power of the masses of workers but the "push" of organized crime.

In fact, taken all together, the thrust of the new wave movies is that times are hard, the system's messed up, people are looking for a way out, but if you try to struggle against it you're gonna end up beating your head against a stone wall, because the bourgeoisie is strong and the proletariat is weak and divided, and one way or another the capitalists are going to keep the people in their place.

This is the content of the "new Realism," the content of their "exposure": expose the effects of the system on the masses, but never really get to the heart of what is responsible for all the misery in society, and equally "expose" the impotence of the masses to set things right.

Characters representing the working people are put on center stage *only* to reveal their weaknesses, their inadequacies, their frustrations and ultimately their complete inability to come to grips with the forces that are whipping them around and making their lives miserable. They sell out, cop out, try to escape, or die.

The masses are portrayed as faceless, confused, cowardly and dumb. This so-called "realism" of exposing the "seamy side" of the masses reflects the despair of the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois artists and serves only the bourgeoisie. Let's not be fooled by the new movies when they let a little of the bourgeoisie's dirty laundry hang out. There's a lot more dirty laundry hanging out all over the place than these flicks expose, and the message is that you may not like it but there's not a damn thing you can do about it. In

## Soviet Aggression Against China

In early May the Soviet Union sent 30 troops, 18 boats, and 1 helicopter into North Eastern China (Manchuria), in a blatant act of aggression against the People's Republic of China. A number of people were shot and wounded, and the Soviet "apology" which followed was refused. Despite the Soviet Union's apology and excuses, it is clear that a leopard cannot change its spots.

The old and new czars have a long history of aggression against China. After the Opium War of 1840, czarist Russia compelled China to sign a number of unequal treaties. And ever since Khrushchev and his revisionist clique took over and put the Soviet Union back on the capitalist road, these new czars have been carrying out attacks against the PRC and invoking the old unequal treaties to support their claims, and even going beyond these.

For example, according to the Sino-Russian Treaty of Peking signed in 1860, all the Chinese territory east of the Wusuli River, approximately 400,000 square kilometers, became part of Russia; yet, even according to that predatory treaty, the much-disputed Chenpao Island belongs to China.

In 1963, the Soviet revisionists refused to accept the proposal by the PRC of settling the boundary dispute through negotiations, maintaining the status quo and avoiding conflicts in the meantime.

Instead, the USSR has continually violated Chinese territory and air space,

## In Memoriam: Nancy Goodman

On May 17 in Boston a memorial service was held for Nancy Goodman, a comrade who had been involved in the work of the Revolutionary Communist Party among youth in that city. Nancy Goodman was 25 years old when she was brutally murdered last November at the hands of a depraved criminal. Her body was only recently discovered.

She is survived by her husband and her mother and father and sister.

\* After her disappearance, police refused to take any steps, even refusing to take fingerprints on the automobile she had last been in. The RCP and others, concerned that her disappearance not be used as an excuse for more terror by the very police who did nothing to find her killer, organized an extensive search of the area in which she was known to have disappeared. 50 to 60 people in the area turned out to help in the search. "Even though we didn't find her," said her husband Roy Goodman, "it was good to see so many Black, Latin and white people concerned and clearly outraged about what had happened. The unity that developed was an important thing. It was a tribute to Nancy. That's what she stood for."

At the memorial service, a wreath was presented by the Central Committee of the RCP and the following message was read:

"It was with the deepest grief that the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party learned of the death of Comrade Nancy Goodman. Comrade Goodman was killed in the course of carrying out the Party's revolutionary work among the youth. Her death was a direct result of capitalism and the decadence that it spews forth in many forms as it falls ever deeper into decay. Comrade Goodman dedicated her life to the destruction of this system and to building a new world without exploitation or oppression. She died a revolutionary communist.

"We extend our sympathy to her comrades, family and friends and pledge on behalf of the whole Party to carry forward the struggle to which she dedicated her life."

other words, the capitalist class is on top and it's gonna stay there.

### Mensheviks Laud "New Realism"

Now there are some people who claim these movies "tell it like it is," including people who call themselves communists (occasionally). The Mensheviks (who tried to capture and ruin the RCP) are incapable of raising perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge and getting to the essence of contradictions. They once again demonstrate in lauding these new movies that they are incapable of discerning a trend.

They write in their *YOUNG COMMUNIST*, "Just as a broken clock is right twice a day, every once in a while a film comes out of Hollywood that speaks to the experience of the people... *Saturday Night Fever* is like a burst of sunlight through the cinematic clouds.

attacking fishermen and other civilians along the border. The last major incursion occurred in 1969 during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution; the USSR sent troops and tanks to attack Chenpao Island, killing a number of Chinese. Recent reports have confirmed that the USSR had actively made preparations for a preemptive nuclear strike against China around that time.

All of these attacks have been responded to in a variety of ways by the Chinese people: fishermen on the rivers have tried to reason with the crews of the Soviet gunboats, while also cutting high powered water hoses used against them; Chinese border patrols have tried to reason with and educate Soviet border patrols who have often been eager to hear about the facts; aggressor troops have been repulsed by force of arms.

At the present, the USSR has roughly one million troops stationed on the Chinese border. These troops are not only there in an attempt to blackmail and pressure the Peoples' Republic, but as the latest incident shows, could well be unleashed. However, the Chinese people have a history rich in the experience of fighting against imperialist aggressors coupled with the legacy of the revolutionary theory and practice of Mao. Guided by this, the Chinese masses will be able to engulf any Soviet aggressors and defeat them by a people's war, which would be supported by the peoples of the world. ■

It tells it like it is. A thick slice of life that any young person can bite into and be satisfied... Tony can take the power of the disco [!?!]—the *Saturday Night Fever*—and turn it into fever for revolution." And these pearls of wisdom from an article in their scab "Worker" on *Blue Collar* (signed by an alternate delegate to the 1977 UAW National Convention):

"The power of the movie is that it shows the conditions workers, not just auto workers, face both in the 'plantations' and in their whole lives. It makes no excuses for the corporations or their lackeys in union office, or for the cops and the FBI, and it shows the different methods they use to keep us down... It doesn't offer any way out of the bind it portrays, but that is not its aim... *It tells the truth.* [our emphasis] It makes you laugh and it makes you angry. Don't miss it." After all, people are like that, that's the way things are, that's what conditions are like for the working class, quack the Mensheviks, and thanks be to Hollywood for putting all that stuff out on the screen so that the working class can laugh and get mad and recognize its own potential!

They praise *Saturday Night Fever* as a "thick slice of life," as though there can be some non-partisan slicing into a corner of reality which simply mirrors life as it is and from which the viewer can draw his own subjective conclusions. This "slice of life" theory is a model of eclecticism. The idea that an artist simply records everyday phenomena without emphasis, showing every aspect with equal weight, is bogus. There is selection involved and this selection is marked by the class outlook of the artist whether or not he is conscious of the fact. The so-called "thick slice of life" these Mensheviks tout so highly is cut with a bourgeois knife.

### Art Must Be Higher Than Life

These broken clock "communists" act as though the proletariat doesn't have to bother producing works of art because the bourgeoisie is doing it for us. Their praise of these movies "about working class life" puts them in direct contradiction to what Mao said in his talks at Yanan:

"Although man's social life is the only source of literature and art and is incomparably livelier and richer in content, the people are not satisfied with life alone and demand literature and art as well. Why? Because, while both are beautiful, life as reflected in works of literature and art can and ought to be on a higher plane, more intense, more concentrated, more typical, nearer the ideal, and therefore more universal than life actual everyday life. Revolutionary literature and art should create

a variety of characters out of real life and help the masses to propel history forward. For example, there is suffering from hunger, cold and oppression on the one hand, and exploitation and oppression of man by man on the other. These facts exist everywhere and people look upon them as commonplace. Writers and artists concentrate such everyday phenomena, typify the contradictions and struggles within them and produce works which awaken the masses, fire them with enthusiasm and impel them to unite and struggle to transform their environment."

The new films concentrate what is backward, typify the weaknesses of the masses and basically end up lower than life, but the Mensheviks, who themselves are a living example of all that is lower than life, argue that the movies typify working class life. Just look around, they say, aren't there youth who do all the things that the youth in *Fever* do? Don't blame youth for being youth. And aren't workers trying different ways to fight back? "Some work and some don't." (!)

The movies don't provide the solutions but they do show "typical" people in "typical" conditions, say the Mensheviks. Their partial and empirical view of the world and their own narrow view of "conditions"—looking at them in only the most immediate sense as a bunch of unconnected phenomena—their disregard for the laws and forces governing the development of things, leads the Mensheviks into a "typical" trap of mistaking a picture of the bourgeoisie for the proletariat.

Do the characters in these movies who are models of the influence of bourgeois ideology—individualism, escapism and capitulation—typify the masses? Do these movies typify the contradictions in the life of the working class? Bourgeois ideology does influence the masses of people, but bourgeois ideology does not *typify* the working class as a class. In fact it is alien to the working class and must be struggled against, not raised to a principle and applauded.

What art can and must do is get to the essence of things. In portraying the class struggle, to "be more typical" means to draw out those qualities which typify the proletariat *as a class* in contradiction to the bourgeoisie *as a class*, so that the masses gain an understanding which is more universal than any one or a number of phenomena taken individually. This is what Mao means when he says art ought to be on a "higher plane."

The characters in *Blue Collar* do not typify the workers in this way, but the Mensheviks insist that the movie "tells the truth." But truth too has a class character. In the history of mankind only Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is genuine scientific truth. It is both objective and partisan, summing up the struggle between classes and showing how it is inevitable that the proletariat will resolve the conflict through revolution and put an end to the exploitation of man by man.

Merely to recognize the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and not to recognize what is rising and developing—that the working class is on the rise and that the bourgeoisie is doomed—is in fact not to portray reality.

Is it not true that the masses are the makers of history? That the masses of people in the class struggle, in struggling to change their environment propel all history forward? Then how can it be that works of art, which do not even indicate this fact but basically portray the masses as spinning their wheels in a rut while history moves on, tell the truth? The fact is—they don't.

This new wave of films only makes it that much clearer why it is important for the working class to battle the bourgeoisie on the ideological and cultural front, to expose the class nature of their works of art, as part of the overall struggle against the capitalist class, and the need to produce works of art that "arise from and in turn serve the struggle of the masses of people, reflect their great power in opposition to the decay of the imperialists and radiate the confidence and militancy of the proletariat as the class of the future." (*Programme* of the RCP, p. 62) ■



Chanting "Kent State, Jackson State, It's Right to Rebel! Imperialist System Go to Hell!", members of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade lead a contingent of students during May 4th actions at Kent State.

## 1500 Rally At Kent State On May 4 Anniversary

On May 4, 1970, four students were killed and nine others wounded by National Guard troops called in to put down student protests at Kent State University in Ohio against the U.S. invasion of Cambodia. This year on May 4, 1500 rallied at Kent State to protest the original shootings, the continued cover-up of those responsible, the construction of a gym on the site of the murders, and the underlying causes of both the shootings and cover-up.

These rallies and other events on May 4 have been a tradition at Kent State ever since 1971. Traditionally, however, it had been a memorial service for those killed and wounded. The atmosphere tended toward mourning and moralism.

This changed, however, over the past year. In 1976 the administration officially dissociated itself from the May 4th memorial and further, announced plans to build a gym on the place where the students had been gunned down. In 1977, students fought back hard against this attempt to sweep under the rug the memory of Kent State 1970 and what it stood for.

The May 4 Coalition, a broad united front of campus organizations and other individuals, came into existence, and this became the organizational form through which students launched a vigorous struggle to prevent the construction of the gym. A sit-in at the administration building, a tent city on the construction site, militant demonstrations in September and October drawing thousands of students and youth to Kent from throughout the East, South and Midwest—these were some of the high points of the fight. (See *Revolution*, June, August, September, October, November 1977.)

Through all the twists and turns of this struggle the Revolutionary Student Brigade (the former student group of the Revolutionary Communist Party, which went out of existence after playing a big role in forming the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade) was able to play a valuable role in providing leadership both within the May 4 Coalition and on dozens of campuses across the country. At many crucial junctures, when some forces within the Coalition called for placing reliance on the courts rather than mass struggle, or when tendencies toward pacifism grew strong, the RSB was able to point the way forward. What enabled the RSB to do this was that it was guided by the revolutionary line of the RCP.

The fact that 500 people, including a strong showing of Kent students, attended this year's rally is testimony to the fact that the memory of the Kent State struggle and the murderous attack by the ruling class still burns strong and

is carried forward by a new generation of students.

### A Step Backwards

But in light of what has happened over the past year, the events of May 4, 1978 marked a step backward. Two days of commemorative activities were organized by the May 4th Task Force, a group which came into existence after the shootings mainly to do education about what had happened in 1970, and which has traditionally organized the memorial on May 4.

The Task Force organized a candlelight march the evening of May 3, and an all-night vigil lasting up until the beginning of the rally at noon on May 4. The rally itself was long on moralism and short on revolutionary analysis. For instance, one speaker organized his speech around the slogan, "would that I could love justice and my country too."

An exception was the speech by Clark Kissinger, once National Secretary of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). He pointed out that the significance of Kent was that students were fighting against an imperialist war, and that the current struggle at Kent was a struggle over the summation of those events and of the student movement of the '60s. "The ruling class," he said, "seeks actively to repress any resurgent militant anti-imperialist movement. They see clearly the potential of youth in the coming crisis."

The crowd showed that it was ready for more than moralism by its enthusiastic response to Kissinger's speech, as well as by the spirited way in which the slogan raised by the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade—"Kent State, Jackson State, It's Right to Rebel! Imperialist System, Go to Hell!"—was taken up by others during the march. This was also shown by the way in which the fence was attacked by demonstrators at the end of the march, an action which brought a small horde of riot-equipped police scurrying out from their hiding places in the partly completed gym structure, lobbing tear gas canisters at the crowd.

What was ironic about this demonstration was that there was once again a group called "Revolutionary Student Brigade" involved in the event, but this time instead of pointing the way forward, this "new RSB" thoroughly united with every backward tendency

they could find. Their slogan was: "Eight Years is Long Enough—KSU Administration Admit the Injustice."

In other words, the sum of their demands is that the Kent State administration admit that an injustice was done to the shot students. It is simply a demand that the reactionary Kent State administration fall into line with the rest of the U.S. bourgeoisie, which is happy to mutter a few pious words about the "injustice" and "tragedy" of the shootings if only people forget the revolutionary spirit of Kent and Jackson State and the truth about the system that gunned them down.

This RSB, of course, is an organization under the leadership of those same Mensheviks who tried to split and wreck the Revolutionary Communist Party. While within the Party, these Mensheviks had opposed the formation of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) in the first place (for documents from this struggle, see "Communism and Revolution vs. Revisionism and Reformism in the Struggle to Build the R.C.Y.B.," available from RCP Publications). They had also opposed taking up the Kent State struggle in a big way at all.

And once freed from the discipline of the Party of the proletariat, these opportunists fell all over themselves seeing how fast they could run backwards. First they restored the old name of "their" organization, the RSB, which now seems to stand for "Revisionist Student Brigade." And then they proceeded to carry out their revisionism in practice in case after case. In the Davis Cup demonstration in Nashville, for example, they refused to mention imperialism, instead chanting "Let's scream, let's shout, let's turn this racist mother out" (referring to the South African tennis team), and made the spectators coming to the match the main target. On the cultural front, they heaped praise on the poison of the recent movies *Saturday Night Fever* and *Blue Collar*.

So their line on the Kent State struggle is a fitting sequel. Essentially this line tries to liquidate the gains that have been made in this struggle over the past year, in which it had become increasingly clear that the real issue was continuing the spirit of Kent and Jackson State—the spirit of fighting imperialism. These Mensheviks want to take a step backwards, from anti-imperialism to bourgeois liberalism.

But despite these antics, the spirit of Kent and Jackson State will continue to be an example of the way forward for revolutionary students and youth. ■

## 2nd Congress Drives CPML to Frenzy

We seem to have lanced a boil on the CP(ML)'s posterior with our April-May edition of *REVOLUTION*—particularly with the report on the victorious Second Party Congress and the first installment of our important series "Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions."

In its article "Future is gloomy for RCP's gang of China-haters," (*THE CALL*, May 22) the CP(ML) displays once again its total inability to understand or believe that class struggle exists in the real world, that it takes place sharply within all genuine communist parties, and that this is a good thing, not a bad thing. Indeed, the absence (or suppression) of any real two-line struggle within the CP(ML)—and the  $\text{OL}$  before it—is, as we have said before, a clear indication that Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought has never made any serious inroads into that organization.

Their May 22 article is a graphic example of the CP(ML)'s consistent refusal and, indeed, inability to deal with substantive questions, and their necessity instead to resort to worn-out lies and opportunist slander, which has been their hallmark from their inception. They have repeated such lies so often that apparently they have come to believe them. (See, for example, their fictitious account of our article on the Moro kidnapping for a characteristic example of the high level of CP(ML) criticism.)

The whole tone of this most recent attack on the RCP is one of hysterical dismay. They say "Avakian Holds 2nd Congress." And they repeatedly use quotation marks when referring to the Second Congress and to the fact that, having thoroughly repudiated and defeated the Jarvis-Bergman Menshevik clique, the Second Central Committee unanimously re-elected Comrade Avakian

Chairman. Obviously the "CP(ML)" has been seriously shaken up by the fact that none of its many "predictions" of our "demise" has come true, and that our Party has indeed become stronger in the course of struggle for the correct line. The "CP(ML)" thinks that the only way to build a "Marxist-Leninist" "party" is to throw principle out the window and "unite all who can be united" by promoting careerism, parcelling out "shares" and pandering to every backward tendency; they just don't believe that a revolutionary Party can be built on the basis of principle and principled struggle, and they can't understand that our Party is built exactly on this basis. Their May 22 article is reminiscent of the pimp who is shocked to find that all women are not whores.

The frenzied state to which the CP(ML) has been reduced by its irritation over the April-May *REVOLUTION* can be seen from its hysterical language in describing the RCP: "movement dregs," "misfits, goons and careerists," etc. This unprecedented display of invective and vituperation reminds one of the way Engels once characterized the words of an equally worthy group of polemicists: "Each word is like a chamber-pot, and not an empty one at that."

Come now, lofty critics. It was only yesterday that you were calling out to all "honest" revolutionaries within our ranks to join in your "unity" efforts. Now we are "misfits" and "goons"?

Pull yourselves together. Don't lose your cool. Try to maintain a certain measure of decorum and self-control. Otherwise, people might think you have fallen off the deep end. Get serious. The very future of your opportunism is at stake!



Eritrean peoples' forces drive back an attack by 10,000 troops of the fascist Ethiopian military junta. Backed by Soviets and their Cuban puppets, the Ethiopian regime is making an all out assault on the Eritrean liberation movement.

## Soviet/Cuban Troops Aid Mengistu

# New Offensive Launched Against Eritrea

In the middle of May, the fascist Ethiopian military junta launched a major offensive to drown the Eritrean people and their just struggle for liberation in blood. After several recent failures, the regime's "all out effort" to break out of the six-month siege of Asmara, the capital city of Eritrea, is meeting heavy resistance from the well-entrenched liberation forces.

Over 20,000 Ethiopian conscripts are being reinforced by 3500 Cuban troops, who have taken charge of military operations in Eritrea and are handling sophisticated Soviet weapons such as tanks, multiple rocket launchers, and MiG jets.

Soviet warships moored in the Red Sea off the Eritrean coastline are stepping up their shelling near the port cities of Massawa and Assab, where Ethiopian occupation forces have been holed up for months.

In addition heavy fighting has been reported outside of Barentu, the only other city in Eritrea still occupied by the Ethiopian government. Today 95% of Eritrea is in the hands of the liberation forces, led principally by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

Employing tactics reminiscent of U.S. imperialism's genocidal war in Indochina, "Ethiopian" jets flown by Cuban pilots are dropping napalm and cluster bombs on the populated liberated areas of Eritrea. Under close Soviet supervision, the Ethiopian regime has built new arms depots and an airport just south of the border with Eritrea. Construction is also proceeding on a big military base in the eastern port city of Assab, where thousands of Cuban troops from Angola have landed over the last year. This has brought the current total of Cuban mercenary troops in Ethiopia up to 17,000, with an additional 1500 Soviet "advisers" and hundreds of East European technical experts taking up key positions in the Mengistu regime.

### Long Line of Imperialist Powers In Eritrea

Just as the reactionary Ethiopian military junta headed by Col. Mengistu is rivalling or exceeding former Emperor Haile Selassie in its murderous attacks against both the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples, the Soviet social-imperialists' plans for bringing Eritrea under their neo-colonial domination follow in the footsteps of a long line of imperialist powers who have cast hungry eyes on Eritrea. This has been due primarily to its strategic location alongside the Red Sea shipping routes to Europe.

In 1889, the Italian imperialists forcibly brought Eritrea under their control and colonized it (and also used Eritrea as a springboard for their invasion of Ethiopia in 1935) until 1941, when the British imperialists drove them out. The U.S., which after World War 2 emerged as the chief overlord of the imperialist camp, brought the "question of Eritrea" before the United Nations in 1950, which was then firmly under U.S. control.

The U.S. plan was to turn Eritrea into an imperialist outpost in the Horn—without the stigma of old-style European colonialism—by "federating" Eritrea with the expansionist Ethiopian regime of Haile Selassie, one of the chief lackeys of U.S. imperialism in Africa. U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles openly admitted at the UN in 1950 that "the strategic interests of the U.S. in the Red Sea basin and considerations of security and world peace make it necessary that this country has to be linked with our ally Ethiopia." The Soviet Union, still a socialist country under the leadership of Stalin at that time, led the opposition at the UN to this neo-colonial scheme of U.S. imperialism.

After signing a "Mutual Defense Pact" with Selassie in the early 1950s, the U.S. built the Kagnev military and communications base in Eritrea, the largest U.S. military base in Africa until it was completely shut down in 1977. The U.S. also lavished \$600 million of military aid on the Selassie regime from

1950 to the early '70s, making it by far the largest recipient of U.S. military aid in Africa.

The "federation" period was only a prelude to the complete annexation and military occupation of Eritrea in 1962, turning it into the 14th "province" of Ethiopia. During this period, the Selassie regime banned unions, assassinated progressive Eritreans and suppressed the languages of the various Eritrean nationalities.

The heightened resistance of the Eritrean people, particularly after the savage suppression of a general strike throughout Eritrea in 1958, led to the launching of the armed struggle for independence from Ethiopia in 1961. The 17 year old armed struggle of the Eritrean people, fighting in close unity with the revolutionary struggle of the Ethiopian people, has scored many important victories. This struggle for independence and national liberation has dealt heavy blows to a succession of reactionary Ethiopian regimes and their U.S. and Soviet imperialist backers, and this struggle must be supported.

The Soviet social-imperialists today rely heavily on their "socialist" cover and their strident claims to be "anti-imperialist" and the "natural ally" of the peoples of Africa. But fundamentally, the USSR has relied heavily on the use of Soviet-Cuban military power to challenge U.S. imperialism in Africa. This is the only way the new czars can counter the Western imperialists' economic strength and rapidly bring strategic parts of Africa under their own neo-colonial domination.

Continued on page 13

## Zaire...

Continued from page 1

Katangese went to work for a new boss, the New Czars, and changed their name to the "Congo National Liberation Front."

### Rampant Chauvinism

One of the most disgusting aspects of the current U.S. and Western imperialist activities in Zaire is their shameless and cynical chauvinism and racism. In an attempt to whip up support for armed intervention, stories of Katangese atrocities against whites were splashed all over the front pages of the imperialist newspapers.

No indignation over the blacks who have been killed by these imperialist guns for hire. And where do these blood-stained imperialists get off pretending shock about the murder of innocent people? In their efforts to subjugate and maintain their colonial and neo-colonial rule in Africa—Zaire included—they have slaughtered countless numbers

These very same Katangese gun men who the Western imperialists now so roundly condemn were originally trained in the art of murder by Belgium and the U.S. themselves, and were led by European mercenaries. Listen to the account of Major Hoare, a Belgian mercenary who commanded the Katangese Gendarmes when they were fighting in the pay of Belgium: "Killing communists is like killing vermin, killing African nationalists is as if one is killing an animal. My men and I have killed between 5,000 and 10,000 Congo rebels in the twenty months that I have spent in the Congo. But that is not enough. There are 11 million Congolese, you know, and I assume that about half of them at one time or another were rebels whilst I was down there."

After the latest invasion of Shaba province, President Carter mobilized 1500 paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, although they were never actually flown into the action. According to the bourgeois press, it was the first time the

## ALD Coalition H

As we go to press, people across the country are planning to attend the marches in Detroit and on the West Coast for African Liberation Day (ALD)—a day of solidarity with the revolutionary struggles of the African people.

Detroit is home to some of South Africa's biggest backers—the big four auto companies. The auto giants are major investors in South Africa, where they pay black auto workers barely more than \$1 an hour. So it was fitting that one of the demonstrations leading up to African Liberation Day was held at General Motors World Headquarters in Detroit while the annual GM stockholders' meeting was in session.

Fifty demonstrators picketed the May 19 meeting carrying banners that read, "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from USA (Union of South Africa) to USA (United States of America)!" The militant demonstration, called by the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) and African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC), got a very enthusiastic response from people on the sidewalks, some of whom joined in.

The demonstrators marched into the Fisher building. When cops pushed them away from the meeting room doors, two members of the African Liberation Support Committee who were inside stood up and read statements supporting the people of Africa and exposing GM's role in propping up the murderous government of South Africa. Demonstra-

82nd had been mobilized for such an action since the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965.

At the same time, U.S. administration officials took the occasion to beat the war drums and prepare American public opinion for future direct military action against Soviet challenges to U.S. interests—or, for that matter, against genuine revolutionary struggle.

Carter began complaining loudly that the restrictions of the 1973 War Powers Act, passed by Congress in the wake of massive opposition of the people of the U.S. to the Vietnam War, tied America's hands in coming to the aid of a threatened "ally" such as Zaire.

The Act prohibits the deployment of U.S. troops abroad without Congressional approval. As U.S. action in places like Angola proved, this act is a phony anyway. But clamoring for its repeal is a way to prepare public opinion for war.

### Imperialist Jockeying

Last year, the Katangese mercenary army invaded from Angola, but were unable in 80 days of fighting to capture Kolwezi from Zairian army units and 1500 Moroccan troops airlifted in by the French. This time they moved in from their staging areas in Angola through a thin strip of Zambia, quickly occupying most of Kolwezi and the railroad juncture town of Mutshatsha, 65 miles away.

However, it was not just the early advances made by the Katangese mercenaries that had the U.S. imperialists and their French and Belgian allies so uptight. It comes on the heels of recent Soviet and Cuban successes in Angola and Ethiopia and increased activity by the social-imperialists throughout Africa.

The Soviets have clearly demonstrated their intention to aggressively challenge by force of arms the U.S. and Western European neo-colonial empires on the African continent. The Soviets' Cuban front men have at least 35,000 troops in Ethiopia and Angola alone. Recent reports indicate that Cuban troops have moved into position in Mozambique not far from the Rhodesian border. The Soviet imperialists have strong influence in the North African states of Algeria and Libya as well.

This latest outbreak of fighting in Shaba province, with direct French, Belgian and U.S. intervention, not only represents a significant intensification of super-power contention in Africa. It also reflects a tightening of the U.S.-led imperialist bloc, faced with stronger and stronger Soviet challenges.

The French currently have 10,000 troops in Africa on behalf of their own imperialist interests and those of the U.S. Two thousand are now actively fighting in Chad against a rebel uprising that has received Soviet arms.

For the Soviet social-imperialists, weakening or knocking out U.S. and Western European domination of Zaire would be a significant advance in the constant imperialist jockeying for position and bloc building. And for the Soviet and U.S.-led imperialist blocs alike, Zaire not only has tremendous strategic importance for its hold on Africa, it has great economic value as well.

Zaire is the third largest country on the African continent and has the fifth largest population. It is eight times the size of France and eighty times larger than Belgium, its former colonial master. The Zaire River has 13% of the world's hydro-electric power and holds the potential for electrifying the whole country.

Next to Zambia, Zaire is Africa's largest producer of copper, on which it depends for 70% of its foreign exchange revenues. Zaire has 50% of Africa's commercial timber land and is the world's largest producer of cobalt and industrial diamonds.

## its GM Meeting

tors outside banged on the doors, disrupting the meeting. The demonstration was followed by a march through downtown and a rally at a community college.

Earlier, on April 29, thirty students and members of RCYB and ALSC disrupted a speech by vice-president Mondale at the University of Michigan commencement exercises. Two thirds of the university's \$58 million investments are in corporations doing business in South Africa. Mondale has been a spokesman for the U.S. government's "new policy" in Africa—of putting a few "black faces in white places" to mask the United States' determination to continue being one of the chief slavemasters and oppressors of African people. The demonstration was the main topic of conversation on campus the following week.

The African Liberation Support Committee has also had to wage a battle with the City of Detroit to even get a permit for the African Liberation Day march. After the City denied the permit, ALSC members walked into a closed door City Council meeting, fought for the right to hold the march, and finally won the permit.

These actions both strengthened the significance of African Liberation Day as a day to demonstrate unity against an oppressor that the peoples of Africa and people in the U.S. have in common—imperialism—and brought the question of Africa and the just struggles of African people out to broad numbers of people. ■

### Neo-Colonialism in Zaire

But Zaire is also a neo-colony of the Western imperialist powers headed up by the U.S. Its ruler, Mobutu Sese Seko, is little more than a lackey for U.S. imperialism in Africa. The Zairian military bases at Kamina and Kitona and the Commanders' School in Kasai have been used by U.S., Belgian and Israeli instructors to train troops from several African states.

When Mobutu announced his "nationalization" program in the early 1970s, U.S. companies were specifically excluded. In recent years he has practically begged the European companies that were "Zairianized" to come back in, giving the Western imperialists virtually free reign in the country.

The U.S. has over \$1 billion invested in Zaire, and Belgium, France, West Germany and Japan also have sizable investments. Zaire is in hock to the tune of \$3 billion to U.S. and West European finance capitalists, and this year has had to ask for more credits to keep the economy afloat.

Despite its potential wealth, the legacy of colonialism and the ravages of neo-colonialism have left the people of Zaire impoverished. Eighteen years after it won independence from Belgium, Zaire's economy is totally dependent on the export of its raw materials, principally copper. Sixty percent of its export products are located in Shaba province. Zaire contains considerable potential for agricultural development, but only 5% of its arable land is under cultivation, and this is mainly for cash export crops like palms, coffee, cocoa, rubber and sugar. Zaire is forced to import an extremely large percentage of its foodstuffs. There is massive unemployment and the country is currently suffering a 75% a year inflation rate.

With the decline in the price of copper on the world market in recent years, the Zairian economy has further stagnated, making it virtually impossible for it to pay off any of its gigantic foreign debt. And if Zaire were to lose its rich Shaba province to the Soviet-backed Katangese mercenaries, the U.S. and Western European imperialists would stand a good chance of losing their huge economic investment, something they have no intention of doing.

In light of this stepped-up superpower contention in Zaire, it is necessary to make a few comments on the REVOLUTION article written last year at the time of the earlier Katangese invasion. ("Soviet Backed Mercenaries Invade Zaire," May 1977)

The article correctly exposed and opposed the Soviet-backed Katangese invasion, pointing out that it could only mean the continued oppression and exploitation of the people of Zaire. This was an important point to make against the likes of the GUARDIAN and other apologists for Soviet imperialism, who have made it a major task to sow confusion about the imperialist nature and actions of the social-imperialists and their Cuban mercenaries.

### A Plague on Both Houses

Although the article also exposed the role of U.S. and Western European imperialism in Zaire, and the reactionary character of the Mobutu regime, it had a one-sided tilt in opposing Soviet imperialism. Especially in the wake of the French and U.S.-backed involvement of Moroccan troops against the Katangese, the article was undialectical, failing to emphasize that the U.S. and Western European imperialists would try to tighten their grip on the people of Zaire in the face of the Soviet challenge to their hegemony.

The article also made an analogy between Bangladesh at the time of the Soviet-India moves to split the country off from Pakistan, and Zaire today.



*The U.S. imperialists supplied planes for the airlift of troops and supplies to aid their faithful flunkey Mobutu government in Zaire. Here French Foreign Legion troops wait at Kinshasha airport for drop into Shaba province.*

But the conditions were not the same and the parallel doesn't hold.

The maneuvers of the Soviet imperialists should have been then and should be today strongly opposed and denounced. But to simply make the statement, as the article did, that a successful Soviet-backed invasion would be a "setback in the conditions for the revolutionary struggles in Zaire," is again undialectical in the concrete conditions of Zaire. The situation in Zaire, as in other former colonies that are hot spots of inter-imperialist contention, is complicated. But the least that can be said is that these imperialist thrusts and counter-thrusts create great turmoil for the imperialists themselves and offer opportunities for revolutionary forces.

Today there may even be some like the CP(ML) who will hail the French and Belgian military intervention in Zaire as an example of "second" and "third" world countries uniting against a superpower. In reality, Zaire is more like a juicy piece of meat on which the U.S. bloc of imperialist vultures are presently feasting while the Soviet buzzards try to snatch it for themselves.

In the past the chief contenders for imperialist domination of Zaire had been the U.S. and Belgium, and to a lesser extent France and Britain. But now faced with the threat of a new bandit on the scene, the sharp contention between these imperialists has been shoved into a secondary role as they have united to oppose the

Soviets.

The stakes in Africa are high for the two superpowers. Their maneuvers here are directly linked to their preparations for a new world war, towards which their imperialist rivalry is inexorably driving them. In addition to its tremendously rich mineral resources, geographically, Africa is of great strategic importance.

It sits on the southern flank of Europe, the center of superpower contention. In the southern end of the continent the racist regime of South Africa controls major trade routes around the Cape and is a lynchpin for NATO's military strategy in the Atlantic and Indian oceans. The Northeast on the Horn of Africa is another hotbed of U.S.-Soviet contention, due to its strategic location along the Red Sea shipping lanes through which most of Western Europe's oil from the Persian Gulf passes.

In a world marked by the maraudings of the two superpowers, it is especially clear that neither a comprador bourgeois lackey of imperialism like Mobutu nor Soviet-backed mercenary troops can lead the struggle of the masses of Zairian people anywhere but into the clutches of one or the other imperialist power.

There is no shortcut to national liberation and genuine independence for the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Only the road of arduous struggle, basing themselves on their own efforts and steering clear of the superpowers, can lead to genuine liberation. ■

## Opposed Black Liberation Struggle

# King Legacy: Reformism And Capitulation

This spring marks the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King. It is also the tenth anniversary of the mighty rebellions that rocked 131 cities after his death, shaking the rulers of this country as no uprising had ever shaken them before.

Those massive uprisings of Black people symbolized the fact that the development of their struggle and consciousness had long since left King behind. For a number of years before his death King had ceased to play any progressive role at all in that struggle, becoming a reactionary force within it. Developing revolutionary forces such as Malcolm X, SNCC and the Black Panther Party had denounced King's outlook and political line and the harm he was doing to the Black struggle.

King rose to fame at a time when the Black movement was focused on ending Jim Crow segregation. But before King's death, that movement had already grown into the Black liberation movement, a more conscious movement of the oppressed against the oppressor, which aimed not only at unjust laws but increasingly at all the actual (not just legal) inequality and discrimination faced by the masses of Black people who are part of the working class, and at the system that keeps Blacks oppressed as a people.

As the flames of rebellion spread, Martin Luther King became the system's fireman, trying to throw cold water on the Black liberation movement and stubbornly calling upon Black people to turn back in their struggle.

Despite the fact that King's role had begun to be questioned by growing numbers of the Black masses, still it was not widely and clearly understood. This has meant that after his assassination the ruling class has been able to use the legend around him that they helped create, just as sections of the monopoly capitalist rulers of this country had used him during his lifetime. Today, despite the lull in the Black struggle after the 1960s the ruling class still senses the powderkeg represented by the Black masses and has learned that it cannot count on Black people silently enduring the abuses they continue to suffer.

The bourgeoisie has used the occasion of the tenth anniversary of King's death to try to breath new life into his legend, to fool many people too young to remember and confuse others who were more familiar with his real role, in an attempt to rob the people of the real lessons of the Black people's struggle in the '60s and prevent future rebellion.

The upsurge of the civil rights movement in the 1950s was closely linked with important economic changes in the position of Black people who were being pushed off the land by the mechanization of agriculture following World War 2 and drawn into the factories of the North and South. The plantation system in the South had been the economic basis of segregation, which served the purpose of keeping the sharecropper chained to the land under the thumb of the plantation owner. Now this economic system was falling apart as modern capitalist mechanized agriculture became more profitable in the South as well as elsewhere.

Because so many Blacks had been freed from the tyranny of the landowner only to face continued oppression, in part because of the experiences of many Black people who had served in the armed forces during World War 2 and Korea, and in part because of the influence of the tremendous anti-colonial and liberation movements shaking Africa and the rest of the world at that time, a mood of resistance and defiance was growing strong among Black people. Despite a series of infamous lynchings, protests against segregation were beginning to break out across the South.

The ruling class was determined to maintain the walls of segregation, but it saw itself forced to make a few small concessions, which only made Black people more determined to win fundamental change.

It was during this period, when the U.S. was trying to gobble up the former colonies of Britain, France, etc., and turn them into American neo-colonies, that the U.S. imperialists were forced to operate under the mask of "anti-colonialism" and "democracy." In

Continued on page 13

# Party Press...

Continued from page 3

"Worker") they never once mention, either in word or spirit, the need to be tribunes of the people when laying out their tasks. This is no mere omission, since the point was stressed again and again in internal documents and other forms before they departed.

In fact Jarvis' ideas on this point were set for a long time. While the Party's line, as we said earlier, was that political exposure was the main task of the WORKER, Jarvis had a different idea. For some time he spread around through his own informal channels the notion that in order to relate to the present struggle of the workers the heart of the WORKER should be to develop regular columns putting forward a line for the struggle in major industries such as auto and steel.

In the summer of 1977 he even called a meeting at the Party center, when Comrade Avakian was out of town, to attempt to put over this line of his as "guidance" for an upcoming meeting on these papers. Fortunately, his guidance was rejected. While it was unclear at the time (due to Jarvis' customarily jumbled presentation) whether this was to be the central feature of the papers or just the most important addition that had to be made, it didn't matter much. Both are wrong. (Of course by looking at these revisionists' counterfeit "Worker," it is clear that he meant to reduce the whole paper to reformist drivel.)

While the Party press must contain economic exposures and articles on key industrial struggles, such articles by themselves will never produce a revolutionary paper or lead people beyond the bounds of the struggle for economic reforms. Even if to such we were to add propaganda about socialism, the most this would produce is a reformist social-democratic line—trade-unionism plus talk of socialism—a line spouted occasionally even today by various union hacks, including UAW President Doug Fraser.

All this is dead wrong, and was criticized many times by Lenin who blasted those, reminiscent of our revisionists, "who accuse us of departing from the 'class point of view'... who seek to persuade us to abandon the many-sided campaign of exposure (i.e. the widest possible political agitation) against the autocracy and to concentrate our efforts mainly upon the struggle for economic reforms (to give something 'positive' to the working class, to put forward in its name 'concrete demands' for legislative and administrative measures 'which promise certain palpable results')." ("Political Agitation and 'The Class Point of View,'" *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 339)

Especially after they split, the Jarvis-Bergman bunch accused the Party of "abandoning the task of fusion of socialism with the working class movement," as Lenin laid it out. While we will have more to say on this question in future articles, suffice it here to say that these revisionists were not upholding Lenin's ideas on fusion, but turning them upside down. Lenin raised the task of fusion precisely in direct opposition to the economists of his time, who were abandoning the task of raising the level of the working class movement to a political struggle.

To cover themselves, the Mensheviks accused the Party of retreating. But the Party was not and is not retreating from the struggle of the working class. What these tail-enders are promoting is not "fusion" at all but *confusion* of socialism with the spontaneous level of the workers' struggle and a retreat from revolutionary struggle and revolutionary work.

## Concentrated Struggles—Broad Exposures

In opposition to tendencies in the Party to see all our work narrowly as "building the struggle" the WORKER bulletin put out that our Party's work in the working class should take place as the dialectical unity of "concentrated struggle and broad exposures." The WORKERS could not be mainly an organizer for building particular struggles, but had to be characterized by their broadness, their all-around political character. As Lenin wrote in *What Is To Be Done?*,

"We must blame ourselves, our lagging behind the mass movement, for being unable as yet to organize sufficiently wide, striking rapid exposures of all these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it) the most backward worker will understand, or will feel, that the students and members of the religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life, and, feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to respond to this thing, and then he will organize catcalls against the censors one day, another day he will demonstrate outside the house of a governor who has brutally suppressed a peasant uprising, another day he will teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surpluses who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition, etc." (Chapter 3, Section C)

While this is not the level of things today, the struggle will never advance to this point spontaneously without our work, including the role of our press, conducting agitation and propaganda around all "despicable outrages" and drawing the real connections between them and the criminal rule of the capitalist class.

The concentrated struggle aspect of this policy refers to the need pointed to in the Party PROGRAMME to apply the "single spark method" to turn important strug-

gles into campaigns of the working class. While this does not negate the need to do agitation around many questions, and to pay attention to and participate in smaller skirmishes, it does correctly point to the need to concentrate. Predictably, the Mensheviks have now jumped on these and similar policies and formulations to charge that we really mean to say that propaganda is our principal task and this is a line of turning our Party into a propaganda sect and for "preaching at the people." This, they say, amounts to taking an idealist view of the relation between struggle and consciousness. Let's examine this more closely.

First off, we should point out that if these revisionists want to criticize the RCP, they should also criticize some other "idealists"—Lenin and Mao, for example. Lenin blasted "the Economist conception of 'close organic connection with the proletarian struggle'"—i.e., tailing behind the spontaneous movement. He answered that "The principal thing, of course, is *propaganda* and *agitation* among all strata of the people." (*What Is To Be Done?*, Chapter 3, Section E, emphasis in original)

He also said, "A newspaper is what we most of all need; without it we cannot conduct that systematic, all-around propaganda and agitation, consistent in principle, which is the chief and permanent task of Social-Democracy in general..." ("Where To Begin," *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 20-21)

Still more, we have the formulation by Mao: "First and foremost create public opinion and seize power." Come on, revisionists, why don't you blast Mao for his "idealism"? (We know that, in essence, this has been the view for some time now of the top leaders of this clique and that they are presently sucking up to those who are "re-evaluating" Mao Tsetung.)

Such quotes can be, of course, misused by dogmatists to justify their contempt for and isolation from the struggles of the masses and to bolster their line of peddling their papers and forgetting all other "diversions." These views have been combatted by the RCP and the RU before it, and we oppose them today. But several things need to be said.

First, we refuse to combat such views with pragmatism and economism. Second, exactly because we had sharply polemicized against such dogmatist deviations and had made important progress in linking up with the struggles of the workers, there were and are strong tendencies in the Party to narrow down our tasks to simply "building the struggle." Such tendencies were greatly encouraged by these revisionists. To point to "overstressing" propaganda and agitation under such circumstances would be, as Lenin put it, "like wishing mourners at a funeral many happy returns of the day."

In the contradiction between struggle and consciousness, struggle is basic and principal. So, too, in the overall and broad sense, between building struggle and carrying out exposures, struggle is decisive in the Party's work.

Our goal is struggle—a proletarian revolution. And more immediately it is through their own experience in struggle that the masses learn (or can potentially learn) far more than through simply "being told." As Lenin said, "The real education of the masses can never be separated from their independent, political, and especially revolutionary, struggle." ("Lecture on the 1905 Revolution," *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 241) As we stated at our First Party Congress and reaffirmed at the Second, "it is through the course of struggle that the masses learn, it is in *changing reality* that the masses are able to learn more about it—and in turn change it further, and more fundamentally."

But all this cannot be taken narrowly, as these revisionists would have it. There are many events we should relate to primarily through agitation and propaganda—exposing the rottenness of capitalism. Last year's New York City blackout is one example. The second point is that the struggle for proletarian revolution is not identical to the immediate struggle. And in waging today's struggle our goal is not some sort of adventurist or economist concept of doing "material damage" to the enemy.

Any particular battle must be built to its fullest potential, must be given tactical guidance, and we must aim to win as much as can be won from the enemy. But our most important objective in any such struggle is to raise the class consciousness of the strug-

gling masses. This is key both in bringing revolutionary understanding to the broad masses and in training the advanced and building the Party so as to prepare for the struggles ahead—especially the struggle for proletarian revolution. In fact it is our task to *divert* the struggle from the spontaneous path it will take, which will be reformist, and *transform* today's struggle into a revolutionary struggle. This is impossible without communist propaganda and agitation.

Lenin ridiculed the economists of his time who "attached more significance to the 'forward march of the drab everyday struggle'" (as they put it) than to what they termed the "propaganda of brilliant and completed ideas" (See *What Is To Be Done?*, Chapter 3, Section E) In the same section he also said, "Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relationship between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationship of *all* classes and strata to the state and government, the sphere of the interrelations between *all* classes." "Only from without"! Lenin is obviously four times more the "preacher" than the idealist RCP!

Further, raising consciousness can never be reduced down to what the revisionists say and mean—what can be drawn out of one or a few particular struggles. The WORKER bulletin spoke to this question:

"The heart of the matter behind the stress we correctly lay on struggle is stated well in the following quote from [internal document]. 'If we fail to recognize that in the daily struggle of the workers lies the potential for the revolutionary movement of the working class, then we will fail to develop this potential into reality. If we do not actively and militantly lead these battles then there is no way we can lead the class to win the whole war.' This kind of broad and sweeping statement about the fundamental importance of struggle to the work of the Party, about the necessity of carrying out all our work overall in connection with the struggle as opposed to divorced from it and scornful of it, is a basic point which must be grasped. But it cannot be vulgarized to mean that all, or essentially all, of our Party's work, especially agitation and propaganda, must be carried out in direct connection with particular struggles.

"It is certainly true that generally in the midst of struggle people are the most open to learning all sorts of things, but those things cannot be limited simply to how to view and wage the particular battle. Neither can this understanding be taken to mean that basically the only time or the only way to carry out agitation and propaganda is in the course of a particular struggle. While agitation in relation to particular struggles is important, if it becomes essentially all we do, then we lose our revolutionary sweep, and fall into narrow pragmatism where we cannot see beyond the narrow limits of a particular struggle. In this connection it is important to get clear on what agitation actually is. As Lenin pointed out it is *not* a call to action, but essentially using a single event to present a single idea to broad masses, enabling them to see the hand of the oppressor at work, (though this may move the masses to action.)"

The wrong view of agitation criticized above was a widely held tendency in the Party and was practiced and actively promoted everywhere by these revisionists. The effect of this, perfectly consistent with their line, is to reduce the role of communists to that of "organizers" who attempt to turn every outrage into a "Big Battle." Organizing such battles is a crucial part of our work. But with their narrow view of "building struggle" this clique could never grasp the fact that objective conditions, the laws and big forces at work, inevitably will propel far more people into struggle than our hard work ever can (though such hard work on our part is absolutely necessary and does play a role in this). Communist leadership in struggle requires applying the mass line, leading not only in the concrete struggle but also in the struggle over lines and ideas that goes on among the masses.

The crucial importance of the task of raising class consciousness (together with the task of building the Party) is brought out in the following statement by Lenin, which was stressed in the 1976 CC Report, "The task is to keep the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat tense and train its best elements, not only in a general way, but concretely, so that when popular ferment reaches the highest pitch, they will put themselves at the head of the revolutionary army.

"The day-to-day experience of any capitalist country teaches us the same lesson. Every 'minor' crisis that such a country experiences discloses to us in miniature the elements, the rudiments, of the battles that will inevitably take place on a large scale during a big crisis." ("Lecture on the 1905 Revolution," *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 246)

From this perspective, it is clear why agitation and propaganda is so important—agitation and propaganda that quickly and concretely from a strictly Marxist point of view exposes the forces behind the "minor crisis" of every sort. In this light, the real revolutionary role that must be played by the Party press stands out sharply.

## REVOLUTION Price Increase

With this issue of the paper, REVOLUTION has increased its price from 25¢ to 50¢. This price increase is necessitated by several factors: Besides the general inflation which has affected the costs of all the materials used in putting out the paper; there has recently been an increase in postage costs, and in addition there is our move, with this issue, to typesetting and to publishing the paper in two sections because of added length.

The subscription rate has been increased from \$4.00 to \$5.00 a year. All present subscribers will, of course, receive a full 12 issues.

Even with this increase, the price of REVOLUTION will not cover the costs of producing it. Advertising, which is the main source of revenue for bourgeois newspapers, contributes virtually nothing to the costs of REVOLUTION. Besides sales of the paper itself, we continue to depend upon contributions from members and supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

Continued on page 14

# King . . .

Continued from page 11

1954 the Supreme Court ruled "separate but equal" segregation in schools (and by implication all such segregation) unconstitutional. Almost a hundred years ago, the Supreme Court had ruled exactly the opposite—upholding "separate but equal" as entirely constitutional. The Constitution had not changed, but the needs of bourgeoisie had.

This was the stage onto which stepped Martin Luther King. He emerged from a family of Baptist preachers in Atlanta which was closely tied to the Black bourgeoisie and upper petty bourgeoisie there. His father's church, Ebenezer Baptist, was one of the biggest and most fashionable Black churches in town. In fact, M.L. King Senior was a member of the board of directors of the Atlanta Citizens Trust, a leading Black bank. M.L. King Junior's education took place at typically upper-crust Black colleges and at institutions where the bourgeoisie trains its own (like Harvard).

During his college years he was influenced by the ferment then brewing among Black people, as well as by the philosophy of nonviolence which had been developed by Mahatma Gandhi, a representative of the bourgeoisie in India, who had used it as a way to mobilize the masses of Indian people against British colonialism to win independence without "going too far" and bringing about a social upheaval that would threaten the Indian bourgeoisie or imperialism.

Shortly after King moved to his first ministry in Montgomery, Alabama, a wave of Black struggle broke out there whose tide quickly carried him to national prominence. A Black woman, tired after a hard day's work, refused to give up her bus seat as required by segregationist law. Half a dozen women like her had already done the same in the previous months, as the Black community in Montgomery strained against segregation's chains. Black businessmen and social leaders in Montgomery saw this incident as the signal for them to take action. They organized the Montgomery Improvement Association and chose the eloquent Dr. King as their chief spokesman.

For a year, Montgomery's Black working people, who'd made up the overwhelming majority of bus riders, refused to take the bus. Sometimes they rode in car pools with cars provided by Black businessmen and churches, sometimes their desperate employers were forced to pick them up, and often they walked mile after mile, day after day, standing up to threats and attacks. For this reason the boycott could not be broken.

On the contrary, it was inspiring and igniting the Black people throughout the South. After a year of this constant battle, the Supreme Court stepped in to declare Alabama's segregated buses illegal. The news media catapulted King into national prominence. He was invited to preach at one of the most prestigious wealthy white churches in New York and he appeared in Madison Square Garden at the side of Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of former president FDR and patron saint of the liberals.

## Freedom Rides

1960 and 1961 were the years of sit-ins and Freedom Rides. Beginning in Greensboro, N.C. and spreading with the speed of a burning fuse, Black college students began sitting in at all-white lunch counters, demanding service and getting arrested. Blacks and some white supporters from all over would board buses for major cities in the South, and walk into all-white waiting rooms to be arrested. In several cities these Freedom Riders were met by mobs which burned the buses and beat them mercilessly.

Many demanded that the federal government intervene to protect the Freedom Riders and uphold the federal law against segregation in interstate transit. But no action came. More recently, it has been revealed that the FBI was in at least some cases responsible for informing local Klansmen of when the Freedom Riders were going to arrive and even involved in organizing the beatings, which at any rate were widely and openly supported by the local business bigwigs and public officials. In Montgomery, for instance, local radio stations broadcast invitations to these lynch parties over the air.

King was never directly involved in the sit-ins and Freedom Rides. But in a sense they were associated with him. The Montgomery boycott had a big effect in inspiring these actions, and many of the first sit-inners and Freedom Riders were very influenced by King's idea that the way to protest unjust laws was to organize people to break them and then submit to arrest. In fact, this technique was very effective in exposing segregation and the bloody repression of Black people on which it rested. The civil rights movement was inflaming people across the U.S.

But a series of events in Albany, Ga. showed how King's outlook, political line and methods were already coming into sharp conflict with the development of the struggle.

After the Montgomery bus boycott, King formed a South-wide organization of ministers, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which set up headquarters in Atlanta and began to lead some actions there. Under the sponsorship of King and SCLC, in 1960, a group of students and youth who had been involved in the sit-ins and Freedom Rides formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). At first SNCC was very much under the influence of

King's philosophy of nonviolence and certainly its stated goals and demands were no different. Yet it was to develop in a direction completely opposite to the direction King was developing in.

In Albany, when Freedom Riders were arrested SNCC members went out into the Black community and began to organize a series of mass demonstrations to protest. These mass marches and rallies didn't exactly follow the pattern set by King in Montgomery and Atlanta. They represented wider efforts than before to draw the Black masses into struggle widely and deeply, not just to be "the troops" as in Montgomery or just to support those few in a position to invite arrest.

King dropped into Albany from Atlanta, taking over the limelight and basically the leadership as well. His first step was to announce he would march, get himself arrested and stay in jail until the local authorities agreed to the demand to end segregation in public places. In other words, the focus shifted immediately from the masses of Black people to Martin Luther King, who was going to win it all for the masses.

He was jailed all right, but left his cell two days later, before the affair could be really embarrassing to local authorities. On the promise of future negotiations—in a month—King called a moratorium on the mass demonstrations. Instead, he tried to organize an economic boycott which proved far less successful than in Montgomery.

When the pregnant wife of a local Black leader was beaten unconscious by police, Blacks rose up against this outrage and taught some cops a lesson. King declared a "day of penance" for this sin of Black violence. The momentum and the spirit of the campaign were broken. King gave up and retreated back to Atlanta, with Albany's public facilities, movie houses, etc. as segregated as ever.

## The Kennedy Connection

King's approach was to mobilize the masses just enough to put the heat on so that he could "negotiate" with the local bigshots, while doing his best to keep the people from "getting out of hand" and blowing the whole game. Increasing this second aspect—holding the Black masses back—was to become more important to King, because in doing this he was increasingly getting powerful support from the ruling class—support that was given on the condition that the masses be kept under restraint and the Black people involved played by "the rules of the game" no matter what.

In jail on a minor charge in connection with demonstrations against segregation in Atlanta, only a few months before the 1960 Presidential election—and just before Albany—King got a phone call from Robert F. Kennedy who voiced his brother John's support. King was released. He kept his part of the bargain by calling a "temporary lull" in the mass protests. With the aid of Black voters who had supported JFK in large part because of his brother's dramatic phone call to King, the Kennedys came to Washington.

From then on a pattern was set. There would be protests against segregation. King would come to town. A federal judge would issue an injunction against mass action. Often this judge would be a Kennedy ap-

pointee—JFK's first appointments on taking office were three infamous outright segregationists named to federal judgeships in the South. King would plead for the people to obey the injunction, on the basis of promised federal support against the local authorities. Once, when people begged him to carry a protest through despite an injunction, he replied that the civil rights movement could never go against the federal government because "we have no other friend in the South." This pattern was repeated over and over again.

Birmingham in 1963 was the opposite of Albany. It was "very successful" in the eyes of many, where Albany had been clearly a failure. Yet King played the same role in both cities, and if the movement hit harder in Birmingham, it was because it went against King.

Birmingham was the most segregated city in the U.S. and its segregation was openly and nakedly proclaimed. King was jailed in a protest march. JFK had him released. To embarrass the sheriff and the city government, SCLC organized a "Children's Crusade"—thousands of Black youth ages six to sixteen who marched against segregation in defiance of police orders. But the authorities had no shame at all when it came to people protesting oppression and threatening their rule.

The infamous pig "Bull" Conner had his men unleash fierce attack dogs on the children and beat them to the ground, while high-pressure waterhoses tore their flesh. After two days of this, the anger of Birmingham's Black people exploded in his face as people fought back and fought back hard. At night the ruling class's cops and other cowardly thugs who were used to getting away with murder in the darkness were given a strong taste of hell. By day thousands of Black people filled the downtown business districts armed with stones, bottles and sticks. "SCLC has lost control of the crowd," one observer noted.

Something had to be done about this. Douglas Dillon, Secretary of the Treasury and a member of one of the biggest capitalist families in his own right, and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who had been head of Ford Motor Company, flew in to meet with the local kingpins of finance who ran Birmingham. The government took control of the negotiations SCLC was conducting with the "local business leaders" (Bull Conner's masters).

Even after the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional most of the laws under which the demonstrators had been arrested, the Black rebellion grew. People wanted an end to oppression, not federal fireworks. A wave of nighttime firebombings directed against Blacks triggered more fighting against police. The federal authorities, who before had complained that their "hands were tied" and they couldn't do anything to protect the protestors from the police, now moved very quickly to send federal troops to Birmingham and put down the Black movement. The local "business leaders" agreed to drop some segregation in public facilities and some discrimination in hiring.

King was close to the top of his career. He had been in the spotlight the whole time, receiving the adulation of the media. While in jail he'd written his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail," which put forward

Continued on page 16

# Eritrea . . .

Continued from page 10

Particularly, as the two imperialist superpowers intensify their efforts to line up blocs of countries for a new world war, strategic areas like Eritrea—and the whole Horn—located next to the Red Sea shipping lanes through which most of Western Europe's oil from the Persian Gulf passes—become sites of frenzied superpower contention.

With the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974 by military officers who rode to power during the massive popular upsurge against the hated regime, the Soviet imperialists saw a golden opportunity to add Ethiopia to its sphere of influence. The Soviets particularly concentrated their attention on ambitious military officers and bureaucrats, such as Mengistu's clique.

When war was clearly brewing in 1977 between their "socialist" allies in Ethiopia and Somalia, the new czars in the Kremlin fully embraced the reactionary Ethiopian military junta, with over \$1 billion in military hardware and shiploads of Cuban troops. The Soviets' previous "support" for the Eritrean liberation struggle—which was extended only to challenge the U.S. imperialists and the Selassie regime for control of the Horn—was then thrown to the winds.

While the Soviets and their revisionist cohorts laud fascist butchers like Mengistu as "Marxist-Leninist" and "revolutionary," the Eritrean liberation fighters are now termed "secessionists" (Castro) and "agents of international imperialism and Arab reaction" (PRAVDA). This is both because the Eritrean struggle for national independence and liberation has struck powerful blows against the Soviet clients who rule Ethiopia today, and also because a landlocked Ethiopia (Ethiopia's only access to the sea is through Eritrea and newly independent Djibouti) would be of much less value to the new czars in their escalating contention with U.S. imperialism.

The Cuban revisionists, whose 17,000 troops in Ethiopia no longer have the pretext of repelling

"Somali aggression," are obviously worried about losing their political cover as a "friend of the African liberation struggle." The Cubans particularly have turned to dual carrot-and-stick tactics. Even as thousands of Cuban mercenary troops were moving into Eritrea, Vice-President Carlos Rodriguez brazenly claimed in a recent interview with the London OBSERVER that "we always helped the Eritreans in their fight for self-determination." He added that since "Eritrea is an internal problem of the Ethiopian revolution," a "political solution" must be sought.

## U.S. Imperialism Plans Comback

With the Soviet imperialists and their Cuban hit men on the offensive in the Horn, their rival imperialists in the U.S. have jumped at the opportunity to brand them as "aggressors" who are posing a great threat to world peace. In doing this, the U.S. imperialists hope to cover up their own moves in the area.

In Eritrea, the U.S. and reactionary Arab regimes led by Saudi Arabia and Sudan have their eyes set on a neo-colonial solution of their own. They have recently centered their attention (and arms) on the Osman Sabbe clique, expelled from the EPLF in 1976 for capitulationist activities. From bases on the Sudanese border, Sabbe has declared war on the Eritrean liberation forces, tried to stir up religious and national antagonisms, and has openly appealed for U.S. military aid. The U.S. imperialists' increased "concern" for Eritrea in recent months is solely concerned with finding ways to prevent Soviet-dominated Ethiopia from reaching up to the Red Sea, and for reasserting its own domination over Eritrea, as well as the rest of the Horn.

However, through their long and courageous struggle against imperialist aggression and plunder, the Eritrean peoples' liberation struggle has learned important lessons about distinguishing real friends from real enemies. By continuing along the path of the new democratic revolution, relying on the masses of people and armed people's war, and by resolutely opposing the two imperialist superpowers and all forms of neo-colonialism and reaction, the Eritrean people will certainly fight on to final victory and genuine liberation. ■

# Party Press...

Continued from page 12

With their outlook, it is no surprise that this revisionist clique had great contempt for the struggle in the sphere of ideology. This struggle is an extremely sharp arena of the class struggle under capitalism (and also after capitalism is overthrown). The capitalists have whole industries concerned with it (movies, music, newspapers and book publishing, etc.) and they conduct much of their ideological work on this front relatively independently of any particular battle going on at any time between them and the masses. On the surface of it, it might seem this would be an important battlefield for the Party. Not so, according to these revisionists.

In opposition to the line of the Party, put forward in the WORKER bulletin (as quoted earlier) that the main role of these papers in the overall struggle is "in the realm of consciousness and politics," this clique says, "The task of the WORKER is to stand with the people and build the battles that they are in." (emphasis added) This is immediately contrasted to "preaching." (from their "Introducing the Worker," Vol. 1, No. 2) They also say in that article that the RCP "has given up on figuring out how to fight the capitalists, the class enemy, by uniting people behind a political line. Now they take the struggle for granted and devote their main efforts to criticizing people, in and out of the RCP, for their 'non-RCP' ideas."

Besides the obvious lies about the RCP retreating from the struggle and the distortion of ideological struggle waged by and within the Party, the main thing that stands out in all this is its incredible narrowness, its reducing political line down to a question of tactics and wiping out the role of ideological line entirely. Unfortunately, "leading the struggle"—let alone making revolution—is not so simple as this. As anyone who has been involved in a sharp struggle can tell you—the miners' strike isn't a bad example—the struggle over how to sum up the struggle, what context to put it in, and which way to go is itself a class struggle—and a sharp one at that.

As the article "Mass Line Is Key to Lead Masses in Making Revolution" (REVOLUTION, Dec. 15, 1975) put it: "At each point in the development of the struggle the bourgeoisie and the proletariat must and will contend not only in the practical battlefield, but also in the sphere of ideology."

"There is, and will be so long as classes remain, a continual struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat over how to sum up the struggle, what lessons to draw from each battle and what road to take in order to change with the situation. To the degree that the proletariat, through its Party, does not correctly sum up this experience, does not correctly concentrate the ideas of the masses, the bourgeoisie will, through its political leaders and representatives, put over its summation."

The article goes on to point out how this requires repeated experience and constant summation, and that this struggle will grow even sharper as a revolutionary situation emerges. Spontaneity pulls in the direction of the bourgeoisie. As the article says, "revolution will not occur 'automatically.'"

It is impossible to carry out really revolutionary political work without carrying out struggle in the sphere of ideology. Capitalist propaganda such as "Buy America," "Deport the illegals," or "foreign competition is taking our jobs" must be exposed and combatted in many forms—even when there is no immediate plan for a demonstration or other mass action around these questions.

With a line like these revisionists', not only will newspapers be reduced down to dull and flavorless pabulum and rah-rah, but the need for them, especially to comment on anything controversial or outside the immediate struggle, will be completely negated.

For all this clique's posturing about being the "leaders of big battles" and the "organizers," they were pitiful petty reformers in this task too. While they opposed developing the full role of the Party press with arguments about how the WORKERS' task was to "build the battles that they [the people] are in," they negated this task as well. If you wanted to use the WORKER, or any of the Party's propaganda, to help organize or build a particular struggle—these revisionists were regularly found opposing and sabotaging such work. According to them, for the "organizers" of a struggle to openly propagate the Party's line, to distribute its literature broadly, to get that "burdensome" label of "communists" attached to them was automatically "too left."

During the campaign against the 1976 USA Bicentennial, this clique constantly undermined or liquidated the distribution of the Party's literature—the WORKER, REVOLUTION, and the Party's pamphlet on the subject—in areas under their influence. That hatchet-woman who styled herself the queen of UWOC (Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee) told people to stop selling the WORKER at unemployment offices because this would supposedly interfere with the work of UWOC and "raise its level of unity" too high. No Party literature around unemployment was developed under her leadership. Previous to her ascendancy to the throne, Party comrades and advanced workers in UWOC had found the ways to distribute such literature broadly and generally make efforts to develop the Party's independent role while at the same time developing UWOC as a fighting

mass organization of unemployed workers. (When it came to summing up the lessons of this work, this "UWOC leader" produced several draft revisionist theses for publication in REVOLUTION. But this whole effort ended in fiasco, with her grabbing some drafts back and scurrying off with them [while she was still in the Party], saying she was worried that, if published, they would only stand as "teaching material by negative example.")

After the Humboldt Park rebellion in Chicago in 1977, a lesser light revisionist who had responsibility for the Party's work around this question effectively stopped distribution of the WORKER and a special WORKER leaflet in that neighborhood. In the typical opportunist method of these Mensheviks, this was accomplished by sabotage—never openly stating any case against it to others outside their circle. But later, in an appeal to the Party leadership against having the word "communist" in the name of the Party's youth organization, they made clear that they opposed it because they felt being widely known as communists would only isolate them.

The result of this was that nothing was consolidated by them in this struggle, the Party literature did not get out, and opportunists like the CP(ML), which sold its paper and held a forum but in fact did nothing to build the struggle, were allowed to parade around as "the communists" while they peddled their opportunist line.

In other situations, such as last summer's Pullman strike in Chicago, comrades were criticized as "ultra-leftists" for raising that even one person working actively with the strikers should be selling the WORKER to them. The argument was that in the early stages of a strike comrades should not be known as communists, but only after the strikers began to trust them as leading fighters. How any worker could "trust" someone who corresponded so perfectly to the bourgeoisie's image of "sneaky, hidden" communists is beyond us.

The WORKER bulletin spoke to this point when it said:

"While tactics (including keeping jobs) must be considered, it is generally a good thing, not a bad thing, to be known as a communist by people, even before much struggle goes on. There is no 'holy principle' mandating this in every case, but as opposed to a mechanical narrow and rightist 'theory of stages' or making an absolute out of 'unfolding' understanding simply out of particular struggle (first bring people into struggle, then bring out politics) it is generally helpful to carrying out all three objectives. Often it gets harder, rather than easier, to bring out openly where we stand in the course of a battle or after a relatively long period of time of not doing so. Patterns of our work and relations to people that get set on one basis are often not so easy to change. The more freedom we take on this, the more we have."

"If we are known from the beginning as communists, then when struggle does break out, people are obviously more able to see for themselves what the role of communist actually is. This is clearly preferable to having this explained to them after the fact. ('Oh, by the way...') it is also true that if we are honest and bold with where we're coming from people, though not all will agree, will tend to respect that and check it out more seriously if we act like we really think we've got something important to say."

"Finally, if we're known as communists it becomes easier to explain the relation between a particular struggle we're in and the overall struggle because the question poses itself directly—'Why are you involved?'"

In sum, for these revisionists using the Party press to build the struggle was not only unimportant, sideline activity—it was a potential and often immediate

liability. Organizing a particular struggle certainly requires more than using the Party press. In most situations it is not even the main form of giving leadership to the struggle. But it cannot be negated. "Building the struggle" is not an abstract question, or separate from the question of line. Struggle will always be built according to one line or another—whether this is conscious or unconscious. Negating the role of the Party press in organizing struggle was part and parcel of these revisionists' attempt to negate revolutionary work and the decisive role of line and replace it with their concept of "great organizers make history."

There is another way in which the Party press functions as an organizer of the struggle and that is as an organizer of the Party's work. Lenin spoke of this role of a newspaper and described it as a "collective organizer." Under our current conditions, this role is played mainly by REVOLUTION, the organ of our Party's Central Committee, which is intended mainly for advanced workers and other Party supporters as well as Party members.

Under the direction of the Central Committee and its standing bodies, REVOLUTION has a crucial role to play in directing the advanced forces, who are a key lever to the broad masses. It is a tool of the Party in applying the mass line—concentrating the political experience of the masses and the Party members and taking up the political questions confronting them in waging revolutionary struggle and returning this to them to carry out the struggle in a more conscious and unified way.

## Revolution

REVOLUTION plays its role as collective organizer by giving leadership through line. As such it was increasingly foreign and irrelevant to this pragmatist and factional clique, whose idea of "real leadership" was something very different. REVOLUTION was "just ideas." To them Mao's teaching that "the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything" had no real meaning. Their method of leadership was exactly what the Chinese Communist Party's 10th Congress described as Lin Piao's method—wanting to "have everything under his command and everything at his disposal." They constantly went around central and local Party leadership and relied on private conversations with "key people" or on their own "travelling road shows" of organizers. All this did real damage to the Party's correct methods of leadership.

These revisionists were also disinterested in REVOLUTION because it plays an important part in arming its readers with the science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and with an understanding of the basis for the Party's various policies. This task was meaningless for this clique, whose method was to dish out a few increasingly reformist policies and tactics to the masses while theory (such as it was for them) was kept the property of a few "geniuses."

REVOLUTION did not, however, remain simply irrelevant to this clique. Increasingly they came to oppose it. Unable to struggle successfully for their line on the Party's leading bodies, Jarvis-Bergman and Co. increasingly used their own channels to factionalize against the Party's line.

As time wore on, this clique was unable to simply ignore REVOLUTION or dismiss it as a "safe" realm for "idealists." On the basis of discussion on leading bodies in the Party, REVOLUTION increasingly began to combat reformist errors and tendencies that these opportunists were not only concentrating into their own line but extensively factionalizing around within the Party. Comrades throughout the Party began to take up the task of criticizing and rectifying these errors. This led the Mensheviks to whip up frenzied attacks on key articles in REVOLUTION which hit at rightism, even while the top leaders of this clique mumbled mealy-mouthed agreement with them on top leading bodies. They particularly hated the articles on the Party branches (August, September 1977), which pointed to education in the Party's ideological and political line as the lifeline of the Party's branches, pointed to the importance of ideological work, and generally stressed the revolutionary tasks of the branches in opposition to economism and pragmatism, which this clique was actively promoting. The vast majority of Party members, even including many in Jarvis and Bergman's social base, took up these articles enthusiastically, but these revisionists whipped up sections of their base to wildly oppose them and spout things like—this isn't the line of the Party, it's only in REVOLUTION!

These revisionists were also opposed to any revolutionary approach to the theoretical struggle, which is an important part of the tasks of the Party press. To a large degree this is concentrated in our Party's theoretical journal, THE COMMUNIST, but other Party publications, including REVOLUTION and to a lesser degree the WORKER, play an important role in this. The article, "Theoretical Struggle Crucial Part of Working Class Movement" (REVOLUTION, January 1977), was a major blow at the line this clique was pushing on this question. Taking up an important point in the 1976 Central Committee Report, this article pointed out that there were three—not just two or one—forms of the class struggle, the theoretical as well as the economic and the political. It stated that "within the Party empiricism now represents a greater error than dogmatism."

Continued on page 15

## Subscribe

U.S.—one year, \$5; one year by first class mail, \$12; six month trial, \$2.50.  
Canada—one year, \$6.50; by air mail, \$12.  
Other Countries—one year, \$7, by air mail, \$18.  
Library and Institutions—one year, \$10.00.

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ for a \_\_\_\_\_ subscription.

Being with \_\_\_\_\_ (month) issue.

Surface \_\_\_\_\_ Airmail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to be part of a monthly sustainer program for Revolution. I will contribute \_\_\_\_\_ \$5, \_\_\_\_\_ \$10, \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 a month (or more \_\_\_\_\_) for one year. This includes a one-year first class subscription.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks or money orders payable to RCP Publications, at P.O. Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654

# Coalfields . . .

Continued from page 5

spin"—meaning, will we be able to make a big splash with this campaign.

Even in advance of a strike—and in the absence of any "guarantee" that the miners would succeed in waging one—it was important for the NUWO to take up the contract battle, build it as strongly as possible and sum up developments for the broadest number of workers. But even while these Mensheviks were slipping around like a bunch of street corner hustlers waiting to see if the strike was going to "spin," it was clear that the miners would strike and that it would be an important battle for the working class.

The Mensheviks failed to see what was at stake for the working class in this battle. What they did not grasp was that the aim of the bourgeoisie was to break the resistance of the miners—both in order to increase their profits and productivity in the coalfields, and to make an example of them to the whole working class.

What they ignored or distorted was that the major questions facing the miners are the same ones that workers all over are coming up against—and will even more sharply in the future. "Can you fight such a powerful enemy? Can the workers unite their ranks? Can we win? Can we break through the chains of sellout union leadership? Can't we just make peace with the capitalists? What is the road forward for our struggle?"

Given their outlook, it is not surprising that for almost two months after the NUWO steering committee meeting the Mensheviks blocked any nationally organized work around the miners contract battle. Some local chapters of the NUWO did break through this and took the initiative, but nationally the work was pretty well sabotaged while a couple of hotshots watched for indications that things were "spinning" in the coalfields.

## Building "Support" on Trade Unionist Basis

When the strike did develop into something the Mensheviks could term "big and bad"—something they thought they could pimp off—they did take up building support for it among other workers. But their idea of "support" was to timidly go out to the working class on the narrowest, trade union basis. One glowing example of this was in a leaflet they put out to steel workers. The leaflet said they should support the miners because the UMWA donated \$1,000,000 to help the United Steel Workers of America organize back in the '40s and therefore steel workers "owe it to the miners."

The miners' fight for the right to strike was important, according to these opportunists, not because the struggle and victory on this issue would strengthen the whole working class in its ongoing battles with the capitalists, but because if miners got it, it would be easier for the steel workers to get it. Of course they couldn't believe that workers would come forward to support the miners on the basis of their broad class interests, they had to be appealed to on the basis of their narrowest self-interest. Hey, listen up, George Meany, you've got some faithful pupils here!

As the strike started, the Menshevik followers in the coalfields always tried to take the line of least resistance to the capitalists. They began by deciding in advance that the miners weren't going to get out there

and do anything, and that it was too risky for the Miners Right to Strike Committee to take any advanced actions—like a picket line or rally.

While there was some confusion within the Miners Right to Strike Committee on how to begin organizing rank and file struggle at the beginning of the strike, and while the idea that a contract fight should be waged by the union leadership in Washington had some currency among the masses, it was clear what was needed—and that was not to tip-toe behind the hacks. But for the Mensheviks it was too dangerous (politically and to their careers) to do anything unless they had the guarantee in advance of big turnouts and broad support. Consistent with their line, in the course of the fight and afterwards, they gave a big play to district and local union officials who they credited with providing leadership for the strike. How much more respectable and "legitimate" they think they must seem by being able to praise officials!

As the strike went on and the struggle inside the RCP came to a head, the narrowness and pragmatism of the Mensheviks in the coalfields degenerated into outright crimes against the masses, in a desperate effort to build their own puny clique. Their "big gun" (actually he was more like a toy pistol) misappropriated Committee funds, dishonestly tried to raise money in the name of the Committee (putting a different address out as that of the Committee), tried to build actions in direct opposition to events and actions that had been democratically decided on and planned for by the Miners Right to Strike Committee as a whole, and backed off and tried to change the Committee's stand on the main demands of the rank and file as soon as he saw that it meant a real fight.

He was finally expelled from the Committee when all of his outrageous nonsense came out after the strike. As the resolution of the Committee on kicking him out summed up his role: "It adds up to a real attempt by a self-seeking misleader to take a fighting rank and file organization and turn it to the purpose of building his own self and his little group of sidekicks. The working class, the rank and file miners, and the Miners Right to Strike Committee have no use for this kind of low-life. And it's on this basis that we expel him. Good riddance!"

## Key Importance of Line

Since the RCP was formed the revisionists emerging inside the Party complained and whined about how the revolutionary communists in the RCP were "too concerned about line." One of their biggest criticisms of the Party's work in the Miners Right to Strike Committee was that it suffered from what they panned as "correct-linism," their term for the struggle to grasp and put forward a line which represents the fullest interests of the proletariat, rather than their own narrow, self-serving drivel.

Soon after its formation the Party's revolutionary leadership unfolded struggle and education aimed at combating the economist and pragmatist trend—particularly through a series of articles and campaign around the mass line—stressing that the mass line is not a mirror to reflect the masses' spontaneous understanding, but a weapon based on revolutionary science and the underlying laws of class society. Taking up the struggle to grasp Marxist-Leninist theory and repudiate opportunism is a key element in enabling the Party to develop the correct political line and lead the masses forward.

But, for the Mensheviks, taking up the theoretical struggle was merely a "diversion." They couldn't

in all arenas of the class struggle. Further developing this role goes hand in hand with further strengthening the Party as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. Now that our Party has won an important victory in smashing the Jarvis-Bergman clique we can continue to learn from their negative example, root out similar tendencies in our own understanding, and move forward in this important task.

In the book *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Stalin said, "A whole generation of the revolutionary proletariat was reared by *Pravda* [a mass working class paper of their party]." (p. 153) While this does not describe today's situation in our country, the future holds vast potential. With the victory against this Menshevik clique and its petty reformist and thoroughly revisionist line, through deepening our grasp of the correct line and revolutionary work based on it, and with the further development of the objective situation, we can make big strides. On this question—no doubt earning again the label of "idealists," a label we proudly wear when pinned on us by revisionists for fulfilling our responsibilities as the proletariat's revolutionary vanguard—we would like to quote Lenin:

"We should dream . . . There are rifts and rifts . . . My dream may run ahead of the natural march of events or may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural march of events will ever proceed. In the first case my dream will not cause any harm; it may even support and augment the energy of the working men . . . The rift between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observation with his castles in the air, and if generally speaking, he works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well.' Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement." (*What Is To Be Done?*, Chapter 5, Section B) ■

understand the '76 CC Report when it said, "The role of theory in building the revolutionary movement of the working class is crucial . . . Because capitalism cannot be overthrown and abolished with spontaneity, by the working class on its own, without theory to guide it, and the Party cannot lead the working class in achieving this without waging the theoretical struggle, together with the economic and political." Without this understanding, the "linking up with struggle" that the Mensheviks yell about can only mean tailing along with their eyes glued firmly to the backs of the masses.

The article "Miners' Struggle at a Crossroads," in the December 1977 issue of *REVOLUTION*, particularly incensed them. This article was a real contribution to the work of communists and other conscious forces because it was an accurate summation and concentration of the key problems and questions that had arisen out of the struggles of the miners themselves and of the work of Party members to develop the struggle of the miners as part of a class conscious and revolutionary movement of the working class. The Mensheviks in the coalfields would have been too exposed at that point to oppose the article altogether.

Instead they criticized it by saying, "It's OK as far as it goes, but it doesn't give enough particular guidance on building the struggle." Their "criticism" exactly missed the point of the "Crossroads" article, that the crucial thing that miners and the whole working class have to grasp is not just that you have to fight the effects of exploitation, but that the fight must become increasingly a class conscious fight against the whole capitalist system, that under the leadership of communists the struggle must become a struggle against all oppression and the system of wage slavery itself.

The article spoke directly to many of the questions miners were raising about what the hell they were accomplishing by their constant guerrilla war with the coal bosses. It explained the vital importance of these day-to-day battles that the working class must fight to keep from being driven down to the level of a "mass of broken wretches." It made clear that it is not enough to "build the struggle, build the struggle." "It is exactly in the tremendous upsurge of struggle that it becomes clear again that building the day-to-day struggle as an end in itself is a dead-end. The problems of workers everywhere are not solved by one piecemeal reform after the other, but by building an increasingly revolutionary workers movement that recognizes the face of its enemy, recognizes and struggles against all oppression and aims at the overthrow of the system itself."

The Mensheviks complained that this was just more "left idealism," that the "Crossroads" article did not give enough "particular guidance" for the work and merely left the cadre demoralized and thinking they should not be involved in the day-to-day struggles of the working class. Bull! They knew what the Party's revolutionary leadership was calling for—and they opposed it.

Their line was to keep the workers riveted to the day-to-day economic battles. They opposed the slogan "Workers Unite to Lead the Fight Against All Oppression" and in fact dropped it as soon as they left the Party. They opposed any real effort to point to the system of capitalism as the chain around the necks of the workers.

In a rag they fraudulently call the "Worker" the Menshevik headquarters did not even mention the capitalist system in their so-called "sum-up" of the contract strike. The significance of this strike is summed up as being simply that the miners fought hard and resisted the bosses' attacks. Then they run out their gem on what the lessons of this strike are for the miners: "What the strike pointed out was the need to fight in an organized, unified way . . . The need for rank and file mine-to-mine organization has never been clearer. The need to strengthen the union, roll over the bloated toads at the top and fight in the miners' interests remains." Certainly true, but left there how is this summation any different from militant trade unionism?

Finally, they conclude that the miners strike was a "glimpse of the future." What was this future they envisioned for the working class? A future of endless, bigger and badder trade union struggles. Not one word which would assist in building these struggles in a way that will lead to the smashing of the treadmill of capitalism and the overthrow of the capitalist class.

The irony of the Mensheviks' line of "build the struggle, build the struggle" is that their contempt for the masses—their unshaken conviction that the masses can't grasp revolution—leads them to backing off from the struggle altogether. These misfits never did do any work in their home UMWA district. In the face of heat from the union hacks and the bourgeoisie, their response was to run off, often hundreds of miles away, under the pretext of "leading the struggle."

## Unity of Opportunists

Not surprisingly, these Mensheviks have a great deal of unity with other opportunists and agents of the bourgeoisie masquerading as "communists"—in particular the revisionist Communist Party (ML), but also the older revisionist CP and something called the Communist Labor Party (formerly CL). Not only do they unite with the CP and the CP(ML) in slandering the Miners Right to Strike Committee and the work of the Party, they do it from the very same basis.

Continued on page 16

# Party Press . . .

Writing a few months later in an internal document in an area under the grip of these revisionists, a glib-tongued, empty-headed hack in their clique wrote the following about the "progress" on their local *WORKER*, which he headed up: "In the [1976] CC Report, it says we are not good enough at exposure, and that our low theoretical level holds us back. This is true. But the gaining of theory can't be separated from fighting idealism and metaphysics. The paper had to root itself in the real world, the objective contradictions and struggles. Only by doing this could the question of theoretical level be raised in a real and not abstract way." (emphasis added) That was one big "but." This hackneyed honcho was openly opposing the line of the Central Committee, and expressing this clique's characteristic hatred for the theoretical struggle. Any form of rational knowledge is just "abstract" to them, and ideas—at least correct ones—are "idealism."

For this reason this clique never seriously took up the theoretical struggle in general, nor did they take a revolutionary approach to the theoretical journal—though they would occasionally dabble in it. Their social base was an unholy alliance of pragmatists plus a few dilettante intellectuals who would flit about, gathering a smattering of knowledge and isolated facts to impress others with their "expertise" and produce an incredible mishmash of various schools of bourgeois thought with a "Marxist" coloration. Jarvis and Bergman personally combined and concentrated both pragmatism and dilettantism. As Marx said of Proudhon, "he seeks to be the synthesis, he is a composite error."

The Party's press is a potentially powerful weapon

# King . . .

Continued from page 13

his idea that Black people should meet oppression and terror with disobedience of "unjust laws"—although King failed to add that he only considered local laws unjust and never went against federal law—and non-violence and "love" for the cops, courts, segregationist bigshots, etc. "Forgiveness" and "self-discipline" would bring Blacks freedom—and they always had to prove themselves "better" than those who were tormenting them. He denounced Blacks who fought with the cops, denounced Black violence against the oppressor as equally bad as the oppressor's violence.

But it was the fact that Birmingham gave rise to one of the "worst riots" in Southern history—a great rebellion—that gave the struggle in that city its impact. Earlier that year JFK had told King that he just couldn't sponsor a Civil Rights Act that year, supposedly because Congress would never agree. But in the wake of Birmingham, Kennedy quickly changed his tune. He introduced the Civil Rights Act shortly after, and Congress agreed to it a year later.

## March on Washington

Also in 1963, King played a major role in the famous March on Washington. For several years there had been a growing sentiment among Black people for a mass demonstration in Washington, an action which would go beyond hitting at local authorities to hitting at the whole government by picketing the White House, sitting-in in the halls of Congress and so on.

Despite this mass sentiment—and despite the fact that hundreds of thousands of Black and white people came to Washington, not knowing what kind of attacks they might face but determined to fight for justice—the March on Washington that took place had no fight in it at all. It was more of a stroll than a march. Under the leadership of A. Phillip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, the NAACP and Martin Luther King, the whole thing was turned into a lukewarm pep rally for JFK's Civil Rights Act.

When JFK at first opposed the idea of this action, Randolph replied, "The Negroes are already in the streets. It is very likely impossible to get them off. If they are bound to be in the streets in any case, is it not better that they be led by organizations dedicated to civil rights and disciplined by struggle rather than to leave them to other leaders who care neither about civil rights nor nonviolence?" In other words, since Black people were determined to fight for their freedom and couldn't be stopped, these "moderate" paid hacks like

# Coalfields . . .

Now the Mensheviks put down the Miners Right to Strike Committee as a "small rank and file committee [the RCP] was backing." In the April 10 issue of the *CALL*, the CP(ML), like the bourgeoisie and the hacks, try to claim that the Miners Right to Strike Committee is a small irrelevant handful and try to deny its role and influence. (Just the sheer number of times and the virulence with which the hacks and the bourgeoisie repeat this would make people think the Committee's role must be fairly significant.)

Like the Mensheviks, the CP(ML) says that the Committee is "sectarian," "splittist" and "divisive." They are a "small but destructive force within the miners' movement . . . fueling anti-communism among the miners." The older revisionist CP had about the same thing to say shortly before the strike began.

What the Mensheviks and their blood brothers mean is that to raise anything but trade unionism will "cause trouble and be disruptive." For them it's OK to attack some of the hacks, sometimes. But only in the context of putting themselves forward as the new saviors.

Sure the Miners Right to Strike Committee is the subject of much controversy in the coalfields and sharp red-baiting attacks from the capitalists and their agents in the union. Before and during the strike the bourgeois media and the union misleaders waged a frenzied red-baiting attack in the media throughout the coalfields against the Committee and the Party. The Committee has not backed off on the fact that there are RCP cadre in it, nor have Party members backed off of the question of communism.

Many miners, including members of the Miners Right to Strike Committee and miners who work with it, recognize that the basis for the attacks is the fact that the capitalists see the Committee and the Party as a real threat. It's no accident that anyone connected with the CP(ML) has for the most part stood outside this controversy, despite their implications to the contrary.

There is no way that genuine communists or an organization that has communists in it can escape being controversial. The point is that communists must take advantage of the opportunities created by this controversy and turn it into a good thing. (As for the CP(ML)'s own work in the coalfields, their only whisper of it in their sum-up article on the strike is the following: "During the recent strike the CP(ML) has been active in the coalfields . . ." This would come as a real surprise to virtually all coal miners!)

In fact, the Mensheviks even stand a bit to the right of the CP(ML)—difficult though that may be. In con-

Randolph and demagogues like King had to pretend to stand with the movement and to take part in it in order to hold it back—or else it might run over King, Kennedy and all the rest.

King's speech that day spoke movingly about Black oppression and the dream of equality and an end to divisions between nationalities, a dream shared by uncounted millions of Blacks and whites as well. Without his ability to touch these chords, King would have been nothing. But his speech really had little content beyond dreams. And in the real world, King stood with the others in forbidding the head of SNCC to even mildly criticize Kennedy in his speech. Deleted from the SNCC speech were the words, "In all good conscience, we cannot support the Administration's civil rights bill, for it is too little too late."

In this period King was to hit the top as far as his standing with the bourgeoisie was concerned—and begin to slide sharply among the more aroused and conscious Black masses. After the Harlem "riot" of 1964, one of the first of a growing series, King was called to New York by the Mayor to quiet things down. King was jeered and eggs were thrown at him in the streets, and he quickly left town. A year later, after the historic Watts rebellion, more or less the same thing happened. King had as good or even better relations with LBJ as he'd had with Kennedy—but large sections of the Black masses were no longer so interested in King's message.

Many bourgeois authorities have had to take note of this, saying that it was because the Black struggle was moving North. But while it's true that the cities of the North began to explode, the cities of the South exploded too. The real problem was that the nature of the Black struggle itself was changing, moving more and more into open confrontation with the government, the ruling class behind it and their system, and this was true in all parts of the country.

## SNCC

While King was flying around the country making speeches and raising funds, SNCC was sending organizers into the most backward and Klan-ridden counties to go door to door and farmshack to farmshack, drawing in and relying on the masses themselves instead of gambling everything on making national news with the arrest of a famous, larger than life saint.

Part of this involved Black people trying to register to vote—and raising hell in large numbers when the local authorities tried to stop them. Since much of this was in rural areas of Mississippi and Alabama, including many places where the sharecropping system segregation was based upon was still very much alive, it led to violent confrontations with local exploiters for

trast to the Mensheviks, the CP(ML) at least talks about the need to fight the capitalist system—in their paper. But these opportunists all have a fundamental unity when it comes to a program of struggle for the miners and what the road forward for their struggle actually is.

The way the CP(ML) puts it is "The Labor Movement Needs Revolutionary Leadership." What they mean is that the "Labor Movement" needs them as its leaders. The problem, say these "revolutionaries," "is that there is a whole bureaucratic apparatus, a union hierarchy of which Miller is just the current boss. The whole apparatus crushing the rank and file must be smashed, and the agents of the coal operators driven out of the union. *Only then* [emphasis added] can the initiative and leadership of the vast majority of mine workers be brought into play in running their own union organization. . . . With a correct and far sighted leadership [like the members of the CP(ML)], this movement can educate and rally the majority of miners to build a fighting UMW based on a clear program of class struggle." The Mensheviks put it only slightly differently. Their whole riff reeks of "elect me and I'll do a job for you. Elect the right leaders and everything will be fine."

It is clear that these puffed-up penny-ante stepchildren of John L. Lewis couldn't possibly lead miners—or the working class as a whole—on the high, hard road to revolution. They're too busy stuck in their rut trying to figure out which way the wind is blowing. A sure sign of opportunists on the make is the line that only once good leaders are elected can the struggle be waged. Reality is just the opposite. It is only by building the class conscious understanding of the rank and file about the nature of the enemy and the battles that they face that unity and struggle can develop in a way that will break the stronghold of the top union officials and in the process fight to turn these unions into weapons in the hands of the working class.

The treason of the John L. Lewises of the labor movement, who these opportunists sound so strikingly familiar to, is not principally that they don't fight militantly for reforms on occasion, but that they limit the struggle of the working class to those reforms, condemning the workers to perpetual wage slavery.

The repudiation of the Mensheviks and the struggle to root out revisionism in the Revolutionary Communist Party has been a major victory for the working class and its vanguard in blowing away yet another obstacle the bourgeoisie would like to place in the path of the working class struggle to stick to the revolutionary course, to build the revolutionary, class conscious movement of the working class to liberate itself and all mankind from the slavery of capitalism. ■

whom keeping Black people in chains was an immediate matter of economic life and death. In this campaign SNCC did not preach nonviolence. In fact, although most civil rights workers went unarmed, the houses where they slept were often guarded by a car full of sharecroppers with shotguns. Otherwise, far more would most likely have been killed.

For the bourgeoisie as a whole, denial of the right to vote, like other aspects of segregation, was very useful in terms of preserving the oppression of Black people. Still, since voting is part of the sham which the capitalists use to fool the people and maintain their rule, they could give in on this point without weakening their power—in fact, it seemed that it would weaken them more if they didn't make a few concessions.

But militant, mass struggle against injustice of any kind couldn't be tolerated since there was no telling where it would lead. So the federal government worked quietly and behind the scenes to put a stop to this movement, even while posing as its best friend. As part of the terror campaign against Blacks, three civil rights workers were taken from their car one night in Philadelphia, Mississippi and murdered by the local police and the Klan. Although the FBI had the Klan riddled with agents and informers, as usual it did nothing to prevent the murders.

At the end of summer '64, a delegation of sharecroppers and other Mississippi Blacks and civil rights organizers formed the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) to go to the Democratic Convention and demand that they be seated instead of the avowedly segregationist regular Mississippi Democratic Party (MDP). Since the MDP was widely considered at odds with LBJ and the national Democratic Party anyway, many expected that the MFDP would be seated. But that would have given too much encouragement to those who were rocking the boat.

On LBJ's initiative, Hubert Humphrey arranged a highly publicized "compromise"—two of the MFDP delegates would be seated alongside the regular Mississippi delegation. King, who'd lent his name to the MFDP delegation, tried hard to get them to accept Humphrey's offer. But the MFDP delegates turned their backs and walked out. It was an insult, a slap in the face, when what they'd been demanding wasn't really so much after all.

King had been mockingly called "de Lawd" by many SNCC members ever since Albany because of his empty demagoguery and really backward role. Now more and more it seemed as if the smell of the oppressor had rubbed off on King.

## King's Last Years

There were more years left to King. In Selma in 1965, he did his usual act, conveniently absent the day that police attacked the head of the march, conveniently present to use his full weight to get people to accept a federal injunction against mass marching, and finally off in a blaze of glory after leading a parade of movie stars, politicians and bigshots—leaving the people in Selma to figure out how to put back together the pieces and rebuild the long-term struggle there. At one point King's aides had even pulled guns on SNCC members who had argued against King's tactics. Apparently nonviolence was for the masses, not for King.

In Chicago he held endless negotiations with Mayor Daley, bragged about the formation of a city-wide tenants union based among Blacks that never really got organized. When Black people rioted because, despite Daley's promises, cops still attacked Black kids for turning on fire hydrants in the summer, King was ferried around by the police in a squad car to stop it. He couldn't. Increasingly he devoted himself to speaking engagements and overseas junkets.

When he was assassinated, King was in Memphis, trying to run his routine in a situation where a Black sanitation workers' strike had led to mass protests and a federal injunction. As usual, there was a fire and King was expected to put it out. Many Black people involved in the protests either jeered or ignored King.

His last speeches show a growing despair. If he often seemed preoccupied by death, it may be that the likelihood he faced of a slow political death had a lot to do with it. Or maybe he realized just how expendable he'd become? When he died, *TIME* magazine, which had twice named him "man of the year," remarked that "King was dangerously close to slipping from a prophet to a patsy."

Some people say that King was actually changing, becoming more revolutionary, during the last year of his life, taking up Vietnam and "economic issues," and that was why he was killed. This is mistaking changes in what King was tailing after for changes in King. In taking up "economic issues," King was simply trying to adapt himself to changing conditions in the struggle and channel it in the most narrow reformism, LBJ's "War on Poverty" programs and trade unionism. Such things were the system's phony answers to a fact obvious to increasing millions: even with many legal barriers removed, Blacks still face heavy national oppression on top of the exploitation the overwhelming majority of Blacks face as part of the overall U.S. working class.

As for King's opposition to the war, this came only in the Spring of 1967, when many bourgeois politicians representing powerful ruling class interests were also making speeches against it because of what they saw as

Continued on page 17

# King...

the overall interests of the bourgeoisie. King's stand of opposing the war on the grounds of pacifism—which makes you wonder why it took him so long—contrasts sharply with Malcolm X's firm anti-war stand in the very early years of Vietnam, which linked the Black people's struggle and the Vietnamese struggle as part of a common struggle worldwide against imperialism.

## Why Was King Killed?

If King was no danger to the ruling class, if he was in fact their servant, why was he killed? We won't bother here with the theory that James Earl Ray killed King on his own—others have dealt with it in detail and few believe it anyway. Much has been made of the fact that FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover hated King, that he was apparently blackmailing King by threatening to release tapes of his private life, and so on. The TV series *King* basically admits by implication that Hoover was up to his neck in King's murder. But this doesn't explain why Hoover was protected in doing this, because he obviously couldn't have gotten away with it unless he had extremely powerful backing.

The fact is that the U.S. ruling class has been torn by internal contradictions—conflicts of economic interest and of policy—that have many times come to blood. The killing of the two Kennedys was part of this, so it is not surprising that King, who was so much identified with them, should go the same way. Although the exact nature and terms of this conflict are not clear, certainly a lot of it had to do with exactly how to attack the masses and preserve bourgeois rule. Should it be the kind of sneak attack carried out by the Kennedys, who used lots of sugarcoated poison and Martin Luther King types misleading the masses? Or should it be more open attack, naked terror and force?

Lest it be taken that this is a conflict between "democracy" and fascism, let it be remembered that Kennedy and Johnson never hesitated to send in troops. Kennedy, not Hoover, ordered King's phone tapped. There was a contradiction about how to treat the civil rights movement, especially at first, because the big bourgeoisie as a whole was not dependent on legal segregation for its rule or its profits, although this was not true of every rich capitalist and landowner.

But the more the movement grew into a Black liberation struggle demanding an end to the oppression of Black people in all its forms—and the more this revolt turned into a call to revolution for all those exploited and oppressed by the capitalists—the more the whole bourgeoisie united to stop this movement cold.

Using King and giving lip service and token reforms to Black demands while opposing and attacking the real struggle for liberation was the line taken by the bourgeoisie as a whole. In killing King other bourgeois forces were taking aim at this line, but at the same time this act revealed how narrow the differences were. For the Black movement was proving increasingly strong in the face of tricks and bait, and Martin Luther King wasn't doing his masters much good anymore anyway. Alive, he was growing more exposed daily, while dead he has proved extremely useful as a martyr and "non-violent saint."

King's killing must be distinguished from the murder of Malcolm X and Fred Hampton, who were shot down, like so many lesser known men, because they represented nothing but danger for the bourgeoisie. No big corporations sponsored any TV programs on the tenth anniversary of their assassinations. They are revolutionary martyrs of the people's struggle and not buzzards who got knocked down when the wind shifted.

King's assassination shows just how vicious and ruthless the ruling class is, even with those who have loyally served it, let alone with those who stand up to it, whom it moves to crush without a thought. There is an interpenetration between these two different types of political murder, because killing King was meant to throw terror into the hearts of all who dared to rebel—after all, if they'd kill *even* the pacifist reformist King... But the massive rebellions that erupted in Black communities from coast to coast showed that the Black masses would not be cowed into submission by the terror of the bourgeoisie.

King's nonviolence was not and cannot be treated simply as a mistaken philosophy, for it was part and parcel of his reformism and reactionary role. It was bad enough and disgusting to preach that people should love their enemies and turn the other cheek when they are being beaten and murdered. But this pacifism was part of a whole political outlook that viewed the rage of the masses against their oppression as "useful" only if it was confined to the safe and harmless channels bourgeois democracy provides. King opposed revolutionary violence because he opposed revolution. While there were people who admired King's pacifism, few of these actually practiced it themselves, especially after the first few confrontations when the police and other reactionaries like the KKK proved that they would unleash their reactionary violence whether people fought back or not.

## The Black Bourgeoisie

In this King expressed the outlook and interests of the Black bourgeoisie, a class centered on Black insurance companies, funeral parlors, banks and so on,

and the ministers who work for them. Especially in the '50s and early '60s, the Black bourgeoisie saw its own interests very much tied up with the developing mass movement, since many aspects of the oppression of Black people make life hard for them as well, and in this movement they saw a golden opportunity to advance their own economic and political power. But their outlook towards the masses was exactly that of King: they saw the mass movement as something to pressure the white capitalists into giving the Black bourgeoisie a better deal.

Because of the inherently conservative nature of its class interests, on the whole the Black bourgeoisie and many of the Black petty bourgeois forces tied to it wavered at best and increasingly capitulated outright to the imperialists, especially as the Black liberation struggle unfolded. There were other political trends within the Black bourgeoisie as well, such as the NAACP which tried to keep its differences with the ruling class confined exclusively to the bourgeoisie's courts. Others were more "militant" thinking for a time. But overall, King's nonviolence, his emphasis on loving your enemies, and his refusal to distinguish exactly who the enemy was—making it white people in general, a disguised form of narrow nationalism, despite his professed concern for brotherhood—all of this suited the interests and the outlook of the Black bourgeoisie.

It suited the imperialists as well, who were doing their best to build up and buy the Black upper crust in order to mislead the masses in a situation where the ruling class had few other options.

This policy certainly didn't begin with King and it didn't end with him either. Today, when the bourgeoisie is forced by economic crisis to take back many of the crumbs it was forced to give up by the struggle of the '60s, it continues to build lip some Black business interests and certain forces among the Black upper petty bourgeoisie as a stopper for the Black masses, even while the blind workings of capitalism in crisis are steadily weakening and threatening these forces and may cause them to lash out against the imperialists.

King's goals and those of the mass movement were always different, even when he played a positive role in the mass movement, because even the civil rights movement's demands for equality had a fundamentally different meaning for those who want to be equal to the masters with whom they compete than it had for the Black working people. King once declared that the Black people's movement "isn't a movement to overthrow, it's a movement to get in." This idea of "wanting to get in"—of wanting a piece of the "American dream," of "making the system work for Black people" was a common wrong idea among the masses. But such is really the dream of the Black bourgeoisie, whose interests lie in making room for themselves in the capitalist system.

The ruling class maintains—and must maintain—the oppression of Black people as a people because of the superprofits this allows them to squeeze out of the exploitation of Black workers, who make up the overwhelming bulk of Black people. The more the civil rights movement developed, the more it became clear that formal equality—an end to legal segregation, etc.—could not change the fundamental oppression of Black people, because the imperialist system is incapable of doing away with discrimination and bringing about real equality.

## Mao's Statement

Shortly after King's assassination, Mao Tsetung made his famous statement "In Support of the Afro-American Struggle Against Violent Repression." It begins, "Some days ago, Martin Luther King, the Afro-American clergyman, was suddenly assassinated by the U.S. imperialists. Martin Luther King was an exponent of non-violence. Nevertheless, the U.S. imperialists did not on that account show any tolerance towards him, but used counter-revolutionary violence and killed him in cold blood. This has taught the broad masses of the black people in the United States a profound lesson. It has touched off a new storm in their struggle against violent repression sweeping well over a hundred cities in the United States, a storm such as has never taken place before in the history of that country. It shows that an extremely powerful revolutionary force is latent in the more than twenty million black Americans."

Mao went on to call this "a new clarion call to all the exploited and oppressed people in the United States to fight against the barbarous rule of the monopoly capitalist class."

As the PROGRAMME of the RCP points out, "Especially as it developed from simply a civil rights movement into a Black liberation movement aimed more squarely at the imperialist system, it became the main force pushing ahead all other struggles against the capitalist rulers at that time. At a time when the working class movement was weakened and without a revolutionary vanguard Party, the Black liberation struggle rekindled revolutionary spirit among people of all nationalities, and raised again the question of the overthrow of imperialism."

"But this struggle could not accomplish the overthrow of imperialism and the real liberation of Black people... because the source of this oppression is capitalist rule. The Black people's struggle alone cannot resolve the basic contradiction of capitalism—between the working class and the capitalist class—the contradiction from which all of its evils arise.

"Thus, the advance of the Black people's struggle, in bringing up the question of revolution has also brought up the fact that the working class as a whole must lead in making revolution, and that the Black people's struggle must and will be developed as part of the overall working class struggle to overthrow capitalism." (p. 24)

The Black movement of the '60s helped rekindle the spirit of revolution among the working class as a whole. It gave birth to organizations such as the Black Panther Party which went far beyond previous groups like SNCC in putting armed revolution against capitalism on the agenda and helped create the conditions for the later formation of the RCP. Still, this movement could not develop past a certain point in the absence of such a Party and in the absence of the further development of the workers movement. It is the nature of the people's struggle that it advances not in a straight line, but in waves, and the greatest success of the Black struggle of the 1960s is that it made a tremendous contribution to preparing the conditions for a future, successful revolutionary confrontation.

Of course the bourgeoisie has no interest in seeing things that way and certainly needs to convince the masses of people of all nationalities otherwise. That's why they've tried so hard to convince people that the whole thing was a tragic waste and a failure. On the one hand they try to use the fact that Blacks and other minorities find themselves in a position today as hard as that of a decade ago and growing worse to "prove" that the struggle was useless. On the other hand the bourgeoisie is trying to resurrect everything that was backward and useful to them in that decade in order to limit and sabotage the struggle against oppression that constantly breaks out.

It is true that today things have changed, including the mood of Black and other people for whom the question of how to sum up the '60s is extremely tied into the question of what can and must be done about the conditions of today. That's why the bourgeoisie has done so much to revive the spirit and legend of Martin Luther King, and why his role must be scientifically and ruthlessly analyzed from the revolutionary point of view of Marxism and more widely exposed among Black and other people awakening to political struggle against the imperialist ruling class.

But in the wake of the bourgeoisie's attempts to revive Martin Luther King, certain so-called "communists" have tried to associate themselves with these efforts in order to revive themselves.

Most nauseating of these attempts is that of the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (CP(ML)), and the October League before it. They loudly promote King and had even lauded his heirs who are alive today like Jesse Jackson and Hosea Williams for several years before it proved too embarrassing. In the April 10, 1978 issue of the CP(ML)'s *THE CALL*, a headline declares "King Was a Pathbreaker for Black Liberation." In this the CP(ML) "explains" that "While his illusions about the capitalist system and the path of non-violence at times allowed him to be used as a buffer against the revolutionary forces in the liberation struggle, King, especially in his last years, took a stand alongside the oppressed Black and working masses."

As we've pointed out, King did his best to close the path to Black liberation and his "standing with" the Black working people consisted mainly in standing behind them and calling them back. For the CP(ML), it seems better to stand with the illusions among the masses, including illusions that the bourgeoisie itself is promoting, than to point out that what King represented was in contradiction to the revolutionary development of the mass movement itself. Of course this is consistent with the CP(ML)'s general political line of appealing to what is backward among the masses to pull the mass struggles of today under their own reformist leadership. It's typical of the CP(ML)'s opportunism that they try to paint themselves as the true inheritors of King's legacy—as sort of "communist" Martin Luther Kings, but it's really quite fitting. And of course the CP(ML) is not the only one fishing in that particular cesspool right now, as the Workers Viewpoint Organization contends with them for the mantle of King.

The working class is the only force in society that has absolutely no interests in maintaining any forms of oppression, and which must take up and finally end the oppression of Black people and other minorities as well as wipe out all inequality in order to win its own emancipation. For this reason, the alliance of the oppressed nationalities and the working class is the solid core of the united front against imperialism, which is the working class' strategy for revolution in this country. This united front must be broad, including bringing Black petty bourgeois forces as far and as broadly as possible into the revolutionary camp and winning over or neutralizing as much of the Black bourgeoisie as possible.

But in order to build such an alliance, it is necessary to bring forward at all times the line and outlook of the working class and its revolutionary interests, both in building the movement of the multinational working class as a force leading the struggle against all oppression and in mobilizing the broad masses of the oppressed nationalities in the struggle against their oppression as an ally of the working class in the revolutionary struggle for proletarian revolution. Denouncing, exposing and explaining the role of those like King who represent attempts to move things in the opposite direction is an important part of building this revolutionary united front. ■