



The USWA rank and file want democracy IN and the class-collaborationist Abel/McBride (left) machine OUT. For this they get shot at and beat up (see inset taken at convention). Sadlowski (right) cashes in on the steelworker's desires by assuming a militant pose to win the union presidency - \$70,000 a year!

SADLOWSKI, AN INSIDE-OUT ABEL

Social Props in Steel Elections

Next February the United Steelworkers of America will hold union-wide elections to select a new international president. The \$70,000 a year post is being sought by Lloyd McBride and Ed Sadlowski. McBride represents the present reactionary leadership headed by I W Abel, while Sadlowski purports to represent the "rank and file". Let's take a look at the policies and actions of both camps to see exactly whose interests they ACTUALLY represent.

MCBRIDE RUNNING ON ABEL'S LABEL

I W Abel was originally elected president of the Steelworkers in 1964 as a "reform" candidate, opposed to the class-collaborationist policies of then union president David J McDonald. Since his election Mr Abel and his colleagues (e.g., Lloyd McBride) have brought Steelworkers the following:

1. The Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA). This agreement contains the infamous "no-strike" clause which bans strikes in basic steel unless they are approved by the international president, who of course is not "inclined" to approve them. Disputed issues are referred instead to binding arbitration.
2. The ENA extends for three years (1973-1977) and contains a clause pledging another three-year contract. The rank and file have consistently demanded one-year contracts, which only makes sense given the continual fluctuations in capitalist economy, and the corrosive effects of inflation, unemployment, rising taxes, utility costs, etc.
3. Abel hailed the ENA as a "job guarantee". In fact, since the ENA was signed the steel companies have enjoyed a profit increase of 300% per ton, while at least 63,000 steelworkers lost their jobs between 1973 and 1975.
4. Rather than taking up an active struggle against the bitter racial and national oppression within the steel industry, Abel has chosen to rely on the infamous Consent Decree. This racist edict of the capitalist judicial system forces the victims of past discrimination to forego all future legal claims against the companies in exchange for a payoff of a few hundred dollars. Its clear intent is to blunt the militant struggle of the oppressed

nationality workers, while letting the companies off the hook after decades of racism and superexploitation of the oppressed nationality workers. This is the Abel-McBride answer to national oppression and racism. In the meantime it is the oppressed nationality steelworkers who face the highest rate of unemployment (around 14%), who receive the lowest pay, and who must work the coke ovens and every other unsafe and dirty job in the industry. (80-90% of coke oven workers are Afro-Americans. The incidence of kidney cancer among such workers is 7½ times that of all other steel workers. Their lung cancer rate is twice that of other steel workers.)

5. No democracy for the rank and file. Abel has brought hundreds of locals under his wing and has stamped out all vestiges of democracy in the grand tradition of his predecessor. The rank and file were not allowed to vote on the Experimental Negotiating Agreement, for instance. In local 1981 in Los Angeles, the rank and file overwhelmingly passed a resolution demanding that union meetings be translated into Spanish since the local membership is 80% Spanish-speaking. Abel's stooge, District 38 director Frank McKee, rejected the resolution out of hand. McKee is running for Secretary-Treasurer on the McBride slate.

At the recent National Steelworkers Convention in Las Vegas, Abel stacked the proceedings with hundreds of non-elected staff appointees and staff secretaries. This is the same man who said in 1964 in his election campaign: "The basic democratic traditions of our union have been subverted over a number of years. To an ever-greater degree the decision making process has been concentrated at the top. We intend to restore rank-and-file control over basic policies."

In the face of the Sadlowski threat, Abel-McBride machine beat up one Sadlowski reformer at the national convention in Las Vegas, and shot another in the neck in Houston, Texas. We can expect these kinds of tactics to escalate as the campaign heats up.

6. Abel-McBride support capitalist politician Jimmy Carter, and well they might. Carter proposed to develop "National Economic Planning",

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a planning board made up of the capitalists, the labor bureaucrats and the state which will set productivity goals, enforce wage controls and take other measures to ensure capitalist profit. Carter hides the actual intent of this Board behind a shower of words -- "planning to meet the needs of all the people", etc. Abel-McBride do likewise in their pamphlet entitled "Collective Bargaining" in which they say:

"It is the responsibility of government to direct the economic system to guarantee it serves human needs, not just the motives of private, powerful corporations."

So, we can serve "human needs" by having capitalist government direct the economic system. As we have pointed out before this plan is no different than that of the fascist "corporate state" of Benito Mussolini.

7 Abel-McBride have tied the steelworkers to support of the fascist Zionist state of Israel. They actively promote the sale of Israeli war bonds which help to finance the brutal terrorism committed by the Zionist army against the Palestinian people -- such as the regular napalming and bombing of Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

8 Rather than seeking to unite all steelworkers through the common struggle against capitalism, and especially against national oppression faced by the minority workers, Abel-McBride have pledged to oppose all efforts to increase the hiring and promotion of national minorities. They refer to such measures as "reverse discrimination". This is a blatant attempt to scare Anglo workers with the fear that they will lose their jobs because of "pushy" Blacks, Chicanos, etc. (McBride pamphlet entitled "Involvement With the Union")

SADLOWSKI

Ed Sadlowski was elected president of District 31 of the United Steelworkers in 1974, even though Abel stuffed the ballot box. He rode a wave of powerful rank and file anger at the Abel leadership into office. In contrast to Abel's OPEN class collaboration, Sadlowski promised democracy and a policy of struggle against the companies. He claimed to be against the ENA, and for the right to strike, to wage a hard struggle for the rights of national minority workers, etc.

The facts

1 Sadlowski stands shoulder to shoulder with Abel-McBride in supporting the Consent Decree as the "answer" to national oppression in steel. He has not lifted a finger to organize the many new steel plants like those being set up in industrial parks north of Chicago. These shops contain a significant number of Mexicano, Chicano and Black workers.

2 According to an official of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service there has been "no dramatic difference" in the number or nature of arbitration cases in District 31 since Sadlowski's election into office, (THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 8/24/76.) In other words, Sadlowski is doing no better than his Abel-backed predecessor in fighting workers grievances.

3 40,000 steelworkers from District 31 were thrown out of work by Republic Steel in 1975. Sadlowski didn't do a thing about it.

4 Sadlowski supports Jimmy Carter and his plans for state monopoly capitalism. What better man to give credibility to Carter's Planning Board than the "left" sounding Sadlowski?

5 Sadlowski supports Zionism and will continue the Abel-McBride policy of active aid to that racist state.

6 Sadlowski has backed off on the right to strike issue and now confines himself to "protests" about the undemocratic way the ENA was passed. He is trying to blur the issue here -- whether or not the labor bureaucrats can deprive the steelworkers of one of their most effective weapons in the class struggle -- the strike.

7 At the Steelworkers Convention held in Las-



Communists and class conscious workers must take up patient work in the trade unions - must expose the social props with FACTS and at the same time prove their ability to organize and lead class struggle

Vegas this year, Sadlowski refused to raise the issue of right to strike even though at least 500 delegates were looking to him for leadership in this struggle. Sadlowski showed himself a true politician when he chose instead to "create a fuss" around the question of dues, a minor issue in comparison, and to keep his mouth shut on the ENA.

8 After several Black steelworkers were beaten up by white thugs and Klan elements in District 31, a member of Sadlowski's machine, Local 1033 President Frank Guzzo, actively opposed rank and file efforts to mobilize against these fascist assaults. He instead forced through a resolution calling on Mayor Daly (1) and the Chicago police to end this terror. These are the same Chicago police who joined a racist mob earlier in the year in throwing rocks and bottles at open housing demonstrators.

TOOLS OF CAPITALISM

In order to maintain their system, the capitalists realize that they must control the trade unions. The huge trade union struggles of the 1930's showed them that a revolutionary trade union movement, under communist leadership (the 30's trade union movement was led in large part by the then revolutionary Communist Party USA), could shatter the foundations of their power. After jailing, intimidating or buying off much of the communist leadership in the trade unions, the capitalists installed a number of faithful bureaucrats in union leadership at fat salaries, supplied from the superprofits obtained from the exploitation of many countries of the Third World. These old-line bureaucrats like George Meany, I. W. Abel, Frank Fitzsimmons, Ted Brennan, etc. pursue an open policy of class collaboration and do little to conceal their partnership with the capitalists. These bureaucrats are unashamedly pro-capitalist, (Abel let the steel companies use his picture and endorsement in their campaign to increase productivity), were consistent supporters of U.S. imperialist aggression in Viet Nam, sat on Nixon's Wage Control Board and generally do everything in their power to drive all genuine Communists and sincere trade union militants out of the unions.

But with the intensification of the current imperialist crisis, with the resultant increase in unemployment, speed-up, etc., rank and file discontent has grown to "alarming" proportions. No longer can the capitalists control the unions with their old guard union hacks. No, another type of social prop is needed; a type which maintains a militant facade, which "talks tough" but acts meek, a militant reformist who would do no more to challenge the rule of capitalism than George Meany et al. Out comes the bankroll and voila! We now have a new set of bureaucrats -- of the type of Cesar Chavez, Arnold Miller, and Ed Sadlowski. Cesar Chavez utilizes the righteous national sentiments of the rural proletariat to build the United Farm Workers and then he made an open call to deport undocumented Mexican workers, while at the same time wiping out every trace of democracy in the union and channeling the struggle of the farmworkers along the legislative path, the path

of reliance on the capitalist state, and support for agri-businessman Jimmy Carter. Miller preaches "democracy" and then defies the will of 120,000 striking miners and orders them back to work.

And now the capitalists, who give us the "choice" of Jimmy Carter or Gerald Ford, give us Lloyd McBride and Ed Sadlowski. It's like being between a rock and a hard place.

The rottenness and misery of capitalism make socialist revolution necessary. Its internal contradictions make such a revolution inevitable. But we will never have such a revolution if we follow the lead of any social prop. They are paid to save capitalism, whereas every class-conscious worker wants to destroy this evil system. Every communist and advanced worker has the duty to expose all the maneuvers of the social props. This calls for careful, patient and painstaking work inside of the trade unions. It will not do to just yell "social prop" at the top of our lungs. We must recognize that many workers do not yet see through the militant reformists like Sadlowski. They must be exposed with facts at every possible turn. But this too will be insufficient to win the trade unions to Communist leadership if we fail to combine our exposures with the ability to organize and lead the class struggle inside the trade unions. Lenin gave this simple advice to the Italian Communists who needed to know how to isolate their social props. This wisdom should guide our work.

"The victory of the Italian Communists is assured if they do not isolate themselves from the masses, if they do not lose patience in the hard work of exposing all of Serrati's (an opportunist) chicanery to rank-and-file workers in a practical way, if they do not yield to the very easy and very dangerous temptation to say 'minus a' whenever Serrati say 'a', if they steadily train the masses to adopt a revolutionary world outlook and prepare them for revolutionary action." (LCW, vol 33, p 211)

The necessity to do work of THIS type on a countrywide scale, if we are to win over the trade unions, brings out in bold relief our need for a Communist party which can coordinate our present scattered and disjointed efforts, which can ensure consistency in our principles, and which can guarantee a concerted movement to democratize all of the trade unions and to win them to Communism. It is only a Communist PARTY which can lead a united countrywide effort for the equality of languages and peoples in the unions, which can win the struggle for the equality of women workers, etc. Our present efforts can, and necessarily are scattered and small by comparison. And such will be the case until our party is built. We must increase our efforts as a most effective way of building that party.

REFORMISM AND REVISIONISM

As we stated in the article "Right Opportunism is the Main Danger" (REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE, vol 1, #3, 1976), we will have no socialist revolution in the United States without winning the working class away from the influence of reformism. The historical and social conditions of the U.S. create an exceedingly favorable climate for reformist illusions among the masses. With the increased decay of capitalism comes a corresponding striving on the part of the workers towards socialism. The capitalists stand ready to meet this striving with both force and their "left" social props like Sadlowski. It is no doubt merely a matter of time until these props -- petty-bourgeois liberals like Michael Harrington, all sorts of "liberal" capitalists, and the "left" labor bureaucrats -- form a "Labor" party or a social-democratic party of some type. Working hand in hand with this effort (to thwart the revolution) is the revisionist Communist Party of the USA which has formed an alliance with Sadlowski and every other social-democratic bureaucrat they can find, (e.g., Cesar Chavez). In this way they hope to secure more spots in the bureaucratic hierarchy from which they will be able to seize the trade unions for revisionism. For instance, while Communists are telling the steelworkers that only the overthrow of capitalism can end

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all of the misery they face, the revisionists tell them the following:

"Why should the steel industry moguls be allowed to manipulate elected officials from steel-making districts? Why can't steel, metal and other workers, who live, work and vote in these districts -- who outnumber the denizens of the executive suites better than 25 to 1 -- ELECT THEIR OWN white, Black, Chicano, men and women, young and old? Is it not time that we elect workers as government officials?"

"With the power and potential resources of the millions of members in the USWA and the trade unions as a whole, workers could be the majority in every legislative body in the nation -- federal, state and local. Then there would be no doubt about the ability and capacity to enact programs in the interests of the people, such as the job security program, a peoples tax program, an end to racist practices, overcoming the crisis in the cities, etc., etc." (IT TAKES A FIGHT TO WIN, p 52, Gus Hall, head of the CPUSA)

It is clear that Sadlowski and his type are the perfect partners of the CPUSA, and their alliance reveals clearly the unity of reformism and revisionism.

At the same time the CPUSA hopes to satisfy the growing mass striving towards socialism with social-imperialism instead. They want the trade unions to adopt a pro-"detente" stance, to push for more trade with the militaristic Soviet Union. At a time when the world moves closer to a world war -- a war likely to be started by the Soviet Union -- such a position is nothing less than treachery. At a time when vigilance and clarity about the USSR is required, the CPUSA spreads lies and confusion.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY

Just as dangerous, in their own way, as the CPUSA is the so-called Revolutionary Communist Party. We have pointed to the revisionist essence of the RCP for some time now, and each passing day provides new evidence of the truth of our statements.

Rather than exposing Sadlowski and pointing out the path of independent revolutionary struggle to the working class, the RCP in one of their mass papers, "The Steelworker", says that Sadlowski:

"...reflects the sentiments and aspirations of the rank and file..."

"Sادلowski reflects what we, the rank and file, have fought for and built."

Very interesting. Sadlowski refuses to fight the ENA, he supports the Consent Decree, Jimmy Carter and Zionism. And yet he reflects what the "rank and file have fought for"! Only a confirmed liar would preach such trash. But to do it in the name of Communism makes one a social prop just like Sadlowski and the CPUSA, (Another former "anti-revisionist" group, the Communist Labor Party, is openly and uncritically supporting the Sadlowski slate).

MAINTAIN OUR INDEPENDENCE

It is not our task to support one social prop (Sادلowski) against another (McBride). It is rather our task to expose both McBride and Sadlowski and to point out the path of independent action by the class. This path consists of a program of class struggle and is aimed at putting the unions into the hands of the class-conscious workers. To do this we must learn how to utilize every available opportunity to show the working class its own power, its own capacity for struggle and organization, and to lead them ON THIS BASIS towards socialist revolution. This alone is our guarantee of exposing all the social props and of turning the trade unions into real strongholds of communism. ■