As we enter the last stages of the campaign, the three major candidates seem to be Ford, Carter, and Apathy—not necessarily in that order. Even so, we cannot afford to allow this event to go by without analysis. If the left has been almost entirely unable to use this election to rouse and educate and organize working people, then at least we must try to figure out how this impotence can be avoided in the future.

No longer is Vietnam the burning issue it was four years ago what with the defeat of the U.S. in South East Asia. No longer are the eyes of the people turned toward another part of the world. In the last four years, the U.S. and the rest of the capitalist powers began sliding into what they all feared was the beginning of another Depression, with inflation first climbing up to the double digits, and then unemployment doing the same. Only the most massive increase in governmental debt in history, to the tune of some $80 billion, under a balance-the-budget President, has brought the economy out of its noseive—temporarily. There has been no recovery in many parts of the country, only a leveling off, and in some places not even that. The other ingredient of the "cure" has been a massive attack on labor and living standards generally, with big cutbacks in services and freezes or rollbacks of wages in many cities and areas.

It seems unlikely that things can go very much longer without an even more rapid decline, and an even more furious attack on working people. Long gone are the relatively prosperous 50's.

Gone too are the turbulent 60's, with the anti-war movement and third world movements and revolts in this country. What seems to be approaching us now is a direct economic and political attack on working people generally, and sooner or later this cannot help but drive working people to fight against these attacks and begin to waken from the relative lethargy that has afflicted them for several decades since WW II and before. For these decades the working class has remained in the hip pocket of the corrupt union bosses and the Democratic politicians. And indeed there was good reason. The union leaders did seem to be able to come up with wage increases fairly regularly, and the Democrats seemed to be able to come thru with a few reforms to patch up some of the rough spots—so why rock the boat? This certainly doesn't mean that working people have any great faith in the union bosses or the Democratic hacks—they certainly don't. But what alternative is there?—and besides—things are not all that people would say.

Nebulosity and nothingness

Which brings us up to the present. Once again the Democratic Party is casting itself in its traditional mold of the party of reform, the party which gives the poor and the working people the better break and so forth. Carter's rhetoric is safe and nebulous as can be and he has committed himself to very little, if indeed anything at all. Nevertheless, he manages to convey the impression that he somehow intends to do something to protect the poor and working people against the attacks that have been mounted against them by the Ford administration and the Nixon administration before him.

As for Ford, he has gradually become a known entity, a Nixon with the rough edges removed of with a lobotomy even. Ford's sole appeal is his incumbency and blandness.

He very narrowly avoided being ousted by the more fanatical wing of reaction—Reagan and Co. Indeed, in some respects the Ford-Carter contest is already an anti-climax. It is less interesting than the Reagan-Ford contest was and is certainly rousing less passion.

He has so far managed to tip-toe along the edge of economic catastrophe, without yet falling off the precipice. For lack of anything better, he has the more or less automatic support of all the more conservative elements in the population. He has no hope of winning much support among the worse off section of the working class, or among Black and other third world people.
Carter's rhetoric is much more appealing to working people, and third world people in particular. There is nothing new about this rhetoric. They have heard it before, and trampled into the dirt every solemn pledge given to the voters before the election. So that while Carter's is by the same worn footsteps, it is highly questionable as to how much of it he will be able to cash in on at the polls.

As it is now, Mayor Beame, Gov. Carey, and Carter's Democratic cronies around the country, continue slashing away at wages, jobs and services, all the time with tears in their eyes, pleading for the working people to understand the fiscal necessities involved. And the union hacks, after a few shrill but phoney barks, meekly go along with the program hand in hand with their Democratic cronies, they too explaining the necessities to the workers. Just as Beame and Co., in the end do the bidding of Ford and Simon, so will Carter in the end do the bidding of magnates of high finance. He may do it apologetically a la Beame, but there is no reason in the world to think he will act differently. Every section of capital, in this economic crisis, seeks a way out at the expense of the working class.

Why can't there be a repeat of the Roosevelt phenomenon? There are several good reasons why it is unlikely in the extreme. First, Roosevelt himself was not a new dealer in the 1930's. It was only after a few years of his first term that he embarked on the road of making concessions to the working people and launched his campaign of mild reform and public works. He did not make the mistake of a militant labor movement, a labor movement which has yet to re-attain that same level of militancy. The policy he followed building up huge public debts is no longer a novelty. It has been pursued by the Nixon and Ford administrations more than anyone else before, in spite of their rhetoric to the contrary. The mountain of debt sitting atop the economy cannot be expanded indefinitely without bringing on a wild hyperinflation at some point. Finally, the U.S. is no longer a young imperialist power as it still was in the Roosevelt era. The U.S. is a declining imperialist power, no longer able to make the concessions to its working classes that it was able to in years before. The Rooseveltian rhetoric is still with us, but the substance is gone; substantial concessions are no longer in the cards. The U.S. workers face an increasingly bitter struggle just to hang on to what they have.

In one sense Carter is a greater danger than Ford or even Reagan, in the sense that he delays the realization by the working class that it cannot depend upon anything but its own strength to defend itself. People may think much less of a statement pointing to the fact that Carter talks much less ominously than Ford (or Reagan) but that is the precise point. Such talk merely soothes people and diverts them from realizing clearly the only real alternative they have. This talk is completely unreliable, and will quickly melt into oblivion in the face of the economic realities faced by Carter's capitalist masters.

PHOEBE ISN'T ENOUGH

We can no longer delay turning to the theme—what's in all this for working people? There are some working people who say—phooey on the whole business, the whole thing is a waste of time—and these working people would receive considerable sympathy in their attitude from a good part of the left here. There's another sector that says, well, look at Ford, I doubt Carter will do much either but what else is there?

There is a great deal in common between these two views really. They both 'grow out of political impotence and apathy. On the one hand, there is really little faith in the Democratic politicians, and yet on the other hand the working class here does not even picture itself as a class on any very clear terms, as for example do most of the European working classes, not to mention workers in the rest of the world. The working class here is only just beginning to wake from its decades long sleep which was induced by imperialist prosperity (a prosperity which is now vanishing). So the alternative to political indiff erentism—what comes out to the same thing, having a sigh and pulling down the Democratic lever—is not readily available to the U.S. working class.

What is that alternative? That the working class begin to break away from the two party system, from the two parties of big business and begin to form its own party, a working class party, begin to run its own candidates and demand that the working class in support of the working class as well. What is needed is a new party which makes as its basic platform and premise the fact that there are different classes in this society, that the interests of working people, the working class, and the capitalists are opposed, that the working class needs a party not of one or another sector of the rich and wealthy, but a party of its own with which to fight against the capitalists.

In view of the low level of class consciousness at the present time, it would be ridiculous to think of such a party having any kind of advanced platform, never mind revolutionary platform. What is needed is a party that takes the first steps in the direction of separating the working class from the Democrats as well as various middle class parties of the right and left, convincing the working class to rely on
In a world where the rich and powerful control the majority of the world's resources, the struggle for justice and equality is a constant. Chinese leader Mao Zedong reminded his nation of the importance of education and the need for a united front to face the challenges of the time. Throughout history, education has been a powerful tool for change, enabling individuals to understand their rights and the means to fight for them.

Mao Zedong's vision of a collective future, where the people are in control of their own destiny, resonates with the ideals of the modern world. The principles of democratic participation and social justice are at the core of modern democracy. In this context, the Chairman's words serve as a reminder of the enduring relevance of Mao's vision.

In conclusion, the legacy of Mao Zedong continues to inspire millions around the world. His leadership and the principles he advocated for continue to shape the course of history. The struggle for a more just and equitable world remains a central focus for many, and the Chairman's words serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration for those who continue to fight for a better tomorrow.