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 Mensheviks followers did reflect certain erroneous tendencies in the work as a whole. And it was as the Party's revolutionary leadership intensified its efforts to get back into 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 bulls who have tried to block their path. 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 questioning the capitalist system as the enemy and pointing to proletarian revolution as the goal of the workers' struggle.

In defense of the overall struggle 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 miner's 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 struggle.

The two line struggle began to come to a head at the Second Plenary Session of the First Central Committee in 1978, 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 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 of the Party as a whole to get bogged down in the day-to-day economic struggle.

Among the main errors of the Mensheviks were the following:

- They were the exclusive properly of a few "hotshots" and "assistants" to the rank and file—let alone to make revolution.
- The Mensheviks were concerned, putting forward a revolutionary political line meant that they would be "islated from the masses." In opposition to the line of the Party they promoted pragmatism—whatever works is what's correct, judge everything by immediate results. For these people, the masses can learn all they need to know through their particular, economic struggles. Advanced ideas are the exclusive property of a few "hotshots" and "assistants" 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 and let alone 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 about the significance of this battle, why it was important to the working class and why it was so 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 local contract battle, 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." It was said that the mass support for the Mensheviks was too high and wouldn't unite the biggest number of workers possible. They couldn't see the difference of the new Miners Right to Strike Committee; they said that if the Miners Right to Strike Committee represented the most radical elements in the ranks of the union, they were consistently fighting in the interests of rank and file miners; that it was "hot" exactly because it had a mass base, not because it had a Menshevik line. And the Mensheviks were not alone; there were some union and file unity, these guys published a rag called the Miners Right to Strike Committee.

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 Mensheviks couldn't put out the Miners Right to Strike Committee, the Mensheviks couldn't put out the Miners Right to Strike Committee, the Mensheviks couldn't put out the Miners Right to Strike Committee, the Mensheviks couldn't put out the Miners Right to Strike Committee. This is a powerful contract fight; it's a contract fight where the Miners Right to Strike Committee has a very important role and, not only in building the strike, in the contract fight. 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 contract, nothing more.

After sharp struggle went on around the publication of the RANK AND FILE UNITY, and the Miners Right to Strike Committee 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% cutbacks in miners' medical coverage which came as a result of the '76 contract fight was a direct attack on the miners' and their families, pensioners and widows. The UMWA Health and Welfare Funds' trustees blamed these outrageous cuts on "unfavorable health districts near them because the Unity didn't deal with the medical fund cuts. It exposed the lies of the capitalists that the miners were to blame. Committee members got out the facts that the real aim of the cuts was not simply an attack on miners' rights but a calculated attempt to cut rank and file movement, and their very ability to fight back. The cutbacks were a calculated attempt to turn 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 the medical cutbacks. The Mensheviks' basic position, the Mensheviks' pet scheme, the Mensheviks' darling of the union, the Mensheviks' "futuristic"" downstairs." The new contract was approved, the medical cuts were implemented and all along the leading Mensheviks' line in this area was significant not because of the outrageous tendencies in the work as a whole. And it was their fundamental orientation to pimp off the Party's revolutionary leadership intensified its efforts to get back into 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.

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

The Menshevik line in the Menshevik swamp actively tried to sabotage the Miners Right to Strike Committee around the significance of this battle, why the main demands of the rank and file put forward by the Committee were key. But from the beginning of the local contract battle, 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 direct opposition to the advance represented by the CC Report were the red dirt kids for the developing and building class-wide support for the miners. Their ac
May Day charts Revolutionary Course

Workers gathered in dozens of cities across the country to celebrate May Day, International Workers' Day. The celebrations brought together workers from the front ranks of many of the key battles against the capitalist enemy. In Madison, Wisconsin, 30 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 in their own town, but throughout the country. For those who have struggled for the Masses in the NUWO, thus hoping to get around and bury the Miners Right to Strike Committee, arguing that it would grow despite their opposition, it was an easy flip to the mineworkers' struggle, making it a more militant AFL-CIO instead of the NUWO. Thus it is no surprise that the Miners Right to Strike Committee, the NUWO would not be an advance for the working class and why broad numbers of workers should be looking to the future of the miners' struggle one of the new struggles in the coming miners' contract battle one of the new

But as important as the linking together of the various struggles, 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 deep understanding that the working class must and will bring forward a whole new world, a whole new state of the world economy. It was with this understanding of the need for the working class to take its rightful place at the front line 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 day 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 in these battles, but are becoming increasingly aware of why their class alone is capable of leading these fights for a new society, a socialist society, against the bourgeoisie.

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 of their particular group, into the whole working class, and how this struggle has unified the working class as the revolutionary class in society, so that the working class must and will bring forward a whole new world, a whole new state of the world economy.

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.
Continued from page 5

spin—meaning, will we be able to make a big splash without splitting the Party?

Even in advance of a strike—and in the absence of some immediate victory— was important for the NUWO to take the contract battle, build it as strongly and sum up the experience of the largest number of workers. But even while these Mensheviks were slipping around like a bunch of street corner hustlers who have been caught out, the strike was going "from row to row." It was clear that the miners would strike and that it would be important to protect the gains.

The Mensheviks failed to see what was at stake for the working class in this battle. What they did not grasp was the deepening conflict between the class of capitalists and that of workers. Some local chapters of the NUWO did break through the Menshevik bloc, but they had been sitting around too long. The working class was pretty well subjugated while a couple of hotshots watched for indications that things were "spinning" in coalfields.

Building "Support" for the Miners Right to Strike

When the strike did develop into something the Mensheviks could term "big and bad"—something they could pump off—they did take up building a "support" movement. But it was the wrong kind of "support." The ideas of "support" was to timidly go out to the working class on the narrowest, trade union basis. One gets the impression that the Mensheviks did not understand 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 question was the social base of the Mensheviks in the coalition government. They were all coming up against—and will even more sharply in the future. "Can you fight such aIan, or are you just going to jeep around with your eyes glued firmly to the backs of the masses."

The article "Miners Struggle at a Crossroads," in the September 1977 issue of Revolution, was obviously aimed at these Mensheviks. This article was a real contribution to the development of the revolutionary approach to the theoretical journal and the mass movement of the working class. The Mensheviks in the coalfields would have been too exposed at that point to open a discussion on this question.

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 Mensheviks are never able to "link up" with the working class because it was an accurate summation and concentration of the key problems and questions that had arisen out of the struggle. The Mensheviks were not sure of the role and the functioning of the whole capitalist system, that under the leadership of communists the struggle must become a "struggle against oppression and the system of wages". Very itself.

A whole 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 companies. They wanted to know what the real day-to-day battles 'that the miners were fighting! What was the purpose? What was "oppression"? The time had come clear that this was Just not enough that you have to fight the effects of exploitation, that the fight must be taken into the economic and political life of the whole capitalist system, that under the leadership of communists the struggle must become a "struggle against oppression and the system of wages". Very itself.

Party Press...

Writing a few months later in an internal document in an article on the grip of these revisionists, a glibly

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Now that our Party has won an important battle they will be able to support the miners. The struggle is for the whole of the profession, rather than their own narrow, self-serving devils.

Against the Menshevik Party's revolutionary leadership unfolded struggle and education aimed at combating the capitalist and pragmatic trend—par

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June 1978

Not surprisingly, these Mensheviks have a great deal in common with the Mensheviks in the coalfields. They had been caught out, were sitting around too long while the working class was pretty well subjugated. The Mensheviks now in the NUWO leadership went on summing up their experience of the struggle to "build the struggle. Build the struggle!"

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his idea that Black people would express more emotion and terror with disobedience of "unjust laws"—although King failed to add that he only considered local laws unjust—the CP(ML) was more revolutionary, more violence and "love" for the cops, courts, segregationists, bigots, etc. "Forgiveness" and "self-defence" meant "attack". But in the strikes of the 1960s Black miners always had to prove themselves better than those white. King's strategy was to turn them into the winning cards. He was a successful politician 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 revolution in a city like Birmingham! Earlier that year JKF had told King that he just couldn't take advantage of the opportunities created by this "real surprise to virtually all coal miners!"

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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 major demonstration in Washington, a demonstration which would go beyond hitting at local authorities to hitting the White House, taking their struggle to the government. "The apathy of the Negro masses is the result of the fact that they have been told by their leaders for so long that there is no fight in it at all. It was more of a stroll than a march". In Birmingham, Bayard Rustin, the NAACP and Martin Luther King, the whole thing was turned into a lukewarm pep rally of "non-violent resistance".

When JFK at first opposed the idea of this action, King replied, "The Negroes are already in the struggle for their existence. We can get them to go into the streets. If they are bound to be in the streets in any case, is it not better that they be led by organizations dedicated to making speeches against it because of what they saw at the March on Washington. For several years there had been a growing sentiment among Black people for a major demonstration in Washington, a demonstration which would go beyond hitting at local authorities to hitting the White House, taking their struggle to the government. "The apathy of the Negro masses is the result of the fact that they have been told by their leaders for so long that there is no fight in it at all. It was more of a stroll than a march". In Birmingham, Bayard Rustin, the NAACP and Martin Luther King, the whole thing was turned into a lukewarm pep rally of "non-violent resistance".

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