

THE COMMUNIST

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

"A Communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against all incorrect ideas and actions so as to



consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist." Mao Tsetung

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MASS RESISTANCE TO POLICE REPRESSION GROWS IN SOUTHWEST

In the last year, in the state of Texas alone, there have been 16 officially recognized cases of Chicanos or Mexicanos (Mexican nationals) killed "accidentally" or under the most questionable of circumstances by law enforcement agencies. And these are only the cases that have gained the attention of the state authorities themselves. Chicanos in Texas say that they know of at least twice that many.

These killings, however, are themselves only part of an overall situation that characterizes the Southwest. In February of this year the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) submitted to the US department of Justice a report listing 30 fully verified cases of police murder or severe police brutality against Chicanos in the Southwest over the last two years. This report also made reference to 40 other cases which were not yet "fully verified" and still under in-

vestigation by MALDEF.

MASS MOVEMENT AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION

In response to the killings a mass movement is growing throughout the Southwest demanding an end to this violent assault on Chicanos and Mexicanos and prosecution of police murderers. For example:

-- On February 11th 300 people staged a militant rally in El Paso Texas demanding justice for Danny Vasquez. Vasquez was a 17 year old Chicano killed on January 23rd. The circumstances were that Vasquez protested the arrest of one of his friends for allegedly being involved in an insignificant fist-fight among youths after a dance. According to witnesses the response of the arresting officer to this protest was to cock his shotgun, rest it on Vasquez's chest, and order Vasquez to shut up because it was none of his business. According to witnesses Vasquez pushed the loaded shotgun away from his chest.



photo El Mestizo

IN EL PASO MILITANT RALLY DEMANDS JUSTICE

The officer then shoved Vasquez, re-aimed the shotgun at his chest, and after an interval of a few seconds fired. An investigation by El Paso authorities determined that the killing was "accidental". The movement demanding prosecution of the killer and justice for Danny Vasquez continues to grow.

--On February 25th, 1,000 people from Odessa, Texas and Big Spring, Texas marched in protest against the wave of police murders of Chicanos and Mexicanos in the Southwest.

--In March 1978 in New Mexico people marched through downtown Albuquerque demanding an investigation and prosecution for the killing of Andrew Ramirez. Ramirez died after being clubbed on the head twice with a large flashlight. The circumstances lead-

ing to his death was resistance to police attempts to break up a domestic family quarrel that he was involved in. Family members who were present say the beating was unnecessary. A committee demanding justice for Andrew Ramirez and establishment of a civilian review board to control the police has developed in response to the killing.

THE HOUSTON REBELLION

-- On May 6th a commemorative service was held in Moody Park, the Houston barrio, by a coalition organized to keep the case of Jose Campos Torres from being swept under the rug by police authorities. One year earlier Torres had been beaten unconscious by five policemen after he had

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UMW BUREAUCRATS SQUASH RANK AND FILE RECALL MOVEMENT

The democratic struggle of the United Mine Workers (UMW) rank and file to remove from office union leaders they feel have betrayed the miners' struggle was casually dismissed by an International Executive Board (IEB) vote of 14-5 on July 27.

A movement to recall UMW President Arnold Miller has developed from charges that Miller knew about cutbacks in the miners' health benefits before the June 1977 union elections but withheld that information until after he was elected to his second four year term. Fueled by the rank and file's anger at the recent contract sell-out, the recall movement quickly gathered over 31,000 supporters throughout the coal fields.

But on July 27, the IEB ruled that the recall movement failed to substantiate its charges against Miller and blocked any further steps in the recall procedure. The disdain shown by the UMW bureaucrats for union democracy was typified by Secretary-Treasurer Willard Esselstyn who brushed off the Board action with the comment, "It's a procedural matter."

The "procedure" the IEB used violated the spirit of the UMW constitution. According to recall provisions in the constitution, only 5% of the membership need petition for recall to get the process started. The 31,000 signatures gathered by the Miners For Re-

call group was well over the necessary 14,000. Upon receiving these petitions the union's Secretary-Treasurer should have sent formal recall petitions to all locals. Then, if 30% of the membership signed these petitions, the IEB would have been required to order a recall election. Because of the Board's action, the 31,000 signatures are locked in a safe and no formal petitions were sent out.

According to Anvil Sykes, a Board member from District 28 in Virginia, "There's nothing in the constitution that says it (the matter of recall--ed) is to be brought before the IEB in any way." This view was shared by Donald Lawley from Arkansas District 21 who said, "I've read the constitution and I don't see where the Board has any jurisdiction."

By blocking further steps in the recall procedure, a handful of men on the IEB, led by Miller, supplanted the decision making power of thousands of rank and file miners.

Miller and his cronies who got into office on the Miners For Democracy platform have shown the poverty of their commitment to union democracy. In the typical hypocritical manner of the labor aristocracy, they will raise democracy to serve their own ambitions but then slam the door shut when challenged.

The lock-out of the rights

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ECONOMIC WEAPONS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST HEGEMONISM

An essential feature of the united front against superpower hegemonism is the struggle by third world countries in the economic sphere. Facts prove that in recent years the imperialist powers, and especially the two superpowers, have become dependent on the raw materials and mineral resources of the third world countries. This puts third world countries in control of a powerful weapon to throw off the shackles of imperialism, social imperialism, and hegemonism.

For example, Africa alone is the source of over 30% of the world's diamonds, 66% of the gold, 50% of the phosphorous, 40% of the platinum, and 30% of the uranium. In addition, it is the primary source of several strategic minerals used in the production of mineral alloys and nuclear fuels such as platinum, germanium, cadmium, titanium, and tantal-

um. Zaire, Zambia, Azania, and Namibia are the four largest producers of minerals in Africa, supplying over 80% of the world's diamonds, over 60% of the cobalt, and significant percentages of manganese,

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OXNARD DEMONSTRATES AGAINST THE KU KLUX KLAN

On August First the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) attempted to make a public showing of the racist film "Birth of A Nation" in Oxnard, California.

The experience that local forces gained in organizing resistance to the Klan offensive in Oxnard provides valuable lessons for all comrades on how both reformism and adventurism can undermine our struggle against this growing threat.

On the one hand we must staunchly resist any right opportunist tendency to bow to reformist illusions that belittle the threat posed by the Klan. On the other hand we must also resist the ultra-"leftists" who believe that the masses will be mobilized into struggle against the Klan by the "heroic" efforts of a small band of "super-revolutionaries".

CONCRETE CONDITIONS

There are a number of specific conditions that brought the Klan to Oxnard. This growing community located north of Los Angeles has tripled in population in the last 25 years and now numbers 100,000. The vast majority of the increasing population have been Chicanos and Mexican nationals who now comprise half the population.

The organizing work of the Klan focused on Mexican immigration and whined about struggles of the people for equal opportunity in employment, education, health care, housing, etc. Demagogically, these racists also publicized their intention to use the proceeds from the film to aid white families of a young

couple who were victims of murder and rape, allegedly by Mexican youths. (The family, however, denounced this offer and any connection with the Klan, saying racism was not the issue.)

AUGUST FIRST DEMONSTRATION

When the Klan obtained a permit for their film, the local chapter of the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition, which had been organizing in the community for over a year, began mobilizing a protest demonstration.

The local media, police, and government officials immediately began their own campaign to undermine resistance to the Klan with the view that the best way to deal with these racists was to ignore the "small and insignificant sect."

THE PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

On the day of the demonstration, however, it was not the line of "ignoring the Klan" that was to be the chief detriment to organizing the struggle. Instead, Anti-Klan forces found it was the slogan of "kill off the Klan" put forward by the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) a so-called "communist" organization, that proved to be the greatest danger. The appearance of a relatively large contingent of the PLP, which has no organized presence in Oxnard, came as a surprise to the local forces organizing the demonstration. However, it was no surprise to the national television media who had been given prior notification by the PLP of their intention to "kill off the Klan" and the police who were

both in force at the demonstration.

Unable to win over the anti-Klan forces the PLP carried out its "attack" on the Klan on its own in isolation from and contrary to the tactical assessments and leadership of the other organized forces.

The police with their prior notification of the PLP's intentions were strategically placed (100-200 strong and equipped for riot duty) throughout the area, immediately swarmed in, sealed off the area, and declared that there would only be a private showing of the film for Klan members and their supporters. But, few others would have gone to see the film in any case.

The real political benefits of the KKK-PLP confrontation all went to the Klan. Following the fight the local press and authorities were able to wage a strong campaign depicting both the Klan and all anti-Klan forces as small groups of "outside agitators", enemies of equal stature.

The major political question raised by the demonstration was not the racist and national chauvinist essence of the Klan but their first amendment rights. In addition, the Klan has petitioned to come back to Oxnard in October and those who put forward that the best way to deal with the Klan is to ignore them have gained support.

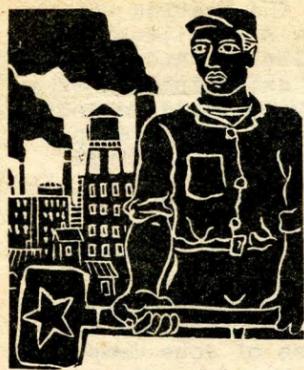
The class conscious forces who must lead the fight against the Klan must not allow themselves to be swayed by

these views or the adventurous antics of groups like the PLP.

While the Klan is small they will not be defeated by "ignoring them". This is because their views and program are not the isolated ravings of a small band of bigots. Exposures, even in the bourgeois press, have more than once clearly shown that it is only the political and financial support of the most reactionary sector of the big bourgeoisie that props up the Klan, the American Nazi Party, and other similar fascist organizations.

The racist ideology and national chauvinism of these organizations is the spearhead for the overall attack being waged on the gains made in recent years by oppressed nationalities in their struggle for political, economic, and social equality. It is hypocritical for reformists to say that they are against national oppression, yet, at the same time defend the right of others to propagate racism and national chauvinism. Our tactics for fighting the Klan cannot be affected by concern for the "rights" of the Klan. This would be as crippling as allowing our tactics for a strike to be affected by concern for the rights of scabs to cross a picket line.

On the other hand we must not allow ourselves to fall into the opposite error. While members of the Klan deserve nothing better than to be torn limb from limb this is a task that must be carried out by the masses and not small isolated groups of so-called "revolutionaries" like the PLP. It is only through class conscious ideological, political and organizational work that the masses can be mobilized against these racist and national chauvinist attacks.



FACTORY EXPOSURES

FACTORY EXPOSURES is a regular column of THE COMMUNIST. We encourage all workers and Marxist-Leninists to send in articles concerning trade union struggles, local grievances, health and safety issues and other forms of workplace abuse.

The following letters, which vividly speak to the brutality of capitalism, were sent in by two correspondents after they read the exposures in THE COMMUNIST about the April scaffold collapse disaster in West Virginia.

BRUTAL LIFE OF MEXICANO MINER

Workers Congress,

I have read "Scaffold Collapse Kills 51--follow-up article", and I remember how I lived in 1938, in a mining town called Superial, Arizona. The mine was called El Rey.

My step-father worked in the mines, and when he started coughing a lot he got tests, the doctor sent his report to the mining company and their office discharged him. He was almost 40 years old. He said, he felt like the world had come to an end because he didn't know how to work at anything else.

They didn't give him disability or unemployment checks, (because he was undocumented) only a check he had as a Bonus of \$500.00. (This is what his life was worth.)

We were starving because there wasn't any work in Mesa. There was a little work in the fields so all of us had to pick cotton, and anything else that came along.

In 1940 we started to come to California as migrant workers. In 1960, he passed away, he was only 55 years old, because of his lungs.

It made me mad, because the Mexican people didn't used to fight for their rights. There was so much poverty in Arizona when I was young.

I think the factories took advantage of the workers because when my step-father got his pay-check there was only one general store, and the pay-checks stayed there because we took out on credit for food, clothes, shoes. But the general store was run by the mining company and the checks went back, the prices were high. We used to eat meat sometimes and sweets only on payday.

I remember when he was going to work he looked so sad because he used to tell us he might not come back, we were prepared.

He said the conditions were very bad, and that there were a lot of accidents and deaths inside the mines. And that they (the bosses) didn't care for the workers. Nobody could complain or they would get fired.

BOURGEOIS LINE 'WORKERS' FAULT' EXPOSED

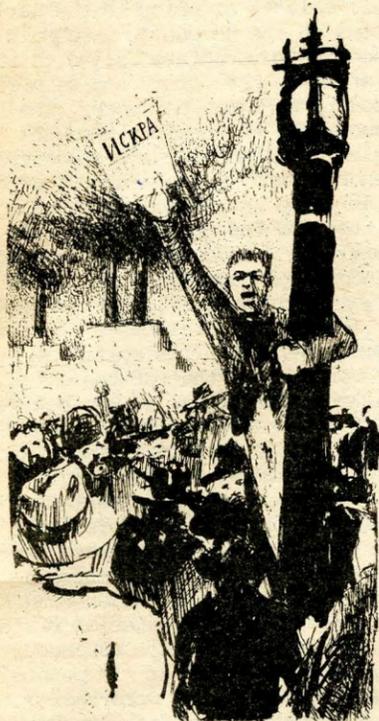
Scaffold accidents are nothing unusual. Last fall where I work three workers fell 50 feet when the scaffolding they were working on collapsed. One was critically injured and two amazingly escaped with "only" broken bones. Not long before that another worker fell 80 feet to his death when scaffolding gave way from under him. In each case the company blamed the workers for the accident. How? By saying they should have been wearing safety belts. According to company regulations, any work done 5 feet over a solid surface requires guard rails or safety belts and lines. So, their reasoning goes, the falls were the workers' own fault.

But, this bourgeois logic disregards the conditions which surround workers, and the company's responsibility for them. There is no account of the hassles and harassment in obtaining safety equipment. Or the disdain fostered by management for people who insist on it, or the speed-up that pushes workers to take risks with their lives. And yet, repeatedly, accidents are seen as the workers' own fault. The company puts out that it is laziness, carelessness, stupidity and so on, to blame others and escape their responsibility. At best they offer outdated, inadequate safety equipment coupled with harassment and maintain they have fulfilled their end of the safety deal according to the contract. Examples of this are: split planks, makeshift scaffolding, poorly or non-ventilated work areas, inadequate

breathing devices, machinery without guards, faulty rigging due to shoddy cable line or speed-up, oil and grease overspill on walking areas, ladders or gangplanks that are not secured properly, scrap, trash and other debris left around, racking noises, etc. And when an accident does happen, the company immediately pulls out their non-liability line. This is because health and safety is not seen as a right of every worker. It is seen as something to be debated at the bargaining table of contract negotiations. What it gets down to is the company sees health and safety as an obstacle and not a need. That is, an obstacle to securing more profit from production. The company put out "accidents don't just happen they are caused". And what is the cause? The conditions and attitude of the company management which is supported by most of the trade union bureaucrats. Instead of leading the rank and file in the fight for health and safety, they too resort to either putting out the line of the company (workers' fault) or they rely on OSHA to take up the fight. We know from experience that the only effective means of fighting for health and safety is relying on the direct action of the workers. Only this will force the union to militantly take up the fight for health and safety.

Employers and trade union bureaucrats say, "let's face it, this is a dangerous place to work". But we know that capitalism maintains this situation. And we know that control over production and working conditions provides a means to deal with safety hazards on the job. Therefore, the fight for health and safety is not an isolated struggle but is part of the over-all class struggle of the proletariat to gain control over our lives.

WC-ML COMMENTARY ON RWC STRIKE SUM-UP DEVELOP LEADERSHIP IN MASS WORK



This is the second of a three part series which presents a sum-up of factory work submitted by the Revolutionary Workers Collective (RWC). This part concludes RWC's own views; the third part will present the views of the Pacific Collective (M-L) relating to the same strike.

In our first commentary we focused on RWC's work with the advanced in building a core. This time we focus on their leadership in the mass work of the strike. Overall RWC's initiative, tactical flexibility, and persistent struggle against the opportunism of the trade union bureaucrats was good. Their evaluation of the strike was concrete and more thorough than most.

Moreover, they showed a basic grasp of the economist tendencies that came forward during the strike. These are the kinds of errors we have had to fight in our own organization. RWC's sum-up is an encouragement to all of us to take a more critical view of our work.

LEADERSHIP DEMANDS INITIATIVE

A vanguard cannot be forged in isolation from the everyday struggles of the proletariat. Communists must take initiative in situations like this strike to play a leading role. RWC saw "a real vacuum of leadership" from the trade union bureaucrats and seized the opportunity well. They fought for leadership in all aspects of strike work, and they have carried the struggle forward after the strike.

Guiding their initiative was the correct long-term goal of "transforming the union into a mass revolutionary organization". (RWC-see first part of series) As communists we intend to be more than an opposition group in the unions. We plan to become the leaders of the trade unions and make them into powerful weapons of the revolution in the hands of the working class.

The vacuum of leadership is present in unions and non-union plants throughout the country. Comrades need to overcome any passivity towards taking advantage of every opportunity to build leadership which can challenge that of the trade union bureaucrats. The same initiative that is required to build cores and nuclei is required to lead legal strike work, health and safety protests, recall campaigns, etc.

GUARD AGAINST SPONTANEITY

Passivity is only one weakness of our movement. Another is the tendency to be very active in the every day struggles without doing the kind of work that increases communist influence in the unions. Both weaknesses represent right opportunist tendencies that fail to transform objective conditions in a revolutionary way.

Communists work in strikes as in any reform struggle, "combining legal work with illegal work...to intensify, under its cover, the illegal work for the revolutionary preparation of the masses for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie." (Stalin, Foundations of Leninism, FLP, p.97)

But what often happens is that com-

munists get caught up by the intense legal activity of a strike situation and let their independent communist work slide and disappear. For example, while not one communist leaflet came out and RWC made inadequate preparations for their core work, they were still able to be working on the fifteen or so strike bulletins, caucus leaflets, court injunction hearings, picket lines, rallies, union meetings, "volunteer committee" meetings, caucus meetings, etc. Anyone who has done strike work knows the story well.

RWC correctly sums up these errors as "a spontaneous style of work" and "economism". These were the basic type of errors in the strike. If left unchecked they lead toward the path of reformism, where, as Stalin says, "reforms are everything, while revolutionary work is something incidental". (ibid, p. 97).

STRIKE TACTICS

Stalin says that correct tactics are "methods of struggle and forms of organization (that) make it easier for the masses to realize from experience the correctness of the revolutionary slogans". (ibid, p. 94).

While there was the lack of "revolutionary slogans" through communist literature, RWC correctly worked through several different forms of mass organization--"volunteers committee", caucus--to carry out different aspects of strike work. In applying tactics they were flexible and not mechanical.

In fact RWC's tactics responded to basic features of the strike which are common to strikes all across the country. First, the ruling class is on the offensive and trying to take away concessions from past contracts. They are using every tool of state power--court injunctions, federal mediators, police, federal troops, acts of Congress, the media, etc. Second, the working class is resisting but needs to organize its power to actually win strikes. Strikers must not only stop production but also get broad support among the working masses. Third, while the corporations represent the main enemies in strikes, the opportunism of the trade union bureaucrats is the main obstacle to powerful rank and file resistance.

It is these common features that determined the need for the different organizational forms used by RWC. Each form corresponded to major tasks in the strike. In spite of weaknesses (see our commentary in the last issue), RWC sought to lay a foundation for its mass work and to build its long term influence in the plant by consolidating a Marxist-Leninist core. The "volunteers committee" served to keep the rank and file informed on negotiations through ties with the official strike committee and organize mass activity such as rallies, pickets, fund-raisers, etc. The caucus focused on the opportunist trade union bureaucrats and the need to build leadership in the rank and file which was independent of the union bureaucracy.

Based on the common features of strikes we can predict similar tasks in any strike. How we actually develop our tactics will depend on the particular situation and our own strength. The essential thing is to make good use of the whole variety of organizational forms available to push the struggle forward.

CAUCUS AGAINST OPPORTUNISM

Perhaps RWC's best tactical contribution to the strike was to use the caucus in persistent struggle against the trade union bureaucrats, who "worked to sabotage the strike from the beginning". (RWC). RWC also correctly saw the caucus as a "basis for

future internal union struggle and an organization through which progressive forces could content for power in the union." (RWC)

The fact is that caucuses are formed time and again in unions all over the country. They are essentially mass organizations within the unions that seek to mobilize the rank and file against the existing union leadership. Sometimes caucuses are merely tools for the trade unionist opposition which is out of office and building their forces for the next elections. At other times they are a means to emphasize special issues such as women's issues or issues of special concern to oppressed nationalities. Most of the time they have their source in the need for the rank and file to develop an organizational form within the trade union to combat the opportunism of the official trade union leadership.

This is our purpose as communists--to build caucuses which will mobilize mass opposition to the opportunism of the trade union bureaucrats. In a particular situation this may mean joining an existing caucus or organizing a new one. Whichever the case, caucuses should be mass organizations in which we can develop our own independent leadership in the rank and file. Our goal is to oust the trade union bureaucrats and win union leadership positions. These positions will allow us to broaden communist activity in developing the revolutionary work of the trade unions.

Lenin has called the struggle against opportunism the "pivot of our tactics" in the trade unions (Imperialism and the Split in Socialism, LCW, vol.23,p.114). In struggling for a caucus before, during and after the strike, RWC showed a grasp of this line. According to their sum-up, the August Twentieth Movement (ATM) and the Bay Area Communist Union (BACU), in originally pushing for work only within the existing strike committee did not. This is a crucial line, for the most dangerous opportunists, says Lenin, "are those who do not wish to understand that the fight against imperialism is a sham and humbug unless it is inseparably bound up with the fight against opportunism." (Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, FLP, p.156)

As for economism in the caucus, RWC states that the "caucus's weaknesses reflected economism". We should be clear that it was not the caucus that was economist, but the communists in it. Economism narrows the scope and activity of Marxist-Leninists and we won't fault the caucus, which should be a militant mass organization, as a whole for that. Furthermore, while communists should influence caucus literature, our view there should reflect the broad democratic aims of the working class. Caucus literature is no substitute for independent communist literature, which can best link the immediate issues to "an overall understanding of capitalism".

STRIKE EVALUATION

Communists cannot initiate struggles, carry out work and then not be able to evaluate what was won and what was lost. To be able to sum-up work is an essential task of leadership. The evaluation of a strike is important for communists because we aim to become class-conscious leaders of strikes.

Our leadership may be as caucus leaders, members of a negotiating committee, business representative, etc. Whatever the form, we will always have to grapple with the question of what constitutes a victory or loss from a Marxist-Leninist point of view.

Kota says, "The value of strikes does not lie in certain immediate economic ad-

vantages alone, as the reformists and revisionists claim, but above all, in the moral and political consequences they bring about, because it is only through these actions and the class struggle that the proletariat can strengthen its revolutionary spirit and raise its consciousness." (Two Opposing Lines in the World Trade Union Movement, p. 156).

In other words, we must examine both aspects, economic and political.

In the communist press there has been a tendency to be very superficial in strike evaluation. Political gains are usually confined to generalities and economic analysis is seldom even done at all. This reflects a narrowness in our work and shallow penetration of the working class movement.

RWC's evaluation, on the other hand, represents a good start towards more thorough sum-ups. They explain how "rightism" resulted in opportunities "lost to consolidate workers around an overall understanding of capitalism and to win people to a higher level of commitment to struggle." (RWC) They begin to show what the economic package looked like in practice. This kind of evaluation is not easy and demands that more of the work appear in the communist press so that we all learn from it.

OVERCOME NARROWNESS

In discussing the district union structure RWC poses two alternatives for future work in that district. "...Either disassociate the local from the district structure so that they can control their funds and the business agents who are supposed to represent them, or work with members in other locals to take over the district structure."

There is no real choice here. We must take over the district. While that structure is used to abuse the rank and file now, in our hands the district will serve them. But even more, RWC should not limit its view to that district alone. It's not merely "work with members in other locals" but work with comrades throughout the country. RWC is part of a movement whose program seeks not only district but international leadership in all the unions.

But RWC's statement shows the tendency to define their tasks according to local activity only. This is a good example of subjectivity or a one-sided view, which comes from the fragmentation of our movement. In our recent series on revolutionary training we showed how this subjectivism is connected to bowing to spontaneity:

"If the conditions of a revolutionary's work are narrow and restricted, then the easier path is to formulate policy on the basis of the restricted framework that exists, rather than to act in terms of the broad and militant goals of communist work." (THE COMMUNIST, v. IV, no. 13)

What is necessary for RWC and other local collectives is the struggle for a broader view of their work. Even now local collectives need to adopt more of a party style of work, to think and act as a party organization in a locality. This in turn requires a conscious struggle to overcome their fragmented ties to the national movement. Otherwise they are bound to continue to operate in a one-sided subjective way. Their work will continue to reflect local priorities rather than those of the national movement as a whole.

We welcome RWC's strike sum-up as a step forward away from narrow circle activity. We encourage others to respond to RWC's views and our own commentaries. We hope this stimulates other comrades to make contributions from their own practice practice.

"Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge and such is the dialectical-materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing." (Mao Tsetung, On Practice, MSW, v. 1, p. 308).

RWC STRIKE SUM-UP: TRADE UNION TASKS

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE, WRITTEN BY THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' COLLECTIVE, CONTINUES THE STRIKE SUM-UP BEGAN IN THE LAST ISSUE.

WORK WITHIN THE UNION

We adopted the slogan, "unite the many to defeat the few" as the basis of our work within the local during the strike. The local represents workers in several shops, but workers at our plant make up about 60 per cent of the local's membership. Despite that fact, the bureaucrats, most of them drawing salaries of over \$30,000 per year, have traditionally ignored our plant.

Approximately 20 years ago, the union set up a "District" structure which has the effect of almost totally insulating the paid union officials from the control of the rank and file. They set up a District organization as an umbrella organization over the affiliated Northern California locals representing workers in scores of shops from South San Francisco to the San Joaquin Valley. All of the business agents and organizers work for the District, which is run by delegates elected from each of the 11 locals. The greatest part of the locals' funds are paid into the District, and the locals have few employees of their own. The result of this structure is that the Directing Business Representative maintains absolute authority over the District's funds and employees, all of whom owe their jobs to him. The rank and file will never be able to run the union unless they are able to either disassociate the local from the district structure so that they can control their funds and the business agents who are supposed to represent them, or work with members in other locals to take over the district structure.

The Directing Business Representative and his cohorts worked to sabotage the strike from the beginning. No effort was made to organize a strike committee until just before the strike and the only union meeting called to prepare for it was a chaotic proposal meeting at which all of the 70 or so demands put forward by individual workers were simply listed without any effort made to select priorities. The result of this was that the key demands were lost in the huge list and the negotiating committee--appointed by the chief shop steward--was without rank and file guidance. Throughout the strike, the business representatives worked to confuse and demoralize the rank and file. Soon after the strike began, when workers rejected by a margin of 1100 to 100 the company's first offer, the Directing Business Representative, without consulting the negotiating committee, invited a federal mediator to meddle in the negotiations. The negotiating committee ran him out. A few weeks later he called a meeting of the striking workers to "consider a new offer", although at the time he called the meeting no offer had been made. The company finally presented its offer the night before the meeting, with the result that the negotiating committee was unable to fully analyse it and make an informed recommendation to the rank and file. Nonetheless the offer was rejected by a 850 to 100 vote. Throughout the strike, the union officials also collaborated with the company's use of the courts to help break the militancy of the rank and file. Soon after the strike began, the company got a temporary restraining order which severely limited picketing and demonstrations near the plant. The union lawyers did not show up in court to oppose the order, nor did they appear a few weeks later when the judge issued a preliminary injunction incorporating the same restrictions. Over 100 strikers jammed the courtroom for the second hearing, never having been told by the bureaucrats that the union was not fighting the court action.

The rank and file understood that the court orders would mean nothing as long as they remained united and forceful. The injunctions were disobeyed when mass picket lines blocked the entrances to the plant after union members learned that scab work was being done by the company's supervisory personnel. The company went back to court, again without opposition from the union, to obtain contempt citations against about 100 rank and file activists. These citations could have resulted in the arrest and jailing of many key strike activists, but members of a law collective which works with the RWC intervened on the strikers' behalf and were able to stop the proceedings.

Finally, the union forced acceptance of the company's last offer by implementing an unprecedented mail ballot instead of the procedure required under the union constitution. Previously all company offers had been considered at special union meetings and voted upon by secret ballot after discussion. The mail ballot procedure was implemented despite a petition protesting it signed in one day by over 900 strikers. Rank and file members tried to get a court injunction against the mail ballot, but this time the union lawyers showed up in court, and the judge ruled, as usual, against the rank and file.

In all of these struggles we attempted to help unite the great majority of members against the trade union traitors. We worked mainly through two forms; the bulletin subcommittee of the official strike committee and a caucus. The official strike committee was selected by the chief steward and was dominated by fairly conservative, white, skilled workers. Many of them were passive members, content to leave strike organization to the union bureaucrats. Members of the rank and file, particularly shop stewards, progressive workers, and communists, organized a "volunteers committee" to help the strike committee. As members of the volunteers committee, we stressed work on the strike bulletin, which was published about 15 times during the strike. We used the bulletin mainly to publicize key contract demands and the progress of negotiations as well as to help organize events such as rallies, pickets, and fund-raising activities. The bulletin was very effective as a mass organizer as it was distributed to all strikers as they stood picket duty. This would give us the opportunity to talk with many people we had not known previously, allowing us to gauge the mood of the rank and file and to recruit people into the caucus. Our work also demonstrated to the rank and file that communists did more than talk--that in fact we were the hardest and most consistent fighters for their interests. Struggles around the publication of the bulletin also provided lessons. The bureaucrats put every possible obstacle in the way of publication: reproduction facilities were not available, there was no money for paper, the union lawyers had to approve everything in writing to avoid libel suits, etc. etc. These stalling tactics, plus the bureaucrats' betrayal during the negotiations, eventually won even a majority of the strike committee to support the publication of a bulletin criticizing the paid union officials, although many of them backed down when the bureaucrats counterattacked. In sum, our work on the bulletin committee was very positive in that: (1) It helped to unite the rank and file around the strike demands and the need to fight for them in a united and militant way; (2) It helped us make contacts with the broad rank and file, particularly important since we were so new in both the plant and the union; (3) It allowed us to demonstrate both that we were committed fighters for the rank and file and that we were sincerely

interested in strengthening the union and its role; and (4) It helped us to expose and isolate the trade union bureaucrats.

The caucus united at the height of the strike a broad range of rank and file activists. It was multi-national in fact and included experienced and young workers, with a broad range of political beliefs represented. It had four principles of unity: (1) We want a democratic union; (2) We need our union to fight for our interests on the shop floor; (3) We demand decent working conditions; and (4) We stand against all discrimination. Throughout the strike, caucus members were among the most militant and active rank and filers. It published several leaflets, most of them attempting to explain and popularize the importance of the strike demands, and consistently criticized the trade union misleadership. The caucus worked to actively mobilize the rank and file for strike activities. Within the caucus, however, there were a series of disputes over tactics, many of them with us on one side and the Bay Area Communist Movement (BACU) and the August Twenty-ninth Movement (ATM) on the other.

The disputes within the caucus reflected an overall lack of clarity about the nature and role of such a caucus, a lack of unified strike strategy, and differences concerning the correct approach to the trade union bureaucrats. During the early stages of the strike, both ATM and BACU took the position that there was no need for a caucus, that communists and progressive workers could work exclusively through the



official strike committee. We took the position that an independent forum not dominated by the bureaucrats was needed and that a caucus built during the strike would lay the basis for future internal union struggles and an organization through which progressive forces could contend for power in the union. The basic issue in this dispute was the organizations' differing views on the nature of our unity with the trade union officials during the strike. We took the position that we would unite with the bureaucrats in the struggle against the company but that we considered them to be at best vacillating and at worst backstabbing allies and that we needed to insure our independence in order to carry on struggle with them when they sabotaged the strike effort. As the discussion of the bureaucrats' role during the strike shows, our analysis was correct. It was necessary on several occasions during the strike to mobilize the rank and file against the company without the cooperation of the bureaucrats, as was done when workers demonstrated in violation of the injunction. It was also necessary to

mobilize against the bureaucrats as was done in the struggle over the mail ballots or prior to the earlier votes on the company's proposals when the bureaucrats failed to take a stand on the offers and we organized to promote "no" votes. The caucus was the vehicle through which these mobilizations occurred. Other groups in the plant - particularly the anti-discrimination committee and the union Negotiating Committee - on occasion played independent and progressive roles in organizing and mobilizing workers.

The caucus' weaknesses reflected economism. While its agitation was different from that of the strike Bulletin Committee, it was not very different. In the main its leaflets stressed the contract issues, discussing them at greater length than was done by the strike Bulletin, and they consistently criticized the bureaucrats. But seldom were the issues taken to a higher level, linked to an overall understanding of capitalism. The material basis for the bribery of the bureaucrats was not discussed. It pointed out how the company used racism to divide workers but did not explain its material basis. In most cases, it was not possible to tell whether you were reading a caucus leaflet or a strike bulletin.

By the end of the 14-week strike, most strike activists were showing strong signs of fatigue. The energy needed to attend the constant series of meetings, picket lines, and other events was waning, and this all took a toll on the caucus. The numbers of people attending meetings shifted greatly from meeting to meeting, with sometimes as few as the hard core 12 to 15 and at other times 35, 40, or more. Without saying that they were doing so, both BACU and ATM stopped building the meetings and then argued that the small attendance showed that it was no longer viable. Red-baiting took its toll as well. Management people, the union bureaucrats, and some reactionary workers labeled it as a communist organization. We thought that it was important to confront the red-baiting head on, particularly since many of the workers in the caucus were asking questions about it and wanted to know whether it was a communist organization. (They wanted to know whether they were being "duped" as some told them they were.) We raised the question at a meeting, with one of us explaining that she was a communist and why she was working in the caucus. She also explained the difference between a communist and a mass organization and that the caucus was the latter. Finally, she discussed the role of red-baiting and the need for all workers to unite against it. While this discussion was generally well received by the workers, neither ATM nor BACU spoke up on the issue at all. Their silence was well noted by several of the workers, who understood that the ATM and BACU cadre were communists but could not understand why they refused to state their views openly.

By the end of the strike, the caucus was very unclear about its future direction. A few meetings were held and there were discussions about putting out a summation of the strike. These proposals got lost, however, when several members, particularly BACU and ATM cadre, took the position that it should dissolve. Meetings became more and more dominated by discussions among the communists, and worker attendance fell. Finally, it was dissolved, without ever having put out a summation of the strike or its role in it. Since then, several caucus activists, particularly a group of progressive stewards and ourselves, have come together with others in the plant to begin putting out a newsletter. This newsletter is beginning to build again some of the unity among the progressive rank and file which existed during the strike. When, towards the end of the strike, we first proposed that such a newsletter be planned, ATM and BACU disagreed, stating that conditions were such that the publishing of the newsletter would be a left error. Events proved them wrong. The first few issues of the newsletter were very well received in the plant and

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showed that the progressive forces were not dead. AIM and BACU have now indicated their support for the newsletter and have begun to help with it. At this point there is an active group of people working on the newsletter, and plans are being discussed to use it as part of the basis for a mass caucus.

Overall, we think that our work within the union and broad rank and file during the strike was positive. We helped to lead the economic struggles in a militant direction, relying on neither the trade union officials nor allowing the situation to be dominated by legal processes. We continually exposed the unity of the bureaucrats and the company and united the majority of the rank and file in struggle for greater democracy within the union. Our work constantly demonstrated the power of multi-national unity -- the hard core of caucus activists included blacks, whites, Latinos, Filipinos, and Chinese workers -- and the commitment of communists to the struggle. The major weakness of our work was its economism -- our failure to consistently raise the political consciousness of the workers by putting out independent communist agitation and propaganda to the majority of striking workers in written form.

STRUGGLE WITH THE COMPANY

In evaluating our work during the strike from the perspective of the struggle with the company, we will attempt to answer the following questions: (1) Was the strike a success for the workers at the company? (2) Did our work contribute to the advances made? and (3) Did our work during the strike help to advance the workers' understanding of the company as an example of a multi-national corporation and its role in the world during the period of the decline of capitalism.

1. The strike was a very limited success for the workers at the plant. Before, during, and after the strike there was a great deal of confusion on how to evaluate the success or failure of this strike, or any strike. Often, discussions took place which implied that the strike would be a success only if the company accepted all or most of the workers' 70-odd contract demands. Another approach was based on a comparison of the wage gains won during the strike with the wages lost during it. We think that neither of these approaches is correct. The view that says that we must win everything fails completely to take into account objective conditions. In every case, we could formulate strike demands based upon our appraisal of an ideal contract and in no case under objective conditions today could we "succeed" in accomplishing them. The success we would have would be based upon the relative strengths of the companies and the workers involved, each of which would depend upon many factors. On the other hand, the practical economic comparison fails to take into account the many issues other than wages posed by the strike.

We think that in deciding whether the strike was a success economically we have to compare the final settlement with the positions of both parties at the beginning of the strike and at different points during the strike when proposed settlements were being considered and also with strike settlements in analogous situations during this period of time.

Based upon this analysis, the conclusion we reached is that the strike settlement represented a small victory for the economic struggle of the rank and file. The victory was far from complete, however, and we pin the blame for the losses incurred on the misleadership of the trade union officials.

On a strictly economic basis, the strike settlement, which provides a \$1.00 increase over three years for most classifications plus the same cost of living increases as that provided in the last contract can be seen as both a victory and a defeat. It is a victory in that the \$1.00 which was offered in the proposal which was accepted is substantially more than the 70¢ initially offered.

On the other hand, the strike settlement does not protect workers from inflation and will probably mean a net loss in purchasing power by the end of three years. For example, assuming that the cost of living will rise 25% in the next three years (a modest assumption), the wages of a worker who was paid \$6.50 at the expiration of the last contract will rise by 25% as well, but for workers earning \$7.50 it will be 22%, and for workers earning \$8.00 it will be only 20%. Thus, most workers will suffer losses in buying power over the next three years as a result of this contract. This is an example of the way in which the bourgeoisie shifts the burden of the crisis of capitalism to the working class. If inflation rises by more than 25% over the next three years (and the increase for the 1974-77 period was about 33%), the loss suffered by the workers will be greater.

The contractual wage increases also fall below the national average for the first half of 1977 for contracts covering plants with 1,000 or more unionized workers. For a worker earning \$7.50 per hour at the end of the old contract, the three year increase represents a 13.3% gain, compared to an 18.0% national average for the first half of 1977, 19.2% for contracts negotiated in 1976, and 23.4% for 1975.

The contract also included small increases in the value of other economic benefits: medical coverage, a new inexpensive vision plan, and pension benefits. But more important to both the rank and file and to the company were the struggles over contractual changes related to working conditions: the grievance procedure, health and safety on the job, seniority rights, temporary layoffs, mandatory overtime, job posting, etc.

One of the most important issues relates to temporary layoffs. In its first proposals, the company insisted on the right to make "temporary layoffs" of indefinite duration, for any number of reasons without regard to seniority. Only after the rank and file rejected the company's offer did it agree to language that would restrict temporary layoffs done without regard to seniority to a maximum of five days. Such layoffs can take place only when there is a power shortage. Originally the company wanted to be able to "temporarily" layoff employees whenever there was no work for a particular worker's machine.

A second key issue concerns grievance handling. Management insisted that foremen should have the right to decide when a worker could call his/her steward and that it could discipline stewards who spent more than five hours each week on union business. This time limitation was removed in the final contract. The company successfully proposed that there be three Chief Stewards instead of one. This is a change which could weaken the union unless it makes clear which of the Chief Stewards is really in charge. The positive aspect of this change is that each Chief Steward will be paid for handling grievances in the second step for 18 hours each week plus the time spent in third step meetings. In the event the company wants to suspend the rights of a steward or chief steward for "abuse of privileges," it may do so pending resolution through the grievance procedure.

In sum, the final contract won through the strike has many shortcomings and inadequacies. No doubt, if the workers had been in a stronger position, the contract would be better. For example, because only one of its many plants in the United States was shut down, with only about 2.5% of its domestic workforce out, the company could weather a fairly long strike, although it was clear by the end of the strike that the company was hurt by the loss of production. More importantly, the role of the union weakened the workers considerably. The company knew that the union wanted a quick settlement and that the union was far from putting all of its energy behind the strike. The bureaucrats failed to focus key demands, mobilize the rank and file's militancy, or fight the company in the courts. With strong leadership from the union, it is likely that the strike would have been settled earlier and

more favorably.

On the other hand, the fact that the rank and file won as much as it did and that the company was forced to withdraw most of its "take-away" proposals as a result of the 14-week strike must be seen as positive. Acceptance of the earlier proposals would have meant both a dramatic reduction in the workers' buying power over the three years of the contract and a real weakening of their seniority rights and union representation. The company's strategy to force the workers to make these concessions was defeated.

The determination of the rank and file takes on added significance at a time when the employers are on the offensive against the working class throughout the country, and particularly in the Bay Area. The Union has been weakened here as a result of the employers' refusal to accept decent contracts and the actions of many employers in running away to right to work states. Increased unemployment among Bay Area workers is a further threat to those working.

In addition, the company had its individual reasons for trying to weaken the rank and file at this time. It is in a period of reorganization when it is to its advantage to be able to lay off and/or more people around without regard to seniority rights. It was in its interest to destroy members' seniority rights and to weaken the system of union representation generally. By their determination the rank and file defeated most of these efforts.



2. Our work contributed to the advances made.

Prior to and at the beginning of the strike we assumed that we would provide little leadership to the rank and file struggle. We took it for granted that the bureaucrats and core of union activists would provide day to day guidance. Instead, what we found was an almost complete lack of both leadership and rank and file organization. At it became clear that there was a real vacuum of leadership, we took a more assertive role and wound up playing an important role in the day to day struggle.

The most important aspects of our work were providing information to the rank and file and mobilizing people for strike activities. Through work on the strike bulletin committee and the publication of caucus leaflets we continually informed the rank and file as to the importance of certain demands, the contents of company offers, and the progress of negotiations. In this way we helped arm the rank and file with the information needed to sustain its commitment to the strike and to evaluate and reject the company's offer.

With regard to our mobilizing activities, we took the initiative, along with members of the strike committee and other caucus members, to help mobilize the rank and file to demonstrate at court hearings and outside the plant to block scab work. We also mobilized people to attend union meetings to demand information from the bureaucrats and to make decisions concerning the conduct of negotiations and the use of the union strike funds. Overall, our work as participants in and leaders of the economic struggles was positive.

3. The strike did little to advance the workers' understanding of the company in particular and imperialism in general.

The strike provided many opportunities for education about the imperialist system and the need for

socialism. Many workers wondered why a company so prosperous fought so hard to avoid signing a decent contract. The time was ripe to discuss the decline of capitalism and the relationship between the general crisis of capitalism and the periodic crises. The world-wide struggle against imperialism could also be discussed, particularly with reference to the company's role in countries like South Africa and Brazil and its partnership with the Japanese imperialists. The strike also demonstrated the role of the state as both the police and the courts sided with the company continually. In short, the lessons were there to be drawn, but the communists in the plant, including ourselves, failed to draw them out in any kind of broad or deep way. Instead, we confined ourselves to verbal propaganda with a relatively few workers and economist agitation in caucus leaflets. These leaflets included a few references to broader issues posed by the strike, but they were at the level of: "We can see how the police and the courts always side with the companies," and "We share with the people of South Africa a common interest in fighting this company." These points, while too infrequent, were well made in economic agitation directed at the broad masses. Our failure, however, was in neglecting to develop materials at a higher level to be used for raising the political consciousness of the class-conscious workers in the plant. As a result of our rightism and the rightism of other communists, the lessons to be summed up from the strike remain for most workers at a perceptual level and have not been raised to the level of political understanding. The result of all this is that opportunities have been lost to consolidate workers around an overall understanding of capitalism and to win people to a higher level of commitment to struggle.

CONCLUSION AND THE ROAD AHEAD

The overall gains coming from the strike were: (1) many rank and file workers have a greater understanding of their own power and the victories that can be won through unified action; (2) The trade union bureaucrats have been further exposed and isolated as traitors to the rank and file; (3) The understanding of many workers that they cannot look to the courts for assistance against the company has been strengthened; (4) We have begun to lay the basis for the development with communist initiative and leadership of a broad rank and file organization to fight for workers' rights in the plant and to win leadership of the local from the bureaucrats; and (5) A small group of class-conscious workers was temporarily won to the need to study Marxism-Leninism and to work with communists in an illegal form of organization to give long-term leadership to the struggle within the plant. The basis for future advances in this work has been laid.

Overall, our main weakness during the strike was the failure to do independent communist written propaganda and agitation at various levels to raise the level of political consciousness of all strata of workers at the plant. A secondary error lay in our sometimes spontaneous style of work in the mass movement, our failure to develop and maintain an all-sided grasp of objective conditions, and our failure to continually develop and revise a long-term strategy based upon an analysis of objective conditions during the different stages of the strike.

For the future, we see three main areas of work: (1) The consolidation of a core of intermediate and class-conscious workers which will engage in both study and organizational work and the winning of that core to communism; (2) The development of written communist propaganda and agitation for limited distribution to class-conscious workers in the plant and (3) The building of a broad mass caucus to struggle for leadership in the union and develop a powerful and militant shop floor organization, beginning with the developing shop newsletter.

POLICE REPRESSION

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been arrested. While unconscious he was dumped into a Houston bayou where he drowned. The police killers were originally found guilty and punished with \$1 fines and one year suspended sentences!! Only the mass protests by Chicanos and others resulted in another trial which gave three of the murders one year sentences. The committee behind the Torres case continues its demand for more just punishment.

The day after the commemorative service (a Cinco De Mayo Celebration) thousands of Chicanos from the Moody Park barrio broke out in rebellion when club-wielding police attempted to break up a minor altercation. For two days Chicanos and others battled police and a major rallying cry was "Justice for Jose Campos Torres".

-- On July 17th, 1,000 people in Plainview, Texas staged a militant protest demanding an investigation and prosecution for the murder of Tim Rosales. An unemployed construction worker, Rosales was killed by Texas police apparently for the crime of being drunk.

-- On July 12th the Chicano community in Del Norte, Colorado came together to organize action against police who shot-gunned Porfirio Jaramillo. Jaramillo was shot at point blank range with a 12 gauge shotgun by an off-duty police officer. The killing was termed "justifiable homicide" because according to the police Jaramillo was armed.

The several civilian witnesses, however, say that Jaramillo was not armed.

-- July 22nd 500 people marched through downtown Dallas to protest the federal government's refusal to reopen prosecution of the policeman who murdered Santos Rodriguez five years ago. Rodriguez was a 12 year old boy picked up as a robbery suspect. He was killed while being interrogated by a policeman attempting to intimidate Rodriguez by pointing a gun at his head and playing "Russian Roulette".

-- July 30th, a Denver coalition met to commemorate the deaths one year prior of Artie Espinosa and Jim Hinojos. Espinosa and Hinojos were shot dead after they were arrested while spread-eagled on the ground in what a number of witnesses described as a "mafia style shooting".

NATIONAL RALLY CALLED

-- August 27th has been set as the date for a "National Chicano Rally Against Police Repression" to be held in El Paso Texas. This rally has been called for and organized by the "Danny Vasquez Justice Committee", "Compana Pro La Preservacion Del Barrio", and "Chicanos Unidos" (Chicano organizations in El Paso), and others.

These murders that Chicanos throughout the Southwest are rising up against represent the tip of an iceberg, only the most violent aspect of the repression, brutality, and harassment that all oppressed

nationalities are subjected to by law enforcement agencies. The source of this repression lies in the role of the police as an instrument for maintaining order in a society divided by class and nationality.

Where society is divided into an exploiting capitalist class and an exploited working class, struggle and "disorder" must inevitably arise due to the conflicting and irreconcilable economic interests of the exploiter and the exploited. In capitalist society the "order" that police must maintain is that which legalizes and perpetuates the exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class.

NATIONAL OPPRESSION -- THE ESSENCE OF IMPERIALISM

Likewise, in a society divided into oppressor nation and oppressed nationalities the order that police must maintain is that which perpetuates the national oppression which is the essence of imperialism.

Any objective survey of the Southwest, the Black Belt South, or Native American reservations, and the large urban centers of the US easily reveals the disproportionate unemployment and poverty, the disproportionate unorganization of labor, the poor quality of education, health care, and housing, and the suppression of language and culture that characterizes the national oppression of Afro-Americans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, and all other oppressed nationalities.

This national oppression grows out of the super-exploitation of oppressed nationalities. It exists to maintain the extraction of superprofits

from the labor of workers who are paid less than the workers from the oppressor nation, who are kept at the lowest paying jobs, the dirtiest jobs, and the sweatshops where the intensification of labor is greatest.

POLICE ENFORCE INEQUALITY

The police agencies of the Southwest are not above this struggle between oppressor and oppressed classes and nationalities. Without class and national oppression capitalism and imperialism cannot exist. Therefore the order that police agencies in the Southwest maintain must be subordinated to the economic interests of the capitalist class of the oppressor nation. The character of their role is defined not by their commitment to uphold the formal equality between classes and nationalities proclaimed by bourgeois law, but instead by the need to enforce the inequality in fact upon which imperialism depends.

In the Southwest this contradiction between the formal equality of bourgeois democracy and the inequality that exists in fact is sharpest with the nationally oppressed and super-exploited Chicanos and Mexicanos. This national oppression and super-exploitation of Chicanos and Mexicanos has inevitably bred resistance. Day-by-day the struggle and demands for equal rights; for equal employment opportunities, for equal pay, and an end to job discrimination, for quality education, health care, and housing, for equality of languages and culture; continues to grow.

It is the growth of this struggle that exposes the police as an arm of the bourgeois state. The murders we have recorded in this article are only the most vicious aspect of the role of the police as an instrument for repressing the Chicano struggle against national oppression and for protecting the inequality of imperialism.

The growing demand for an end to police repression, brutality, and harassment in the Southwest is a demand for equal treatment and a component part of the struggle for equal rights.

THE TASKS OF COMMUNISTS

This struggle provides an excellent opportunity for communists to build the united front of the working class and the oppressed nationalities that is needed to overthrow the imperialist system. However, we will never succeed in uniting this struggle against national oppression to the overall struggle for socialism merely on the basis of communist proclamations. The masses of oppressed nationalities will grasp that the essence of imperialism is national oppression, that equal treatment of all nationalities is impossible under bourgeois democracy, only in the course of the struggle for full equality.

On the one hand communists must uncompromisingly support and strive to give leadership to the struggle for the full democratic rights of oppressed nationalities. On the other hand through our propaganda and agitation we must expose the empty character of bourgeois democracy and clearly show that it is only through the proletarian revolution and the establishment of socialism that the oppressed nationalities will win their full democratic rights and that the basis will set for genuine equality among all nationalities.

BLACK YOUTH KILLED

COMMUNITY ORGANIZES AGAINST POLICE MURDER

On May 30, 1978 two San Diego police officers chased, cornered, and shot and killed a 21 year-old Black man named Tyrone Thomas, a burglary suspect. According to police officials an officer struck Thomas on the back of the head with his gun when Thomas tried to run, and the gun fired "accidentally". But citizen eye witnesses report police brutality and murder. One witness stated that he saw Thomas being held by two police officers with both hands over his head. The eye witnesses to his shooting have requested that they and the officers involved be given a lie detector test. But the police department has refused the request.

Thomas and his family had been the target of police harassment on numerous occasions. Once he was even taken from his car and forced to his knees because "someone" accused him of burglary. At another time his younger brother, Mark, had a gun pointed to his head by police, when he was mistaken for Tyrone.

Incidents of harassment and shootings of oppressed nationalities by police occur frequently in San Diego and throughout the U.S. Only a few weeks before a black man named Jim Graham was shot in the back by San Diego police while running from his own apartment. Not the burglary suspect they were hunting, he was running because he was an AWOL marine. A few years ago the San Diego community arose to condemn the murder of Luis Tato Rivera. Rivera was a Puerto Rican youth who was shot in the back and killed solely for refusing a police

order to halt. Similar incidents have occurred in Albuquerque, El Paso, Tucson and other cities in the Southwest.

As in the countless other cases of police murder of Blacks or Chicanos, no action is being taken against Frank Christensen, the officer who shot Thomas. Instead he was given a new patrol area after a few days off, and the department has publicly defended him, stating that he acted within police policy guidelines.

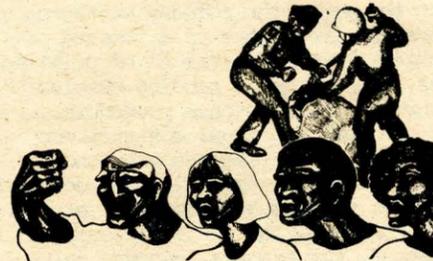
COMMUNITY ORGANIZES

The Coalition for Freedom and Justice has been formed by community groups in San Diego demanding an investigation of Thomas's death and action against the police department. The Thomas family has also taken up the struggle for justice and recently filed a suit against the city. The coalition has pledged their support for the Thomas family and has begun to collect necessary funds to support the suit. Mobilization of community opposition to both this recent killing and to other attacks directed at national minorities by police has been organized by the coalition.

The coalition represents various social, church, political, and minority oriented groups and is headed by Thomas case spokesperson Rev. Robert C. Ard. Rev. Ard has called for "an army of soldiers" and work to "solve collective problems with collective efforts."

Last month a meeting the coalition held drew over 300 people representing a broad spectrum of the Black communi-

ty. The meeting also received multi-national support. Coalition supporters at the meeting were vocal and spirited. Speakers addressing the audience were unified in their disbelief of the police version of Thomas's death and the need for action against the police actions. The police department investigation was viewed by most as one criminal investigating another. The Thomas family attended the meeting and was visibly moved by the show of support. They stated that the strong showing made them see that they were not alone in their struggle.



While mobilization by the coalition has reached deep into the community, work must be broadened. In particular, broad education around this campaign should be organized in the workplace. The struggle against police brutality directed at national minorities, like the struggle against the Bakke decision and Proposition 13, is a struggle against national oppression and for full democratic rights. It is only on the basis of support for these struggles that the united front of the working class and oppressed nationalities can be built.

MILLER RECALL

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of the rank and file was graphically illustrated by the refusal of the Board to allow rank and file unionists and members of the Miners For Recall group to attend the July 27 meeting in Denver. One member of a delegation of a dozen Colorado miners expressed his disgust, "We drove 200 to 300 miles to stand in the hallway. I should have just stayed in the pits. I guess that board is the United Mine Workers. We are not. We're the one in the pits but we can't say anything."

UNION DEMOCRACY ESSENTIAL TO ADVANCE CLASS STRUGGLE

Union democracy is not just a question of internal union affairs. The bureaucrats who impede the exercise of democratic rights within the union also impede the workers' struggle against their capitalist enemies. Union democracy is a means to remove these impediments and advance the class struggle. It is a means of revolutionary training in preparation for the seizure of state power.

The connection between union democracy and the fighting capacity of workers can be seen in the history of the recent attacks on the miners' health and pension benefits which lie at the source of the miners' current recall charges against Miller.

The first move was made in the 1974 contract. The provisions of the settlement were designed to split the militant pensioners from the working miners and attack them separately. Before the 1974 contract, all royalty payments from the coal operators went into one Health and Retirement Fund. But following the contract, the fund was split into four trusts--the 1950 Benefit and Pension Trusts for miners retiring before 1976 and the 1974 Trusts for miners retiring after 1976. Along with this separation came, for the first time, a differential in the amount of money paid to pensioners with those covered by the 1950 Funds receiving much less than those who retire under the later plan.

Besides negotiating these provisions, the bureaucrats' complicity in the coal operators' attacks on retired miners' pensions was further demonstrated by the passage of Article 19, Section 7 in the UMW constitution in 1976 which took away the right to vote on contract ratifications from nearly 80,000 pensioners. In an open letter to the UMWA, James Jenkins of Local Union 6105 of District 29 bitterly wrote, "These are the miners who gave you the union, having their heads beat in, been arrested, having worked under all sorts of hazardous conditions and are now unable to work, due to age or disability. Now, they have no voice in a contract that controls their future income and future health as well as the future of their widow, should they die before their wife does."

In contrast to the shameful actions of Miller and his fellow class traitors, the rank and file raised the unity of retired and active miners and the equalization of pensions as one of the crucial demands in the 1977-78 contract negotiations.

MILLER'S CONCERN FOR DEMOCRACY ALWAYS PHONY

In the period before the 1977 union elections, officers of the UMW Health and Pension Funds raised that the funds'

reserves had dropped and cuts in health benefits were threatened. Arnold Miller, engaged in a tightly contested re-election battle, denied these contentions. But only three days after the election, on June 17, he announced the cutbacks. No longer would health care be free; miners would now be required to pay deductibles of \$250 for in-patient care and 40% of out-patient care up to a maximum of \$500 per year.

Instead of fighting with the rank and file against these cutbacks, Miller joined the coal operators and used the cutbacks to attack wildcats. In this way he used the capitalists' attack as an excuse to limit the workers' democratic right to withhold their labor in defense of their interests.

Although Miller and the rest of the Miners For Democracy slate had ridden to office



on a tremendous wave of rank and file upheaval that swept through the coal fields during the final years of the Boyle regime, those so-called leaders soon joined the coal operators in concern over the continued lack of "labor peace" in the coal fields.

Were the wildcats the cause of the shortages in the UMW Funds as UMW leaders and the coal operators claimed? Facts show that while the strikes contributed, they were by no means the main factor. Even George Getschow of the Wall St. Journal wrote in December, 1977 that wildcat strikes accounted for only about 5% of the Funds' financial deficit. And this connection existed because the 1974 contract continued to tie benefit funding to production (tons produced and hours worked) instead of basing funding on health care needs. Other factors behind shortages were the terrific increase in medical costs, an increase in the Funds' administrative costs of 90% from 1974 to 1976 and the refusal of the coal companies to pay into the Funds. From 1974 to 1977, the Funds had to challenge 500 companies in court for royalty dues amounting to \$15 million. US Steel alone was 3 years overdue to the tune of \$9.7 million. Moreover, cutbacks could have been avoided by transferring funds from the 1974 Pension Fund into the other funds which were short. But this viable solution was blocked by the coal operators, with the cooperation of the bureaucrats, who said it would only "encourage wildcats."

BUREAUCRATS STAND IN MINERS' WAY

The majority of the men in the mines did not buy these lies from the operators and bureaucrats that the cuts were the workers' own fault and again walked out. For 10 weeks up to 80,000 men struck in protest to the cutbacks while Miller and the IEB ordered

them back to work. The fighting spirit of the miners was strong despite the protests of their "leaders" in office.

Miller's capitulation continued into the 1978 contract negotiations. During the 110 day strike, the Funds were again used as a cudgel to weaken the miners' resistance as health benefits were cut off and pensioners did not receive their checks. In the 1978 settlement coal operators succeeded in taking direct control over the health plans which are now administered through private insurance carriers. Because of this, the quality and quantity of health care for the miners is already suffering.

Thus, the lack of union democracy and the resulting control over the UMW by class collaborationist leaders prevented the rank and file from preparing for and mobilizing against the attacks on their health and pension benefits. It is a strong testimony to their fighting spirit that they did stop some of the other take-away efforts.

BUREAUCRATS SIDE WITH BOURGEOISIE

The traitorous and deceitful action of the labor aristocrats in the leadership of the UMW cannot be separated from the needs of the monopoly capitalists whose interests they serve. In anticipation of a coal boom in the next decade, as the general crisis and imperialist war preparations demand more domestic coal as an energy source, the operators are stepping up their organizing efforts against the miners. So they call for "labor stability" to ensure a steady supply of coal. For the miners this means further restrictions on their democratic rights, in particular the right to strike. The operators also expect Miller and their other labor lieutenants to prevent the rank and file from fighting back against the present lay offs due to a slump in the metallurgical coal market brought on by the world economic crisis.

Miller and the others serve a class of people well--but it is not the working class! Not the miners! They wish to spread pessimism, hoping that the miners' fighting spirit has been broken by the combined attack of their sell-out and ineffective leadership and of the coal operators' attacks. Their rotten version of "labor stability" is the same as the capitalists' where the miner is a man who crawls on his belly, who meekly submits his life and labor to the interests of capital.

LACK OF DEMOCRACY UNDERMINES UMW AS FIGHTING ORGANIZATION

Miller is rising to the call of the capitalists for a "strong union", where the democratic rights of the rank and file are denied. Turning reality on its head, he called the rank and file movement which is striving for increased democracy and effective, fighting organization against his dishonest leadership,

"devisive, fomented by people who don't understand the constitution."

Miller and his fellow bureaucrats are trying to suppress the recall movement and attack democracy in other ways to stay in power. Recently he called for "investigations" into the financial operations of those locals which have been centers of opposition against the contract proposals and of support for the recall movement, such as District 19 in eastern Kentucky and 29 in West Virginia. In doing so he raises the possibility of placing these districts under International trusteeship, a policy he vigorously condemned when the Boyle regime held seven districts under trusteeship and Miller was trying to become union president.

Significantly, he has announced his intention to eliminate the union's Bargaining Council which twice rejected tentative settlements during the past negotiations. The Bargaining Council was one of the union democracy reforms he supported when he was running for office. But now it's an obstacle to his class collaboration. Its elimination would lead to even tighter closed door negotiations, leaving the rank and file even more unprepared to adequately assess the contents of any contract offered to them.

Miller, in reference to the recall movement, recently whined, "It's been very difficult to establish democratic principles in this union with a few ambitious politicians. But I don't think those politicians have been successful in destroying those democratic principles. I gave them (the membership-ed.) that and I'm rather proud of it."

CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION IS MINERS' TARGET

Perhaps Miller feels that what he "gave" he can now take away. But he's going to learn a bitter lesson, that it is the masses of miners who brought increased democracy to the UMW and it will be these same fighters who will maintain it. Miller's version of a complacent rank and file are visions shared by all the labor aristocracy, born of the opiates of soft office jobs, high salaries, and cocktails shared with coal operators in expensive hotel rooms.

They are not shared, however, nor ever will be, by the thousands of rank and file miners who still labor in the coal dust in the pits, facing roof falls, methane gas, and other dangers, who live in trailers in the hollows threatened by strip mine wrought floods and face the possibilities of lay offs when coal production is not so profitable for the coal operators.

Movements like the recall movement are not yet truly conscious, and are polluted with old supporters of Boyle like Lee Roy Patterson, but in essence characterize the sentiments of the masses of miners for a strong democratic working class organization that will ably defend their interests against the coal operators. And the movement also shows their understanding that the trade union bureaucrats are obstacles to that aim. What is required of revolutionary leadership is to soberly and materially draw the connections between the labor aristocrats and the coal operators, between the collaboration of the two and the present crisis of imperialism and growing danger of war. In this way the battle for union democracy will train the miners in revolutionary political thinking and revolutionary political action.

ECONOMIC WEAPONS

CONTINUED FROM P.1

chromium, and copper.

In addition to its strategic position in Africa, Zaire is a primary focus of superpower contention because it is the world's main source of cobalt as well as a major source of the world's cadmium, gold, silver, tin, germanium, zinc, iron, tungsten, manganese, uranium, and radium. Namibia, which is struggling for independence from South Africa, has the world's richest deposits of gem diamonds as well as lead, zinc, copper, vanadium, manganese, and tin.

With such concentrations of so many valuable minerals, why do the countries and peoples of Africa remain so poor?

SUPERPOWER PLUNDER OF AFRICA

The wealth of Africa and other third world countries has not been a means to develop the economic and social well being of the peoples of these countries because of imperialist control of international economic relations. Raw materials and other mineral resources are stolen from third world countries to meet the needs of imperialism and social imperialism. For example, US imperialism takes from Africa 54% of its manganese, 47% of its cobalt, 24% of its chromium, and 22% of its graphite. When the USSR buys coffee from Angola, it pays only 38% of the world market price. Overall, African countries have lost more than \$2.4 billion to the USSR in the last decade. As for US imperialists, they take out more than half of that every year.

It is an international economic order based on manipulation and control of the imperialist powers, and especially on the plunder and exploitation of the two superpowers, which makes poor countries poorer and rich countries richer, always widening the gap between the two. The common conclusion of third world countries, therefore, is that this system must be destroyed as it constitutes the major obstacle to any development and progress for all countries of the third world.

Complete overthrow of the old international economic order depends on the total destruction of the system of imperialism and social imperialism. The demand for a new international economic order based on the struggle against imperialist monopoly of international trade is one step along that road. It is a struggle for international economic relations based on equality and mutual benefit, on the defense of national economic independence and on the exercise of national sovereignty over natural resources.

RAW MATERIAL PRODUCERS ASSOCIATIONS

The biggest steps can be taken in the economic sphere when third world countries close ranks in struggle against superpower economic plunder and act in unity. For example, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has shown the mighty weapon which third world countries hold in their hands if they take control of raw materials required for the industrial economies of the imperialist powers. Following the example of the OPEC the CIPEC (Counseil Intergovernmental des Pays Exportateurs de Cuivre) has struggled to achieve price stabilization

measures for copper and similar efforts have developed among the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America producing coffee, tin, cocoa, tea and many other raw materials. Today more than 70 third world countries are now member nations of some 20 organizations of raw material producing countries, and organizations of bauxite, rubber, and bananas have all had some success in increasing world prices for their products. Some of these countries are now promoting a council of producers associations which would further develop the unity of raw material producing countries.

INTEGRATED COMMODITY PROGRAM

Another weapon in the struggle against hegemonism in the economic sphere is the integrated program for commodities called for by third world countries in 1976. One of the most important means of plunder of the countries and peoples of the third world occurs because of the unfavorable development of the terms of trade between the imperialist and social imperialist countries and the countries of the third world. This means that while the price for products produced by the third world -- primarily raw materials -- constantly falls, the prices for products produced by the imperialist powers -- primarily manufactured goods -- constantly rises. For example, in 1974 US exports of fertilizer to Africa were up 100% in price compared to 1973 and prices for metallurgical products were up 33%. At the same time, the prices US monopolies paid Zambia and Ethiopia for copper and coffee fell 40% and 35% respectively. The USSR takes advantage of third world countries in the same way. A Soviet truck which would exchange for 2.2 tons of tea in 1960 now costs the equivalent of 5.8 tons. Overall, the 1975 prices of processed products and raw materials exported by developing countries including Africa were down by 56% while the prices of industrial products purchased from the imperialists were 20% higher than the previous year. Excluding oil exporting countries, the share of the third world in world trade fell from 14.6% in 1960 to 10.7% in 1973, even though the contribution of the third world to world trade increased during the same period.

Through the effect on the terms of trade, economic developments in the imperialist countries wreck havoc with the economies of third world producers and directly contribute

to their economic instability. The world wide recession of 1974 led to a decrease in the demand for raw materials produced by third world countries and a dramatic drop in prices. This in turn gravely compromised the economic development of these countries since they could not any longer obtain from export foreign currencies such as dollars or pounds which were adequate to buy the manufactured goods and modern equipment their economies needed. Furthermore, though the prices of raw material exports fell, the prices of industrial products which had to be imported rose because of world wide inflation.

The experience of Zambia illustrates this point. Copper is the principal export of Zambia and it is the world's fifth largest producer. In 1970, copper accounted for 36% of Zambian Gross Domestic Product and 58% of its government revenue. With the recession and drop in copper prices, the contribution of copper dropped to 25% of the Gross Domestic Product and only 1% of government revenue.

The integrated commodity program is an effort to prevent further deterioration in the terms of trade between the imperialist countries and the countries of the third world. It provides that the prices of all basic raw materials, minerals, and food stuffs, should be indexed to the rate of inflation in the industrial countries. This is like indexing wage increases to the cost of living. As prices for manufactured goods go up, the prices of raw materials go up also. Therefore, it would be a step in limiting the ability of the imperialist powers to pass the burden of imperialist crisis onto the third world.

A second part of the program calls for a common fund supported jointly by participating countries which would be used to establish so-called "buffer stocks" that would contribute to stabilizing world commodity prices. The common fund would be used to buy and stockpile a particular raw material, say copper, in times of falling prices. These purchases in the world market would increase demand and limit the price downturn. When prices rose again, the stockpile or "buffer stocks" would be sold. The net effect would be to stabilize commodity prices and to protect the economies of the third world from the sudden shifts in the demand for raw materials that often have a drastic effect on their anticipated revenues and disrupt their economies and economic planning.

THIRD WORLD TRADE EXPANSION

Another weapon which can be used by the third world countries is to expand trade with each other. This also can play

a role in breaking the manipulation of world trade by the imperialist powers. For example, in the past even third world countries with common borders would not engage in direct trade but would obtain goods produced by each other through an imperialist country which functioned as an intermediary. This caused heavy and unreasonable losses to the developing countries and big profits for the imperialists.

Regional organizations of economic cooperation in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have played a role in promoting regional trade and in improving this situation. Trade among third world countries of different regions has also increased. For example, where the trade among the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America was only \$6,000 million in 1960, in 1975 it was over \$47,000 million. As a result, third world countries were able to reduce the level of imports they obtained from imperialist and social imperialist countries from 73% in 1971 to 66.6% in 1975. By supplying each others needs, third world countries are able to reduce their dependence on the imperialists and on the superpowers in particular.

WHO NEEDS WHO?

A study of international economic relations today reveals a basic fact. It is not the poor countries that depend on the rich, but quite the opposite. But in order to take advantage of this situation and in order to build their own independent national economic development, third world nations must build their unity. Every weapon of struggle in the economic sphere -- raw material producers associations, the integrated commodity program, third world trade expansion, etc. -- depends on third world countries closing ranks and building unity in the struggle against superpower hegemonism.

For the two superpowers, proposals for a new international economic order are tantamount to binding the hands of the plunderer. As a result, though they sometimes agree in words to this or that proposal, in deeds they strive in every way to obstruct implementation of the reasonable objectives of third world countries and peoples.

But the tide of history is irreversible. By strengthening their unity, the third world countries, together with second world countries which treat them on the basis of equality and with the support of all progressive people of the world, can develop the struggle against hegemonism in the economic sphere and make a good contribution to the overall struggle against imperialism and social imperialism.



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