

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

VOLUME IV no.19

WORKERS CONGRESS (MARXIST-LENINIST)

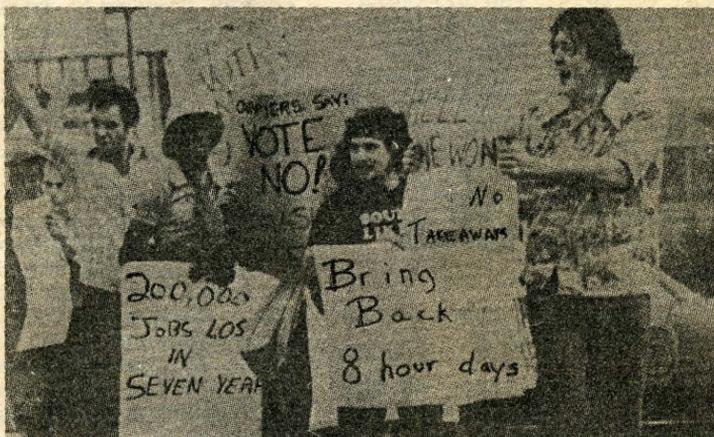
POB 1297

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60690

August 28, 1978

25

SUPPORT POSTAL WORKERS



POSTAL WORKERS CLOSED NEW JERSEY BULK MAIL CENTER IN JULY TO DEMAND REJECTION OF SELL-OUT CONTRACT OFFER

When the vote was announced last week, it became official that the nation's postal workers have rejected the sell-out contract agreed to on July 20th by the national union leaders and the United States Postal Service (USPS). Because the USPS refuses to re-open negotiations, 570,000 postal workers are ready to go on strike this week.

Lenin says that strikes "instill fear into the capitalists, because they begin to undermine their supremacy." This is particularly true of the postal workers, not only because they can stop the nation's mail, but also because they will strike in the face of threats of felony prosecution. It is a criminal offense for federal employees to strike. A postal worker strike will set an example for all

public service workers and also will show every worker the class character of bourgeois law and the need to liberate the class from the tendency to confine our struggle to the limits of bourgeois legality.

POSTAL WORKERS SAY NO TO SELL-OUT CONTRACT

The Carter administration wants to make an example of postal workers by forcing them to take a wage cut. But the postal workers have made it clear to the USPS, the Carter administration and the bureaucrats who control their unions that they rejected the contract because it cut their wages. The bourgeois media promotes the lie that postal workers would get a substantial raise in the proposed contract.

CONTINUED ON P.2

MASS UPRISINGS PUT SHAH ON DEFENSIVE

On August 11 and 13 the Iranian masses waged new militant demonstrations against the fascist regime of the Shah of Iran. The August 11 demonstration of more than 40,000 took place in Isfahan attacking political repression and calling for democracy and independence. The regime retaliated by sending in troops who murdered more than 100, injured nearly 500 more and placed the city under martial law.

A similar incident occurred on August 13 in Shiraz when about 30,000 people gathered to hear speeches by dissident political leaders opposed to the Shah's rule. Again the army attacked, killing several and injuring and arresting hundreds.

Those injured were transferred to a hospital, but following orders from the regime, they were denied blood transfusions. The people of Iran called upon the progressive student movement abroad, particularly the Confederation of Iranian Students, to expose this criminal act of the Shah and to bring the public opinion of the world to put pressure on the regime to administer medical care to the injured. Over 400 Iranians in the US volunteered to give blood if the International Red Cross would deliver it to the injured. The Red Cross refused, saying all blood donations would go to the government to be distributed. The lives of countless Iranians remain in danger from this refusal.

SHAH IS POLITICALLY ON THE DEFENSIVE

Because of the massive scale of the popular uprisings against the Shah which have developed spontaneously over the last year, the Shah is politically on the defensive for the first time in his 25 years of dictatorial rule. The opposition has broadened to include the national bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, working

class, peasants, students, Moslems and Marxist-Leninists. The Shah has increasingly lost his credibility among the population as he has continued to attempt to violently repress the genuine discontent of the masses, while at the same time spawning propaganda about his intention to liberalize and democratize his regime. The regime is still very powerful, backed by a mass of sophisticated US weaponry. But the Shah has been forced on the defensive as he has had to respond to the people's uprisings and the many forms of initiative they have taken.

CARTER HUMAN RIGHTS STAND EXPOSED

The popular demonstrations have also attacked the relationship of the Shah to the US. Some people had thought that Carter's stand supporting human rights would force a liberalization in the Shah's regime. But while the Shah holds over 100,000 political prisoners in his jails where torture is common practice, and sends his army against all demonstrations, Carter continues to call the Shah "one of my closest allies". This exposes the fundamental hypocrisy of the US stand on human rights.

MASS RESISTANCE TO THE SHAH

The latest uprisings are part of a year long struggle unparalleled in recent Iranian history. Several thousand people have been killed in conflicts between police and demonstrators as masses of protesters have filled the streets of more than 70 cities, large and small, every 40 days since January 10, 1978. Facing the conditions of repression existing under a fascist dictatorship, the masses have built on the Moslem custom of setting aside the 40th day as a special day of mourning to

CONTINUED ON P.8

SOMOZA'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED

In Nicaragua, on Tuesday, July 22, patriotic forces from the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) stormed a legislative session at the National Palace in Managua seizing virtually all of the country's senators. The lower house Chamber of Deputies was in session when the FSLN attacked and took hostage members from both the ruling Nationalist Liberal Party and Conservative Party. Calling international attention to the determined struggle of the Nicaraguan people against long hated dictator Anastasio Somoza, the FSLN demanded freedom for political prisoners, safe flights out of the country to Panama and Venezuela, and ten million dollars, in exchange for the senators.

MASSES OPPOSE SOMOZA RULE

The dramatic attack is the product of overwhelming mass resistance to Somoza's dictatorial rule in Nicaragua. Propped up by US imperialism, the Somoza family has ruled Nicaragua with an iron fist for over forty years. While the broad masses of people live in abject poverty, Somoza's fortune is one of the largest in Central America. Nicaragua's unemployment rate is 24.5%, and 60% of the peasants are on the verge of starvation. Since the assassination of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, editor of the country's only opposition paper in January of this year, Nicaraguans have stepped up their protest against Somoza's brutal regime.

Hundreds of thousands of workers went on strike in February, bringing the economy to a virtual standstill. In March, strikes and demonstrations continued in Managua and other large cities as the masses of people took to the streets demanding the ouster of Somoza.

Thousands of students have boycotted classes since April

and held demonstrations in Masaya, Leon, Esteli, Granada, and Jinotepe. They were supported with solidarity strikes by more than 20,000 workers.

Armed clashes between the National Guard, the only reliable support Somoza has left in the country, and the Nicaraguan people are frequent. In cities like Masaya and Diriamba, the people erected roadblocks, to put up armed resistance against armed repression by the National Guardsmen. On April 20, the people in Managua put up street barricades and militantly resisted police crackdowns.

Peasants, housewives, church leaders, businessmen, government employees, and opposition parties have also joined in demonstrations throughout the country demanding Somoza's ouster. And in Latin America, mass organizations and newspapers issued statements condemning the murder of Chamorro, and raised questions concerning Somoza's future political role in Nicaragua.

SOMOZA FORCED TO MEET DEMANDS

Faced with this kind of widespread popular resistance and increasing isolation both in Nicaragua and Latin America, Somoza was forced to give in to the FSLN's demands. While

CONTINUED ON P.8

INSIDE:

RESPONSE TO ATM/IWK	P.6
STRIKE SUM-UP	P.4
WC COMMENTARY	P.3
FACTORY EXPOSURE	P.2

POSTAL WORKERS

CONTINUED FROM P.1

But the contract offered them only a series of measely 2%, 3%, and 5% pay increases and a cost of living clause with a ceiling of 9.5%. Since inflation will cause the cost of living to rise at least 30% in the next 3 years, this wage package is a cut in the postal workers' standard of living.

Carter calls this wage cut an "anti-inflation" plan. This is a bourgeois lie. Wages have nothing to do with causing inflation. Under capitalism, wages are determined by the minimum amount it costs a worker and his family to live and by the amount of struggle workers have organized to win higher wages. Prices are rising independently and far ahead of wages. Inflation is one of the results of decaying capitalism. The state keeps printing more and more money to finance a bloated bureaucracy, an expensive war machine, social services for the growing army of unemployed, a repressive police apparatus, etc., while the productive sector of the economy continues to shrink. Cutting wages is no solution for these problems, but it is a way capitalists can protect their profits.

Postal workers also rejected the contract because it allowed the USPS to continue eliminating thousands of their jobs. While the national union leaders brag about keeping the no-layoff clause in the proposed contract, the rank and file is

angry because the clause was still weak. The management rights clause remains in the contract and the USPS would be able to go ahead with its plans to eliminate 125,000 jobs in the next 5 years using post office closings, bid abolishments, overtime, and attrition. Moreover, the contract didn't meet the demands for abolishing the casual system and giving all postal workers full time permanent positions nor for affirmative action programs.

Postal workers also rejected the contract because it ignored their demands for improved working conditions. In recent years as the USPS has eliminated thousands of postal jobs, the remaining workers have been fighting mandatory and excessive overtime, speed-up, unsafe working conditions, and disciplinary action for using sick leave. For example, the USPS has mechanized much of the mail and package handling in bulk mail centers to cut jobs and costs, but they have not paid attention to the welfare of the employees who work around the unsafe equipment.

POSTAL WORKERS INSIST ON RIGHT TO STRIKE

Postal workers' power in this contract battle is in withholding their labor power. It's a felony for postal workers to strike and now a federal judge has issued a restrain-

ing order to make it easier to arrest strikers. This contract battle has brought postal workers into direct confrontation with the state. There's no pretense that the federal government is neutral or a mediator between worker and employer. It's clearly mobilized to crush postal workers who are now facing firings, jail, fines, federal troops used as strike breakers to move the mail and the possibility of binding arbitration to force a sell out contract down their throats.

But postal workers have refused to give in. The day after the contract terms were announced, workers went out in wildcat strikes in New Jersey and San Francisco, closing bulk mail centers and setting an inspiring example for other postal workers. The strikers were joined by workers across the country who staged work actions and held union meetings to call for rejection of the proposed contract and to support the wildcats. When the USPS fired over 100 of the wildcat strikers, postal workers across the country added amnesty to their contract demands.

RANK AND FILE MILITANCY MOVES THE STRUGGLE FORWARD

It's this militancy of the rank and file that's bringing the postal unions to the point of calling a strike.

The national leadership continues to preach capitulation. But the rank and file won't follow them. At the con-

vention of the National Association of Letter Carriers held in Chicago in early August, President Joseph Vacca was booed as he defended the proposed contract. Then union delegates voted overwhelmingly to urge rejection of the contract, to call a strike if negotiations weren't re-opened five days after contract rejection, and to demand amnesty for strikers. Emmet Andrews, president of the American Postal Workers Union, faced a similar reception from angry delegates to that union's convention held in Denver in mid-August who also mandated a strike if the contract was rejected by the membership. Now that the rank and file has voted down the contract (and the leaders are facing election battles soon) the traitors are forced to say they will follow the will of the membership and call a strike if negotiations are not re-opened. But their talk is empty because they've taken no steps to organize the masses of postal workers to fight a strike or to build the necessary strike and legal defense funds. In some areas the rank and file are organized in caucuses and their local to fight for a decent contract. Their work in raising the contract demands and the importance of mass resistance to the USPS was important in building the wildcats and other actions in July. But the rank and file has no independent national organization. So the traitorous bureaucrats who control the postal unions are still the major obstacle to the postal workers' ability to effectively wage a national strike battle.

BUILD SUPPORT FOR POSTAL WORKERS

All working people share the fight of postal workers against the attacks on their wages, working conditions, job security and right to strike. Communists have a responsibility to mobilize support for postal workers who are currently in the forefront of resisting capital's attacks on the working class.

The first step in supporting postal workers is to tell the truth. The bourgeois media is a powerful weapon which is already spreading lies about the contract. We must do agitation and propaganda about the issues in the contract fight and what is behind the battle.

During a strike, the state and media will step up attacks on the right of postal workers to strike. We must defend that right. Mail service will be disrupted by a strike. But this is no reason to blame workers who are fighting vicious attacks. The USPS who refuses to agree to a decent contract is responsible for a strike being necessary and disruption of mail service is a tool to force them to meet postal workers' just demands. We must oppose binding arbitration which is offered by bourgeois agents as a substitute for a strike and which would take away postal workers' right to vote on their contract. We must join in their demands for amnesty and no reprisals for striking postal workers. In addition, we should mobilize material support for postal workers' right to strike. They will need money to get through a strike and to pay legal costs. We should actively work to mobilize the resources of our trade unions and other mass organizations behind the strikers.

The postal workers face powerful enemies in this strike. We should work to build the unity of the entire working class to bring its power to bear behind the postal workers.

end to the companies' practice of trying to divide us workers by instigating the pitting of one worker against another.

I've also seen discrimination in another department. There is a shortage of Numerical Control Operators in this area of the country according to the company. The company establishes a shortage which enables them to hire who they want to operate their machines. This practice of the company's virtually leads to the unemployment of qualified national minorities and women. I applied for the position of a numerical control machine operators position when I first hired on, I had had previous experience doing that. The interviewer, a pretty slick operator, told me that I wasn't qualified for that position, however there was an opening for a less skilled machine operators position that he knew I would take. The interviewer assured me that after my probation period I would be able to upgrade if (the big if) there was a position open. Within a month they had hired all the operators they needed from all across the US. Most of these were white males with no more than one month's experience, as compared to all of the qualified workers right there in the plant. This did not make the workers mad at one another. It did expose the company's practice of not upgrading from within the plant.

This issue is of primary importance to expose in our plant work. In doing so we must link discrimination to the general crisis of imperialism which is now attacking oppressed minorities and working people. We are being hurt the most as the capitalists persist in dumping the loads of inflation and unemployment on our backs so as to take the burden off themselves and maintain increased profits. These profits are not theirs and we must fight back now to put an end to all forms of exploitation.

--by a worker correspondent



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.

DISCRIMINATION IN UPGRADING

Earlier this year I started to work in a factory that is a division of one of the largest manufacturing companies in the United States.

While I have worked there I have noticed a lot of discrimination. For example, when I first started to work in the plant I noticed there weren't any national minorities and one other woman in a huge department of workers.

In our union contract we have a brief clause that states that neither the company nor the union shall act contrary to State, Federal or Local laws on the matter of discrimination in employment, regardless of race, sex, religion, union affiliation or political beliefs.

The company is in violation of our contract. Discrimination is prominent when it comes to certain sections of the contract; one of the major violations is in the area of upgrading. National minorities and women are the last to get upgrades within most job classifications. When training programs do exist, minorities are hardly ever asked to participate in them, due to favoritism exercised by the company. The jobs that national minorities and women do get are the unskilled ones in the most exploited areas of the shop and they usually stay in those jobs until they quit or are fired.

I am a woman and I see the need to fight discrimination, and form anti-discrimination caucuses that work in the

factories to organize the workers to defeat the company's tactics of discrimination which serves to oppress national minorities and women.

Already grievances over discrimination are on the rise in the plant. Recently I was talking with a black man who works in maintenance. He made a formal request to be upgraded to a machine operators position for which he was qualified. He was denied the position on the basis that he wasn't a good worker. In our conversation it was established that this is a common practice of the company; many of his co-workers had been discriminated against in the same way, and out of fear for their jobs they hadn't even tried to make grievances against the company's blatant attack on minorities. However the man I had been talking to did file a grievance on the grounds of discrimination. His grievance has been filed for months and the union just keeps shuffling his to the bottom of the stack. It's been months and he hasn't been heard yet. This is also an example of how our union cowers and leaves its rank and file defenseless.

If and when this grievance is heard it must win because it will be one of the many that shows the company the will and strength of the workers to wield a striking blow at discrimination for the good of all workers and not a select group. In the interest of equality we must fight to open those positions traditionally held by white males for the benefit of the oppressed workers. We must put an

WC Commentary on Pacific Collective Views

TAKE MARXISM-LENINISM TO THE WORKING CLASS

We ended our commentary last time stressing the need for local collectives to overcome narrowness, to broaden their view of the tasks of communists. But the line of the Pacific Collective does just the opposite. Their commentary consistently belittles the transforming rôle of Marxist-Leninist theory in the working class movement. It narrows the tasks of communists in the trade unions and clears the path for militant trade unionism. This is the essence of the right opportunist tendency of economism in our movement.

But forces like the Pacific Collective cannot come out openly as economists. Instead they use the works of Marxism-Leninism, like Lenin's polemic "Retrograde Trend in Russian Social Democracy", to attack the very foundations of orthodox Marxism-Leninism on party building and communist work in the trade unions. The Pacific Collective revises Lenin and Stalin on the task of party building. They ignore the rich experience of the international proletariat in the trade unions, summed up by the Communist International or COMINTERN. We will focus on these basic elements of line to expose the right opportunism of the Pacific Collective.

This struggle is not new to our movement. For our part the Party Building Resolutions adopted by the Workers Congress M-L in 1975 have consistently defended the line that the basic task of party building is to win the vanguard, the advanced, to communism. Furthermore, we have upheld the 1930 COMINTERN Resolution on Factory Nuclei in building communist influence in the industrial proletariat.

There is a trend in our movement which attacks any reliance on orthodox Marxism-Leninism as dogmatism. But the principles of Marxism-Leninism represent the most scientific summing up of the rich practical history of the international proletariat over the last 125 years. As Mao says,

"Marxism-Leninism is held to be true not only because it was so considered when it was scientifically formulated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, but because it has been verified in the subsequent practice of revolutionary class struggle and revolutionary national struggle" (On Practice, MSW v.I p.304-5)

WIN THE ADVANCED

The line of "win the advanced" was not concocted by US Marxist-Leninists in 1974, but put forward by Lenin and Stalin long ago. Speaking about the international significance of the Russian revolution, Lenin said in LEFT WING COMMUNISM, AN INFANTILE DISORDER, that the first stage of communist work was to win the proletarian vanguard to communism.

Stalin summarized this same lesson in preparing a pamphlet on strategy and tactics for the international communist movement. He sums up the task of party-building as "to win the vanguard of the proletariat to the side of communism (ie build up cadres, create a Communist Party, work out the program, the principles of tactics). Propaganda as the chief form of activity". (Stalin, COLLECTED WORKS, v.5, p.82)

The Pacific Collective attacks this line directly. "The Pacific Collective does not describe our party building task in the workers movement as 'winning over the advanced' since that expression erroneously implies the existence of a significant stratum of advanced workers..." Or again, "The Pacific Collective did not consider 'winning over the advanced' one of our goals in the mass work. We believed from the beginning that it is necessary to use Lenin's definitions of strata among the workers and by these definitions there were no advanced workers in the plant... most core members were among the most progressive of backward (ie non-socialist) workers."

One thing or the other-- either party building is not the central task or winning the vanguard is not party building. In either case the Pacific Collective is wrong.

The Pacific Collective (P.C.) justifies its attack by revising Lenin's definitions in the polemic "Retrograde Trend". They limit advanced workers to "socialists". However, Lenin's definitions of the advanced is broader than they make it to be. No doubt he is describing the theoreticians like Bebel, who did elaborate independent socialist theories. Also he is describing the rank and file communists who do not elaborate socialist theories, but who do "devote themselves entirely to the education and organization of the proletariat."

But in addition, Lenin is describing advanced workers who are coming forward, responding to the ideas of socialism, who must "study, study, study" to become fully class conscious communists. These workers come from what Lenin called the "better situated strata", that is, the industrial proletariat in the large factories, mines and mills. They are better situated from a communist point of view because of their large numbers and concentration, broad outlook and influence, strategic position and fighting capacity to overthrow monopoly capitalism.

In sum, Marxist-Leninists are among the vanguard, but so are those workers coming out of the plants and democratic movements who are open to the science of Marxism-Leninism. The task is to pursue Marxism-Leninism aggressively, to transform these comrades into class conscious revolutionaries, to win them to communism.

Furthermore, the P.C. reasons that since we don't yet have the kind of influence in our working class movement that the advanced had in Russia in 1899, then there must be an insignificant number of advanced workers here today. They say, "there are very few advanced workers in the US today, nor even enough intermediates (the active socialists Lenin described) to significantly affect the direction of the workers' movement at present. .. You cannot substitute workers with different characteristics and yet expect them to function in the same way... Lenin's advanced workers did."

But the spontaneous character of the workers' movement is really due to the low level of communist influence in that movement. It is the basic logic of economism to blame the workers' movement for our own failures. As we said in our first commentary, "it is a hard task, not an easy one, to connect economic agitation over the day to day demands of the working class with political agitation for our revolutionary goals. If we are to become skilled at this there must be a definite struggle to break with the opportunist tendency of inexperienced comrades to tail trade union politics" (TC v.4#17).

Even our limited experience in the workers movement tells us that there are thousands of advanced workers, ready to resist, willing to make sacrifices, open to a revolutionary science that points the way forward. Just as today, it was the economists in Lenin's time who could only see "an extremely small number of persons fit for revolutionary work" (WITBD p.157, FLP). It is the arrogance of the petty-bourgeoisie that blames the backwardness of workers rather than the current "backwardness" of the communists. What we lack is trained communist leaders who can win the advanced and develop communist leadership in the proletarian and democratic movements.

Why is it the P.C. puts forward their backward view of the advanced? The answer is clear. If their work is directed to the "progressive of the backward" they are relieved of the task of taking Marxism-Leninism to the working class. They are relieved of the necessity to put

forward an independent communist policy. But if Marxist-Leninists are not going to take Marxism-Leninism to the class, what is their purpose for being in the plants at all? Since they have abandoned these communist tasks, the way forward is clear for primarily trade union agitation. In other words, their views on the advanced are a theoretical justification of economism.

WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR WIDESPREAD AGITATION

The P.C. claims that winning the advanced "belittles the broad mass agitating and organizing that communists since Lenin have believed is essential..." What kind of communist work are they talking about? Why, the kind of agitating and organizing "needed to produce advanced workers". In other words, the P.C., like the WC, replaces winning the advanced to communism with winning the lower strata to the level of advanced workers.

In fact, is this what Lenin believed? It is ironic that the P.C. uses Lenin's "Retrograde Trend" to justify their line of agitation to the lower strata. For in that polemic Lenin is criticizing those, like the P.C. who exaggerated the role of agitation to the "lower, less developed strata of the proletariat". (Lenin) In fact, Lenin states

"It is in this extreme exaggeration of one aspect of Social-Democratic work that we see the chief cause of the sad retreat from the ideals of Russian Social Democracy."

He goes on to show how this is part of the economist "retrograde trend" itself!

Lenin goes on to argue against the fear that "the formation of a revolutionary party conducting a political struggle will interfere with agitation." But the P.C. fears that our party building task of winning the advanced "belittles" or interferes with broad mass agitation. Their solution is to liquidate the correct line on party-building.

The fact is if you really want to talk about widespread agitation, the priority goes to party-building work. Lenin shows that by struggling to build the party we build at the same time the best means by which to unfold widespread agitation on a national level based on a common line on all economic and political questions. Through a national network we use every local success to train all agitators. We develop the ability to send agitators to situations that reflect our national priorities. And in building the party Lenin always stresses our work with the advanced.

BUILD FACTORY NUCLEI

We consolidate the advanced in cores and nuclei. In our first commentary we defined a factory core as a "party type organization at the workplace made up of communists and advanced workers and modeled after the factory nuclei". (TC, vol.4, no.17)

Cores are not just another form for mass work, as the P.C. defines them, but are a party type form for communist work that can lead the trade unions in a revolutionary way. They should strive to take up every issue which would fall within the scope of a primary unit of a communist organization. They are a tool for building factory nuclei, our basic communist units in the plants.

The 1930 COMINTERN Resolution on Factory Nuclei described factory nuclei as "the forms and methods of work in accordance with the tasks connected with the leadership of the mass demonstrations of the proletariat... of the agricultural laborers and the poorest sections of the peasantry... and with carrying out the necessary preparations of these mass demonstrations."

Furthermore, looking at our tasks in the industrial proletariat, the COMINTERN Resolution speaks directly to them:

"One of the most difficult points in the organization of Party on a factory basis is the creation of factory nuclei in factories where there are no Party members or where there

are only one or two. As the matter stands today when as a rule, the Communist Parties have no, or very small nuclei in the big factories, as a result of which they can play no important role in the development of the Communist movement in the factory, they are confronted with the essential and urgent task of immediately setting up strong factory nuclei in all big factories."

But the P.C. says "sometimes cores are appropriate and sometimes they are not, depending on the development of the subjective factor. The matter of forms of organization for mass work is a tactical question, which means that we need to combine the lessons of past experiences with the greatest creativity and flexibility in solving practical problems. The concept of what form in which to work with the most progressive workers at a plant should never be cast in iron..."

In the name of "greatest creativity and flexibility" the P.C. has thrown basic principles and line of Marxism-Leninism out the window. We should not form a core without preparing the conditions, and this takes longer in some situations than in others. Our tactics must always remain flexible.

But revolutionary tactics are part of a revolutionary strategy, "subordinate to it and serving it". (Stalin, FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM, p.86 FLP) Our strategy is proletarian revolution in which factories become "fortresses". Thus our tactics must conform to a Marxist-Leninist line which can guide the building of those fortresses. The question of a form for a particular mass organization is a matter of tactics. But the question of a party style of work, which is the issue in building cores and nuclei, is a question of principle.

The P.C. also claims that to have to study Marxism-Leninism in a core is "mechanical". But how can a core help build factory nuclei without the study and application of Marxism-Leninism? We win contacts in the plants to our leadership in cores through aggressively pursuing verbal agitation and propaganda, the use of THE COMMUNIST and joint work in the day to day struggles in the plants. The core further tests and consolidates our unity. Its members test us and we test them. In the course of our work in the core we also begin to defeat reformist tendencies of looseness towards discipline, carelessness towards security and vacillation in political line.

Throughout its history the COMINTERN had to fight for its line against the reformist tendencies from the old socialist parties. Today due to the powerful and long-standing influence of bourgeois reformism and revisionism, economist tendencies in our movement resist the line of the CI Resolution. In capitulation to reformism the P.C. has ignored it. They abandon the very means by which communists will divert the working class from the path of trade unionism, and instead take a step down that very path.

DEFEATING A RETROGRADE TREND IN OUR MOVEMENT

In "Retrograde Trend" Lenin showed how the fragmentation and amateurishness of the Russian Social Democratic movement, and its failure to uphold orthodox Marxism inevitably led to the opportunist trend of economism. Our recent series on revolutionary training shows how similar conditions in our own movement provide fertile soil for economist tendencies today. These tendencies "feed on the conditions of fragmentation and inexperience, promoting ideological confusion, political narrowness, and organizational amateurishness." (TC, vol.IV, no.13)

These are the main barriers to fusing communism with the working class movement and as such must be purged from our ranks. The Iskra Plan of the Workers Congress addresses this task and puts forward an Iskra-type paper as the link to defeating the tendency to bow to spontaneity and follow the line of least resistance in our work. It is in this struggle that we build a network capable of forming a genuine communist party.

COMMENTS ON RWC STRIKE SUM-UP

by the Pacific Collective

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE, WRITTEN BY THE PACIFIC COLLECTIVE (PC), CONCLUDES THE SUM-UP OF STRIKE WORK THEY DID WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS COLLECTIVE (RWC). THE RWC'S SUM-UP IS IN THE LAST TWO ISSUES OF THE COMMUNIST.

PREFACE

In a period when so few US communists have learned to do the kind of mass work that permits us to provide real leadership to the working class and win many workers to our ranks, we think that comrades should routinely circulate or publish summations of their practice so that we can all learn from each others' hard won experience, and not only our own. Therefore we favor the publication of these materials on the joint mass work of members of the R.W.C. and the P.C., even though important inadequacies remain in the ability of both collectives to analyze that work. (In particular, it is necessary to explore more deeply the reasons for the identified mistakes, in order to prevent their repetition.)

We have a high level of agreement with the R.W.C.'s summation, to which, as they mention, we also made some contributions. However, certain differences remain, largely because of lack of time to struggle them out. On those that we consider significant, we add our own comments here. Some concern our evaluation of the work in the strike; others, the broader issues which the R.W.C. takes up in discussing that work.

We want to emphasize that the summation covers a particular period of time. Nothing stands still in the mass work, and the descriptions of our relationships with other communist forces are dated as well. But there are valuable lessons to be learned from the experience of these few months of our work.

THE ROLE OF PRACTICE IN PARTY BUILDING

We will not try to summarize here where we agree and disagree with the R.W.C.'s introductory statements on party-building. Rather, we will state briefly where we see trade union practice fitting in with the tasks of party-building.

Among those tasks which will enable us to build a vanguard party, the P.C. sees Marxist-Leninist study and investigation of U.S. society and the path towards its revolutionary transformation, i.e., the creation and advocacy of theory, as playing the principal role in moving the situation forward in this period. However, practice, particularly in the industrial proletariat, is also absolutely essential, for a number of reasons.

The following are some of our main goals in such work: (1) deepening the fusion between the communist and workers' movements by raising the consciousness and degree of organization of the different strata of workers at the plant, and building a close working relationship with the most active and progressive (but including the mass agitation needed to help produce advanced and intermediate workers); (2) helping us direct our theoretical work to those issues which must be studied to permit our agitation and propaganda to address the problems on the workers' minds and the particular forms of bourgeois ideology that must be refuted; (3) contributing what we can to the communist movement's pool of knowledge of different sectors of the working class, the union bureaucracy, the capitalists, and the state; (4) contributing to the communist movement's pool of knowledge on the correctness and incorrectness of different lines and methods of work,

collective makes separately). This is quite difficult at times, as the differences that emerge in summing up the work may suggest. But it affords the fullest attempts to resolve differences -- in a setting where the practice proves who is correct -- and permits development of a much more all-sided tactical line and more unified practice.

Finally, our collective sees four main areas of future work at the plant described in the summation. The one we add to the three listed by the R.W.C. is this: a consistent, protracted struggle for the communists to coordinate our work and knowledge as much as possible, avoid unprincipled struggle in front of and with worker contacts, and seek to narrow our differences, avoiding both the trap of believing that such struggle is fruitless or unnecessary and the illusion that such a struggle can be entirely successful.

DEEPENING FUSION: WORK WITH THE CORE

The P.C. did not consider "winning over the advanced" one of our goals in the mass work. We believed from the beginning that it is necessary to use Lenin's definitions of strata among the workers, and by these definitions there were no advanced workers in the plant.

We think that some things should be added to what the R.W.C. says about this question. Definitions are conscious choices about what concepts we mean when we use certain words, and the choices should be made to provide the greatest clarity in the theory that guides our practice. But the debate about "who are the advanced in the U.S. today" overlooks this. In fact, we think that there are very few advanced workers in the U.S. today, nor even enough intermediates (the active socialists Lenin described) to significantly affect the direction of the workers' movement at present. This means that we do need to carefully study the class and develop categories to help identify its more and less progressive strata and learn to raise their levels.

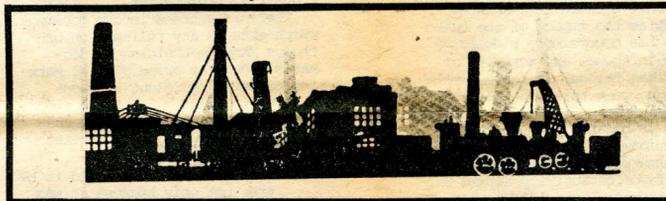
But the terms advanced and intermediate are intimately tied to Lenin's observations about the roles such workers -- who always do develop eventually -- play in fusing communism with the workers' movement. To understand Lenin, we must apply what he says to the same kinds of workers he was writing about. You cannot substitute workers with different characteristics and yet expect them to function in the same way. For one thing, workers who do not have the influence in the class of the advanced, the leaders whom Lenin described, are not going to determine the character of the worker's movement the way Lenin's advanced workers did.

Comrades from both collectives vacillated on this in practice, and if the R.W.C. is criticizing itself for "the pragmatic substitution of the concept of the 'relatively advanced,'" we agree with the criticism. That this is not an academic matter of formulations can be seen from the "left" errors which we all made towards core members -- both in our expectations of the study that would interest them, and in our unpreparedness for the degree to which difficult objective conditions after the strike and the errors of us and other communists could push core members out of the work. Had we recognized consistently that most core members were among the most progressive of backward (i.e., non-socialist) workers, use of the scientific terminology would have helped remind us whom we were dealing with.

Our own and others' "left" difficulties in holding to Lenin's definitions stem from a reluctance to recognize the enmity of our work in a class where so much backwardness prevails (through no fault of the workers, of course). (There is also a right deviation on this, which similarly lowers the definition of the advanced but is tied to the right error of failing to set for ourselves the task of raising the level of the most progressive workers to what really is possible.) This view of the advanced

explains our participation in the broad forms of mass work described here. It also explains why the Pacific Collective does not describe our party-building task in the worker's movement as "winning over the advanced," since that expression erroneously implies the existence of a significant stratum of advanced workers and belittles the broad mass agitating and organizing that communists since Lenin have believed is essential to communist work since the Russians discovered the technique in 1895. Our party-building task in the workers' movement is deepening the fusion between it and the communist movement. Propaganda is one form of doing this, particularly with the most progressive and active workers. But agitation and helping the workers organize are also essential, and they are certainly not secondary in terms of the time they take, either. Moreover, as we will show in a forthcoming pamphlet on party-building, widespread agitation is one of the factors needed to produce advanced workers (the other being sharp class contradictions and a high level of class struggle).

Turning to the question of cores, we agree with the R.W.C.'s observation that sometimes cores are appropriate and sometimes not, depending on the development of the subjective factor; but it may be useful to give the question a broader treatment here. The matter of forms of organization for mass work is a tactical question, which means that we need to combine the lessons of past experience with the greatest creativity and flexibility in solving particular problems. The concept of what form in which to work with the most progressive workers at a plant should never be cast in iron, a tendency we detect in, e.g. last year's public dialogue between the League for Proletarian Revolution and the Marxist-Leninist Collective on what a core should be in general.



As Mao pointed out,

"The masses in any given place are generally composed of three parts, the relatively active, the intermediate and the relatively backward," and we "must therefore be skilled in uniting the small number of active elements around the leadership and must rely on them to raise the level of the intermediate elements and win over the backward elements." ("Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership")

Unlike the categories of advanced, intermediate, and backward as applied to the kinds of workers who play different roles in the process of fusion, Mao's categories are entirely relative. That is, they vary widely from place to place. We have worked in a plant where the most relative activists would do -- with some fear and trembling -- was serve on an officially-sanctioned strike preparation committee that did criticize the union leadership for hindering its work. In contrast, at the plant described in the summation, a number of workers are actively building an independent newsletter and, we think, will help create a caucus aimed at toppling the opportunist bureaucrats. And we also expect to be able to establish a smaller group for higher level propaganda work. Furthermore, in later times, the "relative activists" in a large number of settings will want to fight, gun in hand, for socialism.

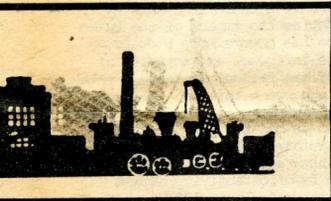
Wherever we go, we should set up forms that will enable us to work closely with the relative activists, to (a) broaden the circle of those who will design and implement a conscious plan, (b) strengthen our influence with the broad masses, (c) criticize our work in ways that the masses will not always do directly, and (d) permit us to raise the political level of those activists in discussions, and hopefully study, that

others are not yet ready for. The caucus during the strike was one such form; our core within it was another.

The point is to see whom we are working with and objectively evaluate what forms will best serve the work with them, not mechanically go in with the idea that you have to have a core, or that if you do have a core, it has to study Marxism-Leninism or have some predetermined level of unity that communists can agree on in the pages of RESISTANCE. (Nor, we should add, in the light of BACU's and AIM's current right line and practice at this plant, do you go in everywhere and always with a strategy for a left-center alliance and apply this so that you concentrate your forces almost exclusively on the low-level forms of organization appropriate for all who could enter such an alliance.)

One final comment on cores in general. R.W.C. is mistaken in identifying ultra-leftism only with mechanically trying to form a high-level core even where subjective conditions do not call for it, and tying rightism only to the failure to form one when there are workers who would join it. These deviations do occur. But other "lefts" can try to be the sole vanguard and lead the masses without uniting the relative activists to help and criticize, an adventurist error that leads to isolation. (We have made this mistake elsewhere, and it also characterized a more recent instance of agitational work of the R.W.C. and others in this area.) There are also other right deviations besides not forming a core. It is possible to form one and then over-rely on the workers' judgement, no matter how conservative (The two collectives agree that such an error contributed to our failure to take a more aggressive stand against some post-strike rebaiting at the plant.)

We do agree with the R.W.C.'s description of strengths and weak-



nesses in the work of the core, but we think that the "left" errors in evaluating these worker comrades were significant enough to warrant inclusion in the list of main weaknesses, at the end of the summation. (By the way, the study materials which the R.W.C. correctly describes as inappropriate for these particular workers were those that presented Marxist-Leninist theory in its most general form, e.g. Stalin's "Dialectical and Historical Materialism.")

DEEPENING FUSION: OTHER MASS WORK

Many communists would not seek to create the kind of caucus described in the R.W.C. document, so an explanation of the reasons for it is appropriate. The four principles of unity defined an organizational form that could unite union members willing to take an independent role in building a successful strike. This was required, in the first place, by the interests of the workers. The strike had no chance of success unless we helped organize these activists to mobilize the masses in a strong strike and in the struggle against the bureaucrats' capitulation. Second, the caucus was a form that would bring forward the most progressive and active workers, permitting us to develop contacts with them and do higher-level verbal agitation than what the broad masses were prepared to grasp, and perhaps enabling us to recruit more core members. We still think that this level of unity was correct, although a program spelling out more particulars instead of such general principles might have helped bring in more workers.

Some communists believe that our mass work in this period should be limited to educating the workers, doing both propaganda and (perhaps) agitational exposures. Our position, backed by both our own experience and that of communists historically, is that it is necessary to educate

and organize the workers. Even if, for some reason, the work of building the unity and organization of the class did not otherwise need to be taken up at this time, those who attempt to educate and criticize, without showing in practice that there is a way to change things, rapidly lose the audience which they are trying to educate.

On the question of agitation concerning the union bureaucrats, we agree completely that the ATM and the BACU resisted exposing the treachery to be expected from the bureaucrats. However, not having struggled over how to sum up the strike with these organizations, we do not join the R.W.C.'s definite statement that the other groups had a different analysis of the relationship of the bureaucrats to the struggle of the workers. The comrades from these groups did appear to have real illusions about these officials, particularly a militant-talking ext-steward. But it is also possible that they underestimated the amount of evidence of the bureaucrats' opportunism already before the eyes of the masses, thinking that serious attacks on them at that time would seem to lack a basis in fact and appear divisive. In any event, they were wrong. Caucus members and a very broad group of the workers generally were able to see the role the bureaucrats were playing and the need for independent rank-and-file initiative.

On the question of the caucus's economism, we disagree with the R.W.C.'s making this criticism of a mass form that succeeded in uniting broader grouping than the communists. Our own reliance on the group as the main form for producing independent agitation was the economist deviation. Had we raised a higher level analysis consistently within the caucus, as we should have, some ideas beyond progressive and militant trade-unionism might have made it into the caucus's leaflets. However, since it was -- correctly -- a mass form, and could not have consistently united around a communist analysis, we also should have used leaflets of our own to put out an independent point of view.

Besides economism, another serious weakness in the mass work was spontaneity. Not that we upheld the theory of tailing spontaneous events, but in the intense and rapidly changing conditions of the strike struggle we were usually just trying to keep up with and respond to these events, rather than operating according to enough of a plan and an analysis that could help us and our close worker contacts find our bearings, take the initiative more often, make consistent economic and political exposures, and judge our practice according to predefined goals. We continue to find that this is much easier said than done and that the struggle against spontaneity is indeed a struggle.

We have three more comments on the particularities of this mass work. One is that anticommunism among the workers at this plant is at a fairly high level. Not to the point that we are in physical danger, but to the point where the credibility of communists is weak. Methods of mass work which fail to take this into account as an obstacle to be overcome will fail.

Second, the R.W.C. statement that we expected "that the bureaucrats and a core of union activists would provide day to day guidance during the strike" does not mean that any of us had real illusions about them organizing a strong strike, for no one did. But we expected more direct action from them, including misleadership, than what actually occurred. They had not been at all hesitant to call a strike (and had been saying for several months that we would have to strike). So we expected them to be a presence, and to have some kind of base. But they had no such base, and they tended to get sick, leave town, etc. so much that there was the vacuum of leadership to which the R.W.C. refers, rather than the type of situation where the bureaucrats are firmly guiding the struggle towards a sellout.

Third, on the role the P.C. and the R.W.C. played in helping mobilize the rank and file in this struggle, we want to highlight the importance of the objective unity of the pro-

gressive forces. Our own effectiveness was definitely heightened by the fact that members of the negotiating committee, another rank and file committee, the ATM and the BACU, and ourselves were all working generally in the same direction, at least in terms of informing the rank and file about the real nature of the company's offers and urging their continued resistance.

ANALYZING THE GAINS MADE

Despite a great deal of agreement with the R.W.C.'s evaluation of where the struggle moved forward and where it did not, we have three important differences. In each area we think the comrades are over-optimistic. On the question of whether the workers won a victory or suffered a defeat in the contract struggle, we think that they suffered a defeat, although it certainly could have been worse. They began, under the old contract, with a level of real wages higher than what they can expect, with inflation, under the new one. And they began without some of the restrictions on grievance handling that are now in the new contract. These losses and others, as the R.W.C. agrees, were not offset by other gains.

We think that the R.W.C. confuses this with the tactical question of whether or not it was correct to strike, an important question on which there was no consensus among the workers following the strike's end. As the R.W.C. demonstrates, the strike helped minimize the defeat. It also may have prevented a situation where, at the next set of negotiations, the losses would be even worse. Had the workers caved in this time, the company would demand even more the next time, the bureaucrats might well capitulate, and the workers -- lacking confidence in their own ability to struggle -- might accept the new losses.

But these benefits of striking do not convert a setback in the economic struggle into even "a small victory." The comrades' method of analysis -- comparing the company's pre-strike offer with the final settlement -- can lead to absurd results. First of all, it allows both sides to claim a victory. For company negotiators can also point out that the final settlement is far more favorable to the company than what the union was initially demanding.

Moreover, in another situation, the workers could be practically crushed, but if the "take-aways" are not as bad as what the company aimed at, we would be analyzing this as a victory. Such subjective conclusions do not sit well with workers, who know full well when they are beaten, but who are open to consider an objective analysis of whether it was correct to undergo the sacrifices of a long strike anyway.

Beyond this, we know that the R.W.C. would agree that, as the imperialist crisis deepens, workers are going to suffer serious attacks on their conditions of work and living standards; those who have at least tolerable lives under capitalism will find them getting much worse. The concrete realization of this process will include innumerable setbacks in contract struggles. The fact that workers must suffer these defeats under capitalism is one of the main reasons why they will even-

tually overthrow it. It would objectively serve the interests of those who want to mislead the workers about the need for that overthrow, if we try to convince them that they are winning when they are losing, simply because their struggles have helped prevent the losses from being greater. Analyzing such struggles as victories implies the sufficiency of trade unionism, but our job is to help the workers see clearly the limits of trade unionism.

We also think that comrades are putting a second matter one-sidedly in their conclusions, in stating, "The rank and file has a greater understanding of its own power and the victories that can be won through unified action." On the positive side, a blow was definitely struck against the common backward idea that the workers cannot do anything together, that it's about looking out for yourself. Some workers also saw better their own power and the gains that can be won through rank and file action, but there was also very broad sentiment that we sacrificed heavily and lost anyway, so striking is futile.

Finally, we believe there is similar subjectivism in the fourth "over-all gain" listed in the conclusion of the summation: "The basis has been laid 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 union local from the bureaucrats..." This wrongly implies that at the end of the strike conditions for building such an organization were favorable, or at least that we could begin to build it, and that communist leadership would be accepted by a broad mass group. Now certainly the first steps were taken in the exercise of communist and other independent rank and file initiative. Some gains were made in the ability of the masses to see the need for legitimacy of such action, but it will still be an uphill battle to establish the kind of organization which the comrades describe. In a recent discussion about when we could hope to unite today's activist forces in the nucleus of a caucus, comrades in both collectives spoke of a target date which is over a year after the strike concluded. After it is formed, if it does good work, under correct leadership, it will surely grow into a broad rank and file organization. And through it, and our own independent role, the shaky credibility of the communists will grow much stronger.

In other words, we think that much of the basis for a strong, communist-led caucus remains to be built, though we have already proceeded farther than we were during a period of serious demoralization among the workers after the strike, which is the point where the summation ends. We think that in the main the R.W.C.'s practice shows that they agree with this. But we also think that their contrary statement in the summation can unintentionally mislead others, and perhaps themselves, about the strengths of their own work and the difficulty of the tasks still before us.

To reach the Pacific Collective, comrades may write to them at 2000 Center St., #1186, Berkeley, CA 94704.



The plan of the Workers Congress (Marxist-Leninist) is to fight for a newspaper modeled on Lenin's ISKRA as the main link in the fight to prepare the conditions for a new Communist party. While we discuss questions from our own definite point of view, our columns are open to all Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary workers for topical exposures, polemics and reports on their work.

Subscribe to THE COMMUNIST

Subscription rates are \$6.50 per year. Please make checks and money orders payable to the Workers Congress, POB 1297, Chicago, Ill. 60690

Subscribase a EL COMUNISTA

EL COMUNISTA se publica separado en español. \$4.50 por ano. Favor de extender su cheque or giro postal a favor de Workers Congress. POB 11713, Los Angeles, Ca. 90011

RIGHT OPPORTUNISM IN ANTI-BAKKE WORK

RESPONSE TO ATM & IWK

In a public forum in San Francisco July 14th sponsored by the August Twenty Ninth Movement (ATM) and the I Wor Kuen (IWK) to sum up their anti-Bakke work, these two organizations lied about the character of Workers Congress (M-L) work in the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition. They accused the Workers Congress of "ALL TALK, NO WORK".

This scoundrel criticism, made in our absence by these two organizations who did not notify us of the forum and who have not dared to put the criticism in writing is an insult to the entire membership of the ABDC. We challenge the ATM/IWK to make the criticism in ABDC chapters where we have taken up work. Try that criticism in Chicago and Los Angeles where our comrades have worked in a determined fashion to build the ABDC in the face of the petty, gossiping sectarianism promoted by your leadership. Try it in a chapter like San Diego where you have played no role and our leadership has been influential. In that chapter the serious and principled nature in which the ABDC has been built, the non-sectarian way in which it has promoted broad democratic representation on the local steering committee and the respectful approach to uniting all who can be united have distinguished the chapter and won it good credibility in the Black and Latino communities.

Either the ATM and IWK, who together are in leadership of the ABDC, do not know what is going on in the coalition, in which case they are unfit for leadership, or they know of the WC(M-L)'s work, but have lied. It is obvious they have lied. Why? It is because we have constantly challenged the economist leadership they have provided to the ABDC. ATM and IWK simply do not want to deal with political differences. They hush them up, or take heavy handed disciplinary action which has no place in a united front coalition, or lie about work to friends who are not in possession of the facts in order to discredit differences which challenge their leadership. They confuse their own narrow organizational ambitions with their responsibilities to a broad united front organization.

For our part, we expect differences in united front work and are not offended by them.

Why do we call ATM/IWK's leadership economist? The answer will be clear to any honest comrade. They have consistently belittled the role of theory in guiding united front work in the ABDC, have adopted a narrow sectarian approach to the political tasks of the coalition and have been amateurish in organizing its work. Let us take these points up one by one.

IS LEGITIMATE POLITICAL STRUGGLE JUST "TALK"?

For honest comrades who may have been swayed by the ATM/IWK slander of the WC(M-L), we'd first like to set the record straight. In an open and above board manner we have consistently brought forward the need for political discussion within the ABDC concerning the political basis for the coalition's work. Our reason for this is that the principles of unity on which the organization was founded as a purely regional coalition are clearly inadequate to mobilize the full scope of nationwide resistance to the widespread attack on affirmative action being felt in schools, communities and workplaces across the country. We have never made a secret of our differences on this score. At the same time we have conscientiously taken up the work of building the ABDC and have never let these differences stand in the way of carrying out ABDC activities and building for ABDC events. What is there contrary to the principles of united front work in this?

Yet our concern for the narrow principles on which the ABDC is based and which infect the whole scope

of its work has been slandered as "just talk."

Let's consider some of this "talk"—for example, the principle "rely on the masses of oppressed people to defeat the Bakke decision."

Imagine going to a democratically minded doctor and telling him that he must agree to this principle before he can work with the coalition. He may very likely reply, "I'm not really sure what you are talking about, and I probably disagree. But I see sick people day and night. I see babies of the poor and national minorities dying of starvation and lead poisoning. I see oppressed people whose health has been ruined by speedups and overtime, industrial pollutants. I tell them they must stay home and rest and they reply that if they do they will be fired. They need the money. The poor health of these people is connected to affirmative action on the job and in the hospitals. I think this coalition can be of some help."

Are we going to exclude this person from the coalition? Are we going to ignore the positive contributions he can make to promoting the anti-Bakke struggle?

The principle of relying on the working and oppressed masses is an excellent principle for communists. Through our influence we should ensure that it in fact characterizes the work of a united front organization such as the ABDC. In fact, in the WC(M-L)'s work in the ABDC we have worked hard to bring our propaganda and agitation concerning the struggle to these groups. We have worked to draw them into the ABDC coalition. However, Marxist-Leninists should not confuse a correct communist principle with a principle of unity of a mass organization.

One thing or the other — either uniting all who can be united is the basis for united front work or we unite those who will rely on the oppressed masses.

We do not believe it is "just talk" to urge the membership of a mass organization to abandon this second formulation, which is incorrect, for the first, which is correct, in order to broaden the political basis for its work.

In bringing this criticism forward, we need to be clear that we made mistakes on this score ourselves.

In our public proposal concerning the principles of unity circulated at the conference founding the national ABDC, we correctly insisted on the need for "unite all who can be united to overturn the Bakke decision" as a principle of unity. However we incorrectly added "rely on the working and oppressed masses." Although we sought to improve the principles of unity we did not think this problem through carefully enough in terms of its practical impact, but instead bowed to the existing formulation of the statewide coalition. In the event, no principles of unity of any kind were discussed at the founding national conference of the ABDC and this remains a definite weakness in the political basis for the coalition.

Let's look at the principle, "oppose both the US Supreme Court and the UC Regents as equal targets," which we have also "talked" about.

Here it is, over 18 months into the anti-Bakke struggle, and 6 months since the ABDC founding national conference, and ATM/IWK are still defending this narrow principle. They bluster and strut as if they were king of the mountain on this question. But when we place the regents in the context of the entire bourgeois state, their mountain is an ant hill.

The UC Regents have been promoters and supporters of Bakke's attack on affirmative action and they should be exposed nationwide. However, they are only part of the entire state apparatus, local and federal, carrying out the Bakke attack on affirmative action. To raise the UC regents to the level of a special target puts undue emphasis on the student and regional character of the specific

Bakke lawsuit and undermines the broad national impact of the overall Bakke attack. How can we make the UC Regents an "equal target" in the Weber case which attacks affirmative action in a Louisiana Kaiser Aluminum plant. Formulated in this way the principle of unity belittles the significance of the Supreme Court as a historical tool of national oppression going back to Dred Scott and the "separate but equal doctrine," it belittles the significance of Congressional action such as the Walker amendment that would withhold federal funds to institutions that use affirmative action in hiring, it belittles the significance of the Carter administration's two faced role in undermining federal affirmative action programs. It also tends to belittle the role of the trade union bureaucrats as opportunist allies of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement whose privileges depend on a policy of national oppression, and even belittles the role of individual employers like US Steel or AT&T in the Bakke attack.

We ask, wouldn't it be irresponsible not to "talk" about these weaknesses in the principles of unity of the ABDC, and irresponsible not to continue struggling against them? What is incorrect is incorrect and neither silence, nor maneuvers nor slander can change it.

Of course, as we have made clear before in the pages of THE COMMUNIST, we disagree with the position of the NCOBD that the UC Regents are a tactical ally. We pointed out that the Regents promoted the Bakke attack on affirmative action (TC, III, #7, 3/29/77) and under the guise of 'quality education' have moved to junk special admissions programs to the university (TC, IV, #1, 10/31/77). They are an integral part of the state apparatus and there is nothing in the role they have played to justify calling them a tactical ally.

Let's take the principle "oppose the systematic oppression of third world people".

We pointed out in February that the use of the term 'third world' in this principle and in ABDC literature was incorrect. The term has been loosely used by bourgeois politicians, California law school deans and other educators to refer generally to "disadvantaged" countries and peoples anywhere. According to this logic, Chicanos are third world people, blacks are third world people, Native Americans are third world people, Asian-Americans are third world people, and so forth. However, according to Chairman Mao Tsetung's theory of the three worlds, which is a scientific assessment of international political forces today, the third world is made up of the oppressed nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America who are together the main force in international class struggle. The people incorrectly referred to in the ABDC principles of unity as third world people are actually oppressed nationalities of the first world, who of course are joined in common struggle with the people of the third world.

It is no secret to ATM/IWK that the theory of three worlds is under attack in the international communist movement today. For communists to encourage or bow to loose bourgeois usage is inexcusable and only aids this attack.

We have also pointed out that this principle is too narrow because it omits women which are a specific target of the Bakke attack. In fact, ATM/IWK leadership in the ABDC has always belittled the impact of the Bakke case on affirmative action for women and justified their position by counterposing the oppression of women to the question of national oppression. Without evidence they assert that women are not a primary object of the Bakke attack and argue that if we expand our written and practical work around the impact of Bakke on women, we will take away from the struggle against national oppression. This is the logic of the

bourgeoisie which attempts to divide the struggles of the masses. Marxist-Leninists seek to unite these two powerful democratic movements around the common source of their oppression and their common struggle for equality.

Once again, we ask honest comrades whether "talk" about these issues is designed to promote or undermine the work of the ABDC? It is clear that our efforts to broaden the political basis of the coalition and to correct what is incorrect in its principles of unity have been designed to further our common goals and to promote and strengthen the work of the coalition.

Lenin says that economism is an opportunist trend which belittles or has a narrow conception of the role of Marxist theory. The longstanding and consistent effort of ATM/IWK to defend the present principles of unity of the ABDC and to stifle any criticism or evaluation of them is a glaring example of the economist character of their leadership in the coalition.

POLITICAL NARROWNESS OF ABDC LEADERSHIP

Economism is also characterized by a narrow scope of political activity. As Lenin said of economists in the Russian revolutionary movement, "I would never dream of denying that you did all you possibly could. I have asserted and assert now, that the limits of what is 'possible' for you to do are restricted by the narrowness of your outlook." (WHAT IS TO BE DONE, Pek. ed., p. 133).

Why does this quote so aptly characterize ATM/IWK's leadership in the ABDC?

In the first place, the emphasis of ABDC work has been limited to California. It is a sad fact that when ATM/IWK give themselves badges for mass work, they are all for campus or for California campaigns. Is there a relationship between this and the fact that as the impact of the Bakke decision has become more widespread that the influence and activity of the ABDC has fallen? Is there a relationship between this and the fact that ATM/IWK have promoted a trend in the ABDC to belittle the necessity for a nationwide campaign to defend affirmative action programs from attack in favor of activity around California's Proposition 13? We think there is. Their leadership has been characterized by what's possible in California, not what is necessary nationwide.

A second kind of political narrowness has been reflected in the way ATM/IWK have handled differences within the ABDC. As we said, differences in united front work are normal and must not be seen as barriers to common work toward a common goal. ATM/IWK's operating principle, however, has been "IF YOU DON'T AGREE WITH US, WHY DON'T YOU GET OUT". This is what they substitute for "UNITE ALL WHO CAN BE UNITED."

For example, members of our organization working in ABDC have been told this on several different occasions — "if you don't agree, why don't you leave". This is preposterous! What kind of united front principle is that?! In spite of important differences, ATM/IWK and the WC(M-L) clearly have more unity than disunity in the broad context of the struggle of the masses for equal rights and against imperialist oppression and reaction. While we will not gloss over even our minor differences, we will not let them stand in the way of common work toward a common goal. Clearly, in the anti-Bakke struggle our unity should be primary over our differences. If ATM/IWK cannot unite with us, who can they unite with? The fact is they have trouble uniting with anyone.

For example, as we understand it, in one instance an individual member of the ABDC was expelled from a local chapter over differences concerning the international situation. But the ABDC is a democratic mass organization, not a communist organization. Right or wrong, any expulsion or disciplinary action which is taken against members of the coalition should be a public matter reported on to all local chapters and openly explained and defended to the whole

RESPONSE

CONTINUED FROM P. 6

membership. Otherwise we make a mockery of uniting all who can be united. Disciplinary action or expulsion becomes an arbitrary substitute for political struggle in those cases where ATM/IWK have organizational hegemony.

We have also seen a sectarian attitude in some of the petty organizational maneuvering that has characterized the IWK/ATM leadership. Criticism is stifled by not informing this or that individual of meetings, or changing the time and place of meetings without adequate, or any, notice, etc. Even where good work has been done by members of the ABDC in community or workplace outreach, the response of ATM/IWK has been to limit it if they can not be assured of hegemony over it.

The narrowness of the ATM/IWK leadership in broadening the scope of the ABDC coalition is best twofold by their failure to agree with the NCOBD to joint action around the April 15 March. While they claim to support ABDC/NCOBD unity, in fact they have obstructed it. There is no question that the leadership of both coalitions has engaged in sectarian maneuvering which has prevented common action, but our concern is with the leadership of the ABDC.

They did not aggressively promote common action on April 15, but in fact adopted a passive attitude toward it which left local chapters unprepared up until the last minute and limited ABDC participation in the demonstration. For our part, we clearly identified the basis for unity of action among all anti-Bakke forces (support for equal rights of women and oppressed minorities; defense of all affirmative action programs), and we fought for the principle of common action in the ABDC. On April 15 we played an important role in mobilizing ABDC members to participate in the Washington, D.C. demonstration.

As if to cover their sectarian maneuvering, the ATM/IWK have been blustering about "no unity with reformists and revisionists" to confuse people about the nature of the struggle with the NCOBD. While on the one hand we don't advocate joining coalitions that are nothing more than revisionist front groups, on the other hand, we cannot refuse to work in a mass coalition because it may contain the odor of revisionism. We must go where the masses are. If they are under revisionist and reformist influence, we do not move the situation forward by ignoring this. Revisionism will not simply go away. It is a contradiction we resolve by putting forward a leading line and winning the masses to it in the process of struggle.

Again on this point also we must criticize ourselves for narrowness. We wrote in our Anti-Bakke Supplement (TC, IV, #8, 2/13/78) that "The ABDC has drawn a good line of demarcation with reformist and revisionist forces who wanted to reduce the Bakke struggle nationwide to one for petty reforms." It is an example of political narrowness to think we can win this battle by drawing organizational lines and abandoning those under the influence of reformist and revisionist leaders to their fate. It is wishful thinking to suppose that reformist and revisionist tendencies do not exist in the ABDC. Clearly, the struggle against reformism and revisionism must go on throughout the anti-Bakke movement. If we find ourselves in a coalition that has "purged" itself of reformism, we know we have drawn our lines much too narrowly. We will have confused a party organization with a mass organization. It is communist propaganda, not organizational demarcation that will differentiate revolutionary from reformist influence in our mass organizations at this time.

There are millions of people today in the US that are affected by the Bakke decision. If we do our work well as communists, we will be a tiny minority in the anti-Bakke struggle. While it is a principle that as communists we must fight for

the hegemony of our ideological, political and organizational leadership, and strive to subordinate every mass organization to communist direction, we must do this through our influence and persuasion, not by narrowing the scope of our mass work to what we can directly dominate or organizationally control. This, however, has been a fundamental characteristic of the leadership ATM/IWK have given to ABDC. Placing organizational ambition above responsibility to the movement as a whole, they have maintained hegemony in ABDC by limiting the scope and activity of the coalition's work.

AMATEURISHNESS IN ABDC LEADERSHIP

Organizational narrowness is manifested in amateurish methods of work. It is in our overall challenge to the economist leadership ATM/IWK have provided to the ABDC that the WC(M-L) attack on poor coalition democracy must be understood. From the beginning we have criticized the lack of reporting, agendas and planning that have stifled democracy in the ABDC. While we emphasized this point at the founding National Conference in February, it is still the case that there is no consistent reporting from the day to day leadership of the coalition to the local chapters and very little national coordination of work. The locals have tended to function as semi-autonomous organizations. Information is exchanged between locals on the basis of who you know. This, however, promotes narrow circle forms of organization incapable of mobilizing a broad mass movement and prevents any effective democracy in the coalition.

While the ABDC has developed a national newsletter in the recent period, it does not give national guidance, particularly since the decision has come down. It is not a forum for exchange of views and experience within the coalition.

We believe it is impossible to extend the activity and influence of the ABDC among the broad masses, to unite all who can be united, as long as democracy is restricted in the ABDC itself, particularly when it is restricted by sectarian and unprincipled infighting by ATM/IWK to keep a tight lid on the coalition. The failure of this leadership to allow for open and democratic struggle to resolve questions of differences has failed to build the credibility of the ABDC among the masses as an organization that can lead the anti-Bakke struggle and win popular victories.

OPPORTUNISM FROM THE "LEFT" OR FROM THE RIGHT?

We would like to emphasize that we wholly disagree with the fashionable criticism that characterizes the errors of leadership by Marxist-Leninists in the anti-Bakke movement as "left" opportunist.

There certainly have been "left" errors in the anti-Bakke work. The ABDC principle of unity, "rely on oppressed people," as well as our own similar proposal, reflects a "left" error since it excludes progressive forces who could be won to the struggle.

But for the most part we consider the categorization of basic errors as "left" opportunist -- such as the superficial criticism of ATM/IWK which appeared in the June GUARDIAN -- as unproven.

In our view it is predominantly the passivity of the right opportunist, not the voluntarism of the "left" opportunist that has characterized ABDC leadership. For example, our own error on the ABDC "drawing a good line of demarcation with reformism and revisionism" looks very "left" on the surface. In fact, it is a theoretical justification for not taking up the struggle against right opportunism in the mass movement.

Comrades forget that sectarianism can be either a right or a "left" opportunist error. The narrowness of ATM/IWK does not reflect their effort to outstrip the mass struggle in order to go it alone. Instead it reflects their lagging behind the needs of the struggle -- the best example of this is the consistently regional emphasis they have given to a national struggle. But there are less dramatic examples as well. For example, while people in the San Diego area, prior to the formation of the

ABDC chapter, looked to the ABDC for leadership, the representative assigned came unprepared to meetings, came late, or didn't show up at all. The help he gave to organizing a local chapter was negligible.

Instead of "outstripping", their narrowness also reflects their passivity in the face of what is required to mobilize a powerful mass movement -- the best example of this is their failure to provide a plan or leadership for workplace mobilization or even to seriously emphasize the significance of the Weber case. These are indisputably right opportunist errors.

ATM/IWK do not drive the masses out of ABDC meetings because they are always talking about communism. In fact, as communist organizations that play an important role in ABDC, they rarely explain the point of view of communists on Bakke issues or put forward independent communist policy. Instead, their failure to mobilize the broad masses of people affected by the Bakke decision is the result of the narrow and restricted scope of their activity. In other words, they don't drive out so much as fail to mobilize in the first place. To the extent they drive people out, it is primarily due to amateurish and heavy-handed methods of work.

It would not occur to anyone engaged in the practical work of the ABDC to characterize ATM and IWK as too far in advance of the membership. In fact, they tail groups they have mobilized by obstinately defending the UC Regents as one of the two chief primary targets and by defending "third world people" as a satisfactory characterization of oppressed nationalities within the US.

"Left" opportunists have no monopoly on isolation from the broad masses of people. Right opportunists who lag behind the demands of the democratic movement will also find themselves isolated. The isolation of ATM/IWK is hardly the result of their "leaping ahead". It is a consequence of their passivity, of their lack of perspective and plan, of their failure to grasp what is required for a Marxist-Leninist to mobilize the mass movement. It is the right opportunist error of failing to take Marxism-Leninism to the broad democratic movement of the masses that mainly characterizes their ABDC work.

THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR WORK

The ATM/IWK "ALL TALK, NO WORK" slander of the Workers Congress (M-L) is precisely the same kind of criticism that the economists of Lenin's time leveled against him -- that he ignored the drab everyday struggle of the proletariat in favor of the exposition of brilliant ideas.

Lenin did immense practical work, but he knew enough to mistrust those who scoffed at the careful presentation of political ideas. For us it has been an important task to promote discussion and struggle in the ABDC over the political foundation for its activity.

While we have done this, we must be self-critical that we have not been more hardhitting in this respect since we have not yet succeeded in correcting errors which undermine the coalition's work.

As for practical work, it would be wrong to overemphasize the work that we have done because we feel the work of the coalition as a whole has been narrow. Nonetheless, our comrades who have worked in ABDC have done a lot of practical work. We want to set the record straight on that score also.

Our work in the ABDC began in the original statewide coalition in August of 1977. We helped build for the October 15 demonstration in San Francisco, other local demonstrations, the national conference in February, the spring demonstrations in Washington and on the West Coast, the Week of Struggle/Semana de Lucha, and the demonstration against the decision of the Supreme Court.

All these events have been publicized in our newspaper. We have had numerous articles in the paper in the last 9 months explaining and striving to guide the struggle. We published a special 4 page Bakke supplement to THE COMMUNIST that has been distributed at the founding national conference of the ABDC as well as programs, rallies, and demonstrations nationwide. This supplement, which

promotes ABDC work, has also been translated into Spanish and widely distributed. In addition, we have aggressively taken up agitation around the Weber case in the pages of our paper.

In chapters where we have taken up ABDC work, we have certainly made mistakes, but this has not been the primary aspect of our work. For example, everywhere we have worked, our comrades have taken initiative in doing community outreach. In the Alico Pico housing project of some 2,000 units in Los Angeles our people have been leafleting and going door to door for the last four months talking with project residents about the Bakke decision. We are the only ones in Los Angeles who have done door to door work. ATM/IWK have tried to obstruct this work in order to have our comrades canvas businessmen for money instead.

As members of the ABDC, our comrades have also been involved in giving support to the National Blank Book Co strike.

In San Diego our comrades have taken good initiative in taking the anti-Bakke struggle to the workplace. Last May we placed special emphasis on a critical workplace and distributed hundreds of ABDC leaflets which served to promote anti-discrimination activity among the workers. We have contacted union locals by letter and otherwise asking for support against the Bakke decision and for affirmative action.

We have also taken the lead in expanding ABDC community outreach there. Work is being done with the Chicano Federation, the Black Federation and other mass organizations.

The very fact that the WC(M-L) has played a key role in building this local ABDC chapter without guidance from the ABDC national leadership demonstrates the principled character of our work toward our common goal of building the ABDC. Unfortunately, where ATM/IWK are strong, they have tried to keep a tight lid on the work of the coalition and to restrict the initiative of its members.

In spite of this, in Chicago, right from the jump we have been instrumental in concretely moving the work of the chapter forward. We have been the ones who have gotten the regular meeting places and meeting halls to hold programs. We are the main ones who have arranged to get ABDC literature translated into Spanish. Through our initiative, ABDC has made contact with the most active group in Chicago involved in affirmative action struggles, the West Town Coalition, which is fighting for more proportionate hiring of Latinos in the Post Office. It was significant to the anti-Bakke struggle that this coalition participated in a common press conference the day of the decision.

Our comrades have also been most active in doing outreach and fundraising in Chicago. We have sold more tickets for every fundraising event than the "unity trend" of ATM, IWK and CP(ML) combined! We have taken the lead in beginning to do work in the Afro-American community and in speaking at Black churches.

We have worked in the ABDC and we have "talked" because it was necessary to talk. We would welcome a serious and principled criticism of what we have said and what we have done. But groundless criticism of the work of members of a coalition will not promote either unity or the enthusiastic participation needed from all democratic elements we need to build a powerful mass movement.

CONTINUE ABDC WORK IN THE SPIRIT OF UNITY STRUGGLE UNITY

Because experience shows that ATM/IWK are easily confused on such matters, we would like to be clear: our criticism has been sharp. In no way does this mean that we intend to abandon our work in the ABDC to any degree. We shall continue as we have done in the past to build the membership and activity of the coalition in a broad and principled manner. We shall also continue to take up our differences in an open and above board way in the spirit of unity struggle unity.



UPRISINGS IN IRAN

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

demonstrate their support for those martyred in previous anti-government clashes. They have been able, in spite of efforts to crush them, to continue their relentless struggle against the government and for freedom, independence and true democracy.

Active resistance to the Shah's regime has developed widespread support over the last year. A first victory of the people against the Shah occurred in Teheran a year ago. Facing soaring rents due to the massive influx of peasants seeking jobs and the manipulation of the real estate market by the ruling class speculators, people had to pay as much as 70% of their wages for a single room. Workers started building shacks outside the city. The Shah sent bulldozers to destroy them and met militant, determined resistance. When workers from throughout the city and peasants from surrounding areas heard of the struggle, massive support was given. After several battles between people armed with bricks and soldiers armed with machine guns, the regime was forced to back down.

The first nationwide outbreak of popular demonstrations against the Shahswept major cities and universities last October with hundreds of people arrested. In November in Teheran, police attacked a group of students assembled to attend a progressive cultural event. Using tear gas, the police injured many and arrested 37, including nine women. Students occupied the university and demanded the release of the arrested students. In support of the occupation there was a demonstration which was attacked by police agents killing 66 demonstrators. All universities and technical institutes went out on strike to protest those murders, shops in Teheran closed, and many workers struck.

In January a new wave of fighting broke out in Qom, a religious center. Many Moslem leaders oppose the Shah, his tyrannical dynasty and the role of foreign domination. This struggle involved a general strike and three days of confrontation with police leaving more than 100 killed. Progressive religious leaders called for a day of grief and national mourning on February 18.

SEIGE AT TABRIZ

Following nationwide preparation and mobilization, a major demonstration in Tabriz, the second largest city, developed into an armed uprising. Although the movement was largely spontaneous in character, the masses focused their attack on the symbols of foreign domination and internal reaction. They destroyed and burnt over 175 foreign controlled banks and businesses. They also attacked governmental institutions and the headquarters of the single legal fascist party.

For the first time since the Shah came to power by a coup in 1953 which ousted a nationalist government, the people held the city for a day against the repressive forces. Quickly the government organized repression by the police and army. Tabriz was bombed by helicopters and looked like a city in the middle of war. The atrocities committed by the regime did not end with the massacre it launched against the rebellion. After the seige, when people came to claim the bodies of their relatives and friends,

the regime demanded payment of \$80 for each bullet used to kill that person. A man shot 5 times cost his family \$400 to claim in order to bury.

ROLE OF US IMPERIALISM

Iran today is politically, economically and militarily dominated by imperialism, particularly US imperialism. Typical of their reliance on the US is that to combat the recent uprisings, the US has sent 50,000 police revolvers, more than 400,000 tear gas cannisters, and 30,000 sets of riot gear.

There are over 40,000 US military advisors and the number is steadily growing. During the last 20 years the US has sold more than \$18 billion worth of arms to Iran. In addition to arms sales, military advisors, and supervision and training, the US is directly involved in intelligence training and activity. SAVAK, the secret police, was set up in 1957 by the CIA, and later advised by Moussad, the Israeli intelligence agency. SAVAK agents receive training in US police training programs. While this military backup has not been able to crush the massive popular unrest and attacks on the government, without it the regime of the Shah would not last one hour.

The economic effects of US imperialist penetration have led to bankruptcy for the majority of classes in Iran so that they can no longer survive. Severe exploitation exists for the working class and toiling masses. In addition to oil, the US government and imperialist corporations have huge investments in Iran. In agriculture Iran used to be self sufficient and exported agricultural products. With US imperialist intervention, the traditional economy has been forced out of business. This has broken the agricultural production of Iran. In less than 20 years from being an exporting country, Iran now imports more than 60% of its food. It is the 5th biggest importer of US agribusiness products. This represents more than \$6 billion annually in sales with imperialist countries.

With the destruction of the traditional economy, there has developed a vast army of unemployed who come to the cities seeking jobs. They are then employed in companies which are almost all subsidiaries of imperialist conglomerates--AMC, Chevrolet, Bell Helicopter, Proctor & Gamble etc. Because of the ever growing army of unemployed, these companies pay tremendously low wages thus supporting huge superprofits. An inflation rate of over 30% causes deepening misery in the lives of the masses.

EXPOSE REVISIONISM AND SOVIET SOCIAL IMPERIALISM

The struggle against imperialism has also exposed the nature of Soviet social-imperialism and the Soviet interests in Iran. For example, during the mass rebellion in Shiraz on August 13 demonstrators not only attacked US imperialist interests and those of other Western imperialists, but symbols of Soviet domination as well. A hotel housing Soviet technicians was burned.

Throughout the struggles the "Central Committee Clique of the Tudeh Party", the revisionist mouthpiece for the Soviet Union, has through their own words exposed the

aims of the social imperialists. They referred to the heroic uprising in Tabriz last spring as a probable provocation of SAVAK and not representing the people. Radio Moscow took the same view criticizing the acts in Tabriz as not the Marxist-Leninist method of social change.

While all the world knows that the Soviet Union will use coups and mercenaries to install regimes favorable to its interests, as in Afghanistan and South Yemen, it slanders the spontaneous upsurges of the masses of the third world against imperialist repression. What better evidence could there be of the corrupt and decadent nature of the Soviet state.

The revisionists give their support to the Shah with whom they also have contracts for natural gas totalling \$4 billion. As a capitalist and imperialist power, they are more concerned to keep the flow of gas that comes from Iran, which they resell in Europe for a huge profit, than they are to support the growing popular movement against the repressive character of the regime and the exploitation of foreign domination.

On the other hand, for genuine communists these rebellions of the Iranian masses are a popular victory of the people of the world in the struggle against superpower hegemonism. We rely on their struggle against the fascist regime of the Shah. As Foreign Minister Huang Hua of China said in his speech to the UN last year, "Every victory in the revolutionary struggle of the people of all countries helps to weaken the superpowers, thwart their aggressive and expansionist ambitions, upset their war plans and deployments, and put off the outbreak of a new world war."

NEED FOR COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP

While the unrest of the past year has given rise to much political activity, it has remained limited by its primarily spontaneous character. At this point there exists no consolidated leadership. In particular the uprisings have not been guided by a genuine Marxist-Leninist party capable of providing consistent leadership in building the national democratic front and the armed struggle. Nonetheless, the left has been able to organize more effectively in this period since the level of political activity has created a greater political consciousness among the masses.

For example, despite the conditions of military repression, there was a May 1st demonstration which included such banners as Marxist-Leninists Unite, Long Live the Unity of Marxist Leninists and Moslems, and Workers, Peasants and Students are Victorious. Furthermore the organized character of many mass activities has given definite evidence of conscious political leadership. All this opens up a bright prospect for the consolidation of a vanguard Marxist Leninist party in Iran to lead the national democratic struggle. In addition, the traitorous activities of the Central Committee Clique of the Tudeh Party has also made clear the readiness of the revisionists to betray the genuine aspirations, and struggle and sacrifices of the masses. It has steered M-L's in the need to persist in staunch struggle against revisionism.

The spontaneous uprisings demonstrate the broad unity that presently exists in the struggle for national independence and against the Shah.

This includes elements of the National United Front of Iran and progressive Moslem leaders. As the national democratic movement strengthens and develops, it is important to support all who struggle for economic and social welfare of the people, for democracy and against oppression and injustice, and for independence and liberation from the yoke of imperialism.

HOW US FRIENDS CAN HELP

An important aspect of the struggle against the two superpowers is the contribution that can be made by the working class within the superpowers to the struggle of oppressed nations for national liberation. As Stalin said in FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM, "(the) question of the oppressed nations became one of supporting the oppressed nations, or rendering real and continuous assistance to them in their struggle against imperialism for the real equality of nations, for their independent existence as states".

It is our responsibility fully support the struggle of the Iranian masses against imperialism, particularly US imperialism, and all domestic reaction. This support can be concrete and direct. For example, the Confederation of Iranian Students has taken up the effort to break through the censorship of the Shah's fascist regime in order to get materials for political education inside the country. Comrades and friends can make financial contributions to support this effort through the Iranian Students Association of the U.S.

In addition, we need to clearly expose the role of US imperialism in Iran and develop a full understanding of the way in which US imperialism props up the Shah's regime.

"Every victory in the revolutionary struggle of the people of all countries helps to weaken the superpowers." We are linked in common struggle with the heroic people of Iran and must give their current battles every support.

THIS ARTICLE IS BASED IN PART ON AN INTERVIEW WITH A MEMBER OF THE IRANIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (ISAUS/CIS) AT ITS 26th ANNUAL CONGRESS. THE ISAUS CAN BE CONTACTED AT P.O. BOX 4000F, BERKELEY, CA. 94704.

NICARAGUA

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

claiming that he acted "to save lives and preserve the national tranquility," Somoza in fact had no other choice.

Altogether fifty-eight political prisoners were freed. On Thursday, Panama and Venezuela sent planes to Nicaragua to pick up members of the FSLN and the freed political prisoners. And in a clear act against Somoza, both countries granted them political asylum.

The Nicaraguan people were jubilant in the face of Somoza's weakness. As the FSLN made their way to the awaiting planes, thousands of cheering Nicaraguans lined the ten mile route from the capital chanting "Down with Somoza" and "Somoza to the Gallows".

Somoza's days are clearly numbered. It is only a matter of time before the Nicaraguan people are successful in overthrowing this reactionary dictator once and for all. The broad based character of the popular upsurge reflects the burning desire of the people for freedom and democracy. Their just and determined struggle against Somoza is an heroic example to the peoples of the third world and demands our unwavering support.