

OBREROS EN MARCHA

POLITICAL ORGAN OF EL COMITE M.I.N.P.

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PUERTO RICO
AT U.N.
VICTORY OR
IMPASSE ?

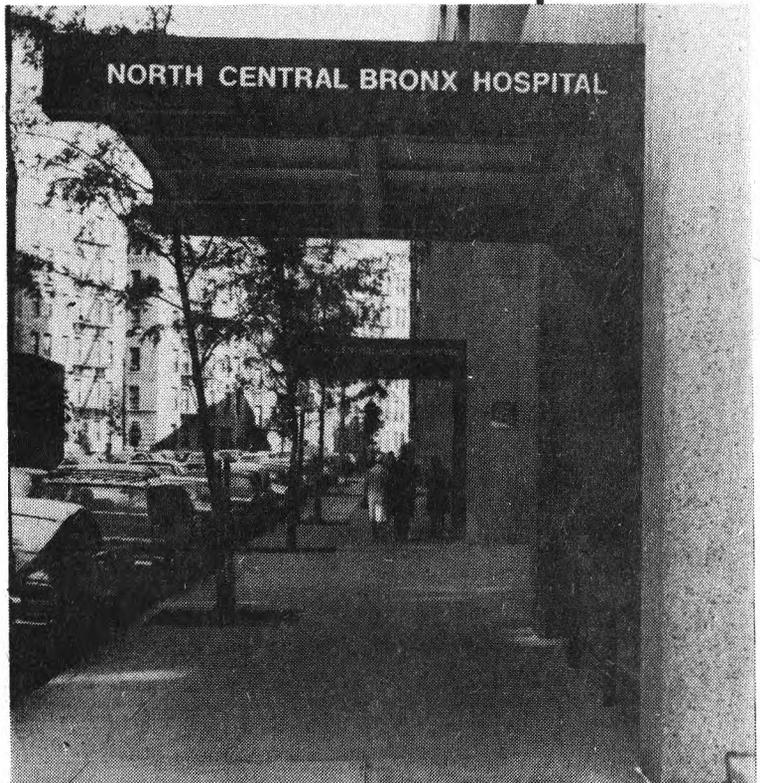
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EDITORIAL

ON PARTY BUILDING

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EDITORIAL

ON PARTY BUILDING

In the U.S. as in other developed countries, the position of strength of the ruling capitalists, and in obverse, the relative weakness of the working class, coupled with the reformist politics of its leading organizations and representatives, creates a situation favorable to capitalism and unfavorable to the interests of the working class. Here in the U.S., the world's foremost imperialist power, and itself a multi-national state, the situation of the capitalists as the "ruling material force" and, consequently, its ruling intellectual force, is further secured by its divisive measures among potential opposition to its privileged status. The effects of this intellectual force are manifested in daily experiences among other things, as national chauvinism, racism, and sexism, which serve as mechanisms to further divide the working class and oppressed sectors in North American society.

In recent years, and intimately related to the imperialist efforts of the U.S. in Indo-China, and its subsequent defeat, as well as the victorious struggles of other national liberation movements, a movement develops in the U.S. to search for an organized alternative to the situation of oppression and exploitation confronting workers and oppressed sectors of society. In clear opposition to the politics of reformism, this movement nevertheless bears remnants, and in some cases to a high degree, of the pervasive characteristics which it opposes.

Recently in a city in the East Coast during a discussion among a series of organizations and collectives, we expressed some of our views on the present situation of the movement of which EL COMITE-MINP is an integral part. In this edition of OEM, we will present excerpts of the views expressed by one of our leading members.

"Our movement, born out of the struggles of the 60's and early 70's - waged by the student movement, the anti-war movement and that of the oppressed nationalities - marks a rebirth of the communist movement and the development of proletarian ideology as well as revolutionary theory and practice. Moreover, our movement is living testimony of the bankruptcy of the CPUSA and its irrelevancy as a revolutionary force. Indeed, we have taken up the revolutionary tasks abandoned by the CPUSA, while admittedly suffering from the meager ideological and political inheritance bequeathed to the working class by the CPUSA. Our movement has literally had to build from scratch its ideological and political foundations. What we have learned from the CPUSA is to reject revisionism; but that lesson has not been well understood and internalized by all; some have rejected revisionism only to accept dogmatism and sectarianism - internalized under the guise of Marxism-Leninism. In placing these deviations in proper perspective, we must understand that it is only recently that our movement has begun to develop its ideological foundations.

THE EXISTING "PARTIES" AND THOSE TO BE

Presently, this communist movement is attempting to build a new proletarian party. Various national formations, local collectives and groups form part of this party building motion. Some already identify themselves as "parties"; others are in the process of "transforming themselves into parties". Indeed, it can be stated that it is highly questionable whether these recently formed parties, if by "miracle" they were to unite under one common center, would constitute a Party of the Leninist type. But leaving miracles to the realm of idealism, we will attempt to present in a general form what we consider fundamental elements to the party building process, aspects which we think have been disregarded - particularly by the dogmatist forces.

In this regard, dialectical and historical materialism, pillars of the science of Marxism-Leninism, have facilitated our understanding of social processes and, within this context, that the objective factors determine the course of events in one way or another. Moreover, that the subjective factors give events precise direction, and at a determined moment assume a decisive character. In this respect, the Party is the synthesis and, in essence, the correct usage of the objective conditions. The importance of this, as it relates to our discussion today, is that no class in history has ever been able to impose its dominance over other classes without its representatives being capable of organizing, developing and leading the movement of the class they represent. This is what has led great proletarian leaders and revolutionaries to recognize and place such importance to the party and its human components, the cadre, as decisive elements in the struggle against the ruling class.

UNIVERSAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTY

The Party, as the organized advanced detachment of the working class, is an essential element of the subjective factors in class struggle. It is the Party that correctly expresses

the fundamental interests of the working class and as such is capable of leading the class to victory. In this respect, the Party assumes its characteristics according to national objective conditions. This assertion does not negate that there are general characteristics common to all Parties. We recognize among these general characteristics:

- An unconciliatory position toward capitalism and bourgeois ideology.
- The acceptance of the revolutionary doctrine of Marxism-Leninism as the guiding principles in its struggles, guaranteeing in the process its ideological unity.
- A commitment to the Leninist organizational principles of the Party which translate into unity of action, internal cohesiveness, tactical flexibility and, fundamentally, strong ties with the masses.

These we understand are universal characteristics of the Party, as teacher and leader of the class.

Perhaps, in aspects of content or form, we may be similar to those who have engaged in the process of transforming and developing the various existing "parties". A fundamental difference is that while we both maintain that the Party has to be teacher and leader, the parties now in existence, and those that will soon be formed, believe that this can be achieved by decrees while we maintain that it can only be obtained in struggle and, to paraphrase great proletarian leaders: 'we must not only struggle but struggle well.'

THE PARTY - PRESTIGE AND AUTHORITY

Significantly, many within our developing movement have become deeply involved and committed to study the science of Marxism-Leninism, and at times, study its most intricate aspects, which are appealing, but often neglect to study and internalize its fundamental and basic principles, which are taken for granted or discarded. This leads to negating the science and its revolutionary essence. Within this context, in order to "struggle well" the Party must be linked to the class and in the struggles of the class establish its combativity and role as the vanguard of the working class. In the process, it will substantiate its following and credibility among the masses. Clearly, the Party cannot lead if it does not have prestige and authority within the class. Therefore, we must ask, do the various "parties" in existence have this prestige? Obviously not! Prestige and authority are not obtained by good intentions or abstractions; they are achieved in struggle and by establishing unity between the Party's tactical and strategical conceptions with existing reality and in matter of course, by avoiding subjectivism in the analysis of objective reality.

But as they objectively negate that the Party's vanguard role is established through struggle, the present existing "Parties", and impending parties, in essence, view the Party as an end in itself and in the process negate another elemental aspect of Marxism-Leninism. Zealously involved in becoming "the Party", or "its leading circle", or what have you, they forget that the Party is an instrument of the Proletariat to seize political power and exercise the dictatorship of the proletariat. As such, it is an instrument to lead a revolution not an end in itself nor a bureaucratic structure that hinders the revolutionary process."

To Be Continued



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N.C.B. HOSPITAL REMAINS CLOSED



HOSPITAL CLOSED".....TOO NEW

In recent weeks, controversy has raged over the opening of North Central Bronx Hospital (NCB) that is testimony to the manner in which the social needs (health, housing, education, etc.) of the poor and working class are dealt with in this society. It is possible that by the time this edition of OEM is out, the controversy over this particular hospital might have faded away with yesterday's news in the commercial press. But this is not the case with the significance and consequence of the events surrounding the events at this hospital.

This latest incident with the recently built hospital, NCB is characteristic of the assaults that have been made by the government, at the behest of the banks and other financial and corporate sectors, on the living standards and social services of the people of New York - particularly the working class and oppressed nationalities (blacks, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, etc.) - in the name of economies.

NORTH CENTRAL BRONX

Built at the cost of \$100 million and staffed by nearly 700 doctors, nurses, technicians and clerks, NCB lies idle and empty except for the treatment it provides to some 100 out-patients in the few clinics that it has been allowed to open. Yet, according to Dr. John L.S. Holloman, President of the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC), "People are being turned away from Jacobi and Lincoln Hospitals in the Bronx because they can't accommodate them."

Since July 1st, NCB has been staffed and ready for operation. But the State Health Department has refused to issue an operating certificate until, to paraphrase the Department, "the HHC can meet its medical and financial responsibility once the hospital is opened". However, this is not the real basis for the State's actions, but only a tactic of the state government and the Emergency Financial Control Board - a banker and corporate controlled budget regulating agency set up by the state government to oversee the city government's expenses to use the NCB as a lever to obtain a \$25 million cut in the HHC budget. This, coupled with the

\$50 million in cuts already made to the public health system by the EFCB, has condemned hundreds of thousands of poor people to inadequate health care and many to die needlessly in a city and country renowned throughout the world for its technological, scientific and medical advancements.

WHILE PATIENTS DIE

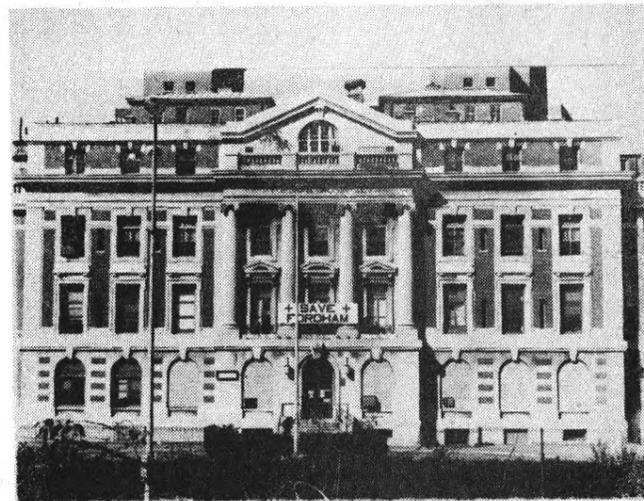
In Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx, a young resident stated to the New York Times that "it is a 'given' that patients die needlessly all the time".

The new Lincoln, as it is known, suffers a shortage of beds in its intensive care unit. As a result, doctors have to prematurely remove patients out of the unit with the knowledge that death will result. Moreover, it has been documented by state officials that in September two stabbing victims bled to death, one because an operating room was unavailable and the other because nursing care was inadequate.

Presently two hospitals, Lincoln Hospital and Jacobi, in the north Bronx, are responsible for servicing the communities previously served by Fordham and Morrisania Hospitals, understaffed and under-equipped, as a result of devastating budget cuts, have been unable to deal with the load. Consequently, what were never quality medical services have deteriorated even further into criminally inadequate emergency services, intensive care, etc. etc.

On the other hand, medical experts have called NCB the most modern well equipped and well staffed hospital in New

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HOSPITAL CLOSED.....TOO OLD

Puerto Rico Informa

AT U.N. - VICTORY OR IMPASSE ?

Special to OBREROS EN MARCHA from JSM in Puerto Rico.

In the previous edition of OEM, we analyzed the case of Puerto Rico as it pertains to the work of the Decolonization Committee. The deliberations of this body having reached their conclusion, I think that we are in a position to analyze its results. We begin by initially reiterating what were the goals and objectives which were expected at the Decolonization Committee. These were:

1. To pass a resolution in relation to the colonial case of Puerto Rico that would contain and specify measures to be implemented on the island in accord with the General Assembly resolution to end colonialism in the world (Resolution 1514). (CLARIDAD, September 3-5, 1976, page 2)

2. Upon its approval by the Decolonization Committee, the resolution would be sent, in the form of a recommendation from this body, to the General Assembly of the United Nations where it would be discussed sometime during this coming November. (CLARIDAD, September 3-5, 1976, page 2)

3. That a resolution be adopted that would entail the fundamental agreements drafted by said committee in the past, reaffirming such. . . (Speech by Juan M. Bras at the Decolonization Committee - CLARIDAD, September 3-5, 1976, page 15)

These were the three basic objectives and demands established by the PSP and PIP in appearing before the Decolonization Committee. Did the anticipated results materialize?

In analyzing the text of the Decolonization Committee decision, its ambiguity is evident. Its most concrete element is that it recognizes and reaffirms the inalienable right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and independence. This was one of the objectives achieved. Then, again, this reaffirmation was the least one could hope for. Can one imagine a Decolonization Committee that would oppose decolonization? What purpose would it have then? Moreover, there would be little credibility in an organism that having approved a resolution in our case in 1972 and 1973 would turn around a couple of years later and disregard its own resolution, particularly when there have not been any changes in the original conditions that led to its ratification.

In respect to the accords in Colombo, Sri Lanka and Lima, Peru, on the question of specific measures, the only thing approved is that annotations would be made about these decisions. There is absolutely nothing in regard to any resolution on the specific measures. This was one of the objectives, the most important, and it was not achieved. In terms of the debate in the General Assembly, needless to say, this was also not achieved.

VICTORY OR IMPASSE?

We definitely cannot categorize the recent results of the Decolonization Committee as a victory. One cannot consider

the fact that our right to be free has been reaffirmed, as a victory for two reasons: 1) The yanquis were not "interested if the committee reaffirmed this or that right", they were preoccupied by the possible specific measures of decolonization. Therefore, in this respect, with whom were we struggling? Obviously, against no one. This was not the issue. 2) The important thing was that in 1973 a resolution was approved by that committee recognizing the right of our people to be free; the reaffirmation of that right can be relegated to the realm of folklore. The reality is that since 1973, our case in the U.N. has not advanced any further.

It was argued, here in Puerto Rico, that the debates in the U.N. are concluded in two known ways: either by resolution or by consensus of the president. The Puerto Rican delegation was advocating the resolution. We all know that the committee opted for the second form. It is then concluded that it was a victory that a consensus was reached. We want one thing and we get another. Then were are we? On the other hand, we expected that the resolution would be discussed in the General Assembly this year. Meanwhile the committee, in its consensus, only approves that the case be discussed again next year. This is then again called a victory. Again, where are we? It was also stated prior to the meetings of the committee that there were enough votes to approve the resolution. It is our understanding that if there were enough votes for approving the resolution, as projected, then there were enough votes for its discussion: the resolution was not discussed, least of all approved. Where were the votes in favor of the resolution that were already assured? Again, this is what is called a victory! We would pose anew the question: where are we?

It appears that in Puerto Rico dialectics are inapplicable. The over zealousness to posture as the victors does not allow room for self-criticism. Objectively we must recognize that the case of Puerto Rico at the U.N. has not notably advanced since 1973. It would be more correct to place it in this context, than to pretend that we have not failed. In this respect, we refer to remarks made at the Closing of the First Congress of the CCP by Compañero Fidel Castro when he put forth: "As a revolutionary principle, self-criticism will always be a thousand times more preferable than self-complacency. And self-humility will always be preferable to self-eulogizing." The Cuban compañeros are indeed an inexhaustible source of experience in particular for us as Latin Americans. It is one thousand times better to learn scientifically from them, than to raise one thousand glories to the Cuban Revolution.

OUR TASKS AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

We, the Puerto Ricans, cannot turn our back on International Solidarity. We must continue to support the efforts of governments in support of our cause, of parties and other sectors, etc. We must: 1) Deepen our relations with those nations that resolutely and without vacillations support our cause; 2) We must play closer attention to those nations that vacillate in crucial moments; 3) We must broaden the support

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PUERTO RICO AT U.N. cont.



EN LA ONU—QUE VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE



JUAN M. BRAS SE DIRIGE A MANIFESTANTES



EL COMITE—MINP LANZA SU CONSIGNA

and mass mobilizations in the U.S. in such a manner that not only liberals will become involved, but also, and in particular, Puerto Rican workers, the national minorities and the Northamerican workers; and 4) Structure a broad front, respecting the ideological and organizational integrity of all the participants, in support of the case of Puerto Rico. This in our view would be the best mechanism to organize the sympathies and support for Puerto Rico as well as the best form to exert pressure. Due to the fact that the case of Puerto Rico is discussed in the U.S. (U.N.) points 3 and 4 should be implemented over there. The best form of implementing these ideas, if there is agreement, is to begin working on them as of now.

Moreover, it is known to all that the case of Puerto Rico at the U.N. is a diplomatic struggle; yanqui diplomacy is based on repression, economic pressure, and arms blackmail. The fundamentals of this policy gives us room to maneuver. In times of relative peace these pillars of yanqui diplomacy are respected, indeed their convincing capacities, acquire extraordinary dimensions. Now, to upset this relative peace through militant struggle outside the confines of democracy but not alienated from the masses; to forget the electoral process and combat reformism; to set the basis for a National Liberation Front; to abandon sectarianism... these are the tasks that the revolutionary forces in Puerto Rico must give priority to. Not only to obtain diplomatic victories at the U.N. but in order to establish the Socialist Republic of Puerto Rico.

EDITORS NOTE: Here in the United States among sectors within the supporters of Puerto Rico's independence, the recent events at the United Nations have been characterized as a "significant victory" for the Puerto Rican independence movement. In the process of presenting such views they have inappropriately misrepresented or assumed positions on behalf of broad sectors of the Puerto Rican revolutionary movement. To explain — to this date only one organization within the national liberation movement has made official declarations in regard to the events at the U.N. In this respect, to define the views of this organization as the views of the "entire national liberation movement" or as "leading forces", as has been done by our friends of the PRSC in their recent declaration in the GUARDIAN'S RADICAL FORUM, is in our view incorrect. This is particularly so in light of the fact that the PRSC defines itself as a body in solidarity with Puerto Rico and not with any one organization which itself is part of the complex total that makes up the Puerto Rican Liberation Movement. While we respect the views of the PRSC, we think it incorrect to attempt to impose its views on others or represent them as those of others. This would not only rest credibility from the PRSC, particularly among Puerto Rican organizations, but also serves as the basis for continued sectarianism in detriment of the struggle for national liberation.

UNITED AUTO WORKERS STRIKE

On Wednesday, September 14, over 165,000 employees of the Ford Motor Company, members of the United Automobile Workers Union (UAW) walked off their jobs closing down 102 plants in 22 states. The strike at Ford Motors, as of now in its third week, began when company and Union negotiators failed to reach an agreement on a new three year contract before the previous one expired.

An agreement prior to the expiration date of the previous contract was anticipated by both Ford Motors and the UAW leadership. Union and Company officials had been working feverishly for several weeks before the expiration date trying to reach an agreement that would result favorably to the UAW leadership as well as to the Ford Motor Company.

Negotiations broke down when discontentment among union members arose after the company's proposal to reduce workers' hard earned benefits forcing Leonard Woodcock, head of the UAW, to call on workers at Ford to strike.

Ford was selected by the UAW as the strike target company for the new contract negotiations. Contracts with the other four American Auto Companies will expire in coming months, and in this respect it is projected that the settlement with Ford will set the base for other UAW contract agreements.

During the life of the previous agreement, over 200,000 auto workers had been laid off, of which some 35,000 to 40,000 (about 20%) will never again find employment within the industry. Those who have remained are being subjected to increased harrassment and speed-ups.



UNION DEMANDS

Faced with the effects of the present crisis, massive layoffs and deteriorating conditions of work within the industry, and rising inflation, etc., the auto workers are utilizing the strike to improve their living conditions. One of the main demands raised by the UAW involved the reduction of working time — 38 hours of work for 40 hours of pay — as a means to maintain the present number of jobs, create new jobs and prevent further layoffs in the industry.

To protect themselves while unemployed, the Union demands that Ford increase its contributions to the Supplemental Unemployment Benefits Fund (SUB). SUB is used to provide workers with financial compensation added to that provided by unemployment insurance while they are laid off. SUB funds ran dry at other auto companies during the 1974-1975 recession.

In order to protect themselves from increased losses due to inflation during retirement, workers are demanding increases in retirement benefits such as life, health and dental insurance. In addition, they are demanding wage increases and an improved "cost of living" clause.

COMPANY OFFERS REDUCED BENEFITS

Conditions surrounding the present strike provide a clear indication of the intentions of U.S. corporations to continue to increase present profit levels by eliminating the gains and benefits that workers had won in previous contract agreements.

To the just demand of the UAW membership, Ford Motors has responded with reductions in benefits earned in previous negotiations. The company has made it very clear they are unwilling to make any adjustments in the unjust distribution of wealth in the industry. While reporting record Second Quarter Earnings of \$700 million (second only to G.M. who reported earnings of \$909 million for the same period), Ford is unwilling to make any concessions to the workers.

To the demand for reduced working time (one of the hottest issues in the dispute), the company proposed "that each worker, after three years on the job, begin each year with



SCHOOLS

EFFECTS OF CUTBACKS

ON CITY'S SCHOOLS

New York City's public schools opened last month with a projected 3,500 additional teachers to be laid off. In some areas of the city (particularly in Manhattan's District 3) parents voted to boycott their schools, to close them for one day in a symbolic protest against the disastrous cuts being made at all levels of the public school system.

Since June, 1975, over 20,000 school personnel has been laid off — more than a 22% reduction in staff. Over 12,000 teachers have been fired (the overwhelming majority being Black and Latins), as well as 1,000 paraprofessionals, 525 guidance counselors, 3,000 school aides, and nearly 1,000 school guards. Cuts have also been made in all other staff positions such as secretaries, principals, social workers, and substitutes. However, the layoff of staff is only one aspect of the deteriorating conditions. The Central Board of Education has increased class sizes (40 and more children in one room), shortened the school day, reduced bilingual and special math and reading programs, eliminated most elective courses in the junior highs and high schools (art, music, shop, etc.), instituted transportation fees, and substantially decreased budgets for educational materials and supplies. In all over \$270 million have been cut from the city's public education budget in the past 2 years.

CUSTODIAL CARE, NOT QUALITY EDUCATION

These cuts eliminated some of the gains won by the working class and oppressed sectors through militant struggles in the 60's and early 70's. A key issue in those mass struggles was the push to open up the teaching profession to minority groups (in particular, to Black and Latin people). Yet in the past 2 years, the percentage of Black and Latin teachers in New York's schools has decreased from approximately 13% to less than 5%. Following the policy of "last hired, first fired", 75% of all minority teachers have been laid off since June, 1974. Under this same policy, the younger and generally more progressive (greatly influenced by the mass movements of the 60's) teachers — both minority and White — have also been laid off.

With packed classrooms, fewer teachers, reduced supplies, the end to free lunches, little or no medical services, and a general breakdown in organization and order within most schools, the notion of quality education becomes a farce. Public schools are being reduced (as is similarly being attempted in the city's daycare centers) to a custodial service — a place to drop your child from 9 to 3.

THE EFCB

The complete deterioration of services is happening not only in public education, but in all sectors of New York City's economy. Through the establishment of the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB), the banking and corporate interests of this city have acted to maintain their level of profits in these times of economic crisis. To insure the

repayment of the millions of dollars in debts and interest accumulated in the past decades by the city government, the EFCB (composed of corporation heads and city officials) has instituted massive cuts and layoffs in health, daycare, sanitation, etc., as well as education. The dominant capitalist class (big business) and their representatives, the politicians, are continuing their historical pattern of placing the weight of the cuts on the working class and poor sectors of this society.

LOCALIZED RESISTANCE

The response of the public school community to the drastic cuts has been minimal. United Federation of Teachers head Albert Shanker has continued his policy of sacrificing the jobs of many (in particular, minority teachers) to save the jobs, wage increases, and benefits for a small sector of the teachers' union. Shanker (like most of the union leadership in this city) mouths strong-sounding phrases against the layoffs, but in fact the UFT has not raised as a central demand the rehiring of all laid-off teachers. In addition, the UFT leadership is concerned solely with the economic issues affecting teachers (wages, benefits, seniority) and in no way struggles against the

Continued on Page 10



U.A.W. CONT.

a 'bank' of 20 to 40 hours of time off, depending on seniority." Furthermore, "The company would retain the right to pay a worker in lieu of the time in certain circumstances, such as emergencies," New York Times, September 14, 1976. As to the demand for increased contributions (by Ford) to SUB, Ford has proposed insignificant increases. In terms of the demand for higher wages, the company offer would provide workers with an increase in base wages of 44 to 83 cents an hour over a three year period. This would give workers an increase of 3%, raising the average factory wage to \$7.43 an hour by 1979 from the present \$6.84 an hour.

According to Union officials, the company's wage proposal would in fact result in a loss of 25 cents an hour since the proposal involves a change in the base formula compared with the provision in the previous contract. The entire company proposal would result in nothing more than reduction from the provisions of the previous contract. While company profits increase, workers benefits decrease.

UAW LEADERSHIP WATERS DOWN WORKERS DEMANDS

Many of the demands raised by the UAW membership were watered down by the Union leadership in order to meet company interests. What may have appeared as an action taken in defense of the interests of workers by UAW head, Leonard Woodcock, was in fact an action for personal gains which favor the company.

The Union leaders are well aware of present economic conditions and know that workers cannot hold out for long without money under such conditions. It is very probable that in the discussions which took place before the old contract expired between Woodcock and Sidney F. McKenna, the chief company negotiator, a mutual understanding was reached in terms of what the final agreement might be. If this is correct, the strike could have been called by the Union bureaucrats as a ploy by which to force workers to accept a settlement which in the long run benefits the Ford Motor Company.

Conscious of the level of discontentment that exists within the union membership, Woodcock rejected the company's proposal of 20 to 40 hours a year. His decision to strike makes him appear as a hard core labor leader on the side of the rank and file. In this manner, the strike allows Woodcock and the rest of the UAW leadership to play both sides of the fence. While many workers and organized Rank and File caucuses within the UAW concerned with job and income security have raised a demand for 30 hours work for 40 hours pay, the Union negotiators transformed this demand into a watered down proposal asking for 12 additional paid holidays a year. Instead of defending the workers' original demand, the Union bureaucrats are willing to settle for 38 hours of work for 40 hours pay that result from the UAW's additional 12 day proposal.

To deal with the loss of real income of retired workers due to inflation, the UAW leadership is asking for a one shot payment of \$1,000 to each retired worker to make up for inflationary losses for the period going from 1973-1979.

These actions indicate that Woodcock and the UAW leadership, contrary to union membership and organized rank and file, are not concerned with such important issues as job and income security. Why should they be? The job and income

security of the union leadership lies in serving the interest of the auto companies. While the union bureaucrats get high incomes, prestige and company privileges, workers get more speed ups, reduced wages, reduced benefits and more layoffs. Ford Motors is attempting to reduce workers benefits, the UAW leadership is doing very little to prevent these reductions and even less to expand present benefits.

RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The present attempts on the part of the automobile companies to reduce labor costs, increase massive layoffs and increase productivity coupled with the conciliatory policies of the UAW reveal the need for a new and more militant union leadership. Rank and File committees have played a very important role during the present strike. They put forth the most advanced demands and were active in organizing workers at the base. Aware of the sell-out policies of the UAW leadership, advanced workers began to organize committees and caucuses to fight for a better contract. Yet this movement, as important and necessary as it is for the auto workers, is not yet strong enough to prevent a sell-out and finds itself in its embryonic stages, still facing many limitations.

At the present time, the rank and file movement is concentrated within the skilled sector of the industry. These skilled workers are predominantly northamerican whites, Blacks and other minorities have been excluded from this sector by the union bureaucrats. Although skilled workers are presently one of the most active sectors within the rank and file movement, it is also within this sector that the UAW labor aristocrats find their base. This is the sector outside of the union leadership that most benefits (economically) from the UAW's agreements with the company. UAW leaders continually try to perpetuate this difference in economic levels between the skilled and unskilled workers in order to maintain control over the union.

Skilled workers active within the rank and file movement must not fall for divisive tactics used by the union bureaucrats and must erase the false illusions that the struggle for strictly economic demands creates. They must struggle for union democracy and elevate the working class militancy of the union. In this fight, workers must also take up the demands of Black and other minorities for equal representation and equal distribution of jobs and incomes within the industry.

Many of the rank and file caucuses exist in isolation from each other, a weakness which must be eliminated in order to make each caucus that more effective. Workers must unite all across the board. White, Black, skilled or unskilled, all workers must unite to struggle and transform the UAW from a sell-out union into a union dedicated and committed to defend the interests of the multinational labor force.

In this movement, it is the responsibility of the communist forces present to struggle against economism, and begin to raise the level of class consciousness of the auto workers. The auto industry is one of the most important sectors of the U.S. economy. Developing working class consciousness, strong working class militancy and organization in this sector will provide leadership and inspiration to other sectors of the U.S. working class. An understanding of this situation by advanced and class conscious workers is necessary as we must take advantage of the present conditions to expose the attacks of the ruling class against workers, isolate the labor bureaucrats and begin leading the working class movement along its revolutionary path, towards the elimination of class exploitation.

CITY CUTBACKS cont.

cuts affecting the quality of the school program itself.

The local school boards for the most part have accepted the cuts, many without even a murmur of protest. Supposedly, these boards represent the interests of the parents in a particular community, but in actuality they function as instruments of the Central Board of Education. They act as a buffer between the Central Board and the community.

However, in some communities, groups of parents and a few rank and file teachers are trying to organize resistance to the cuts. This is particularly true in the Harlem, West Side and Chelsea areas of Manhattan, in Brooklyn's Oceanhill-Brownsville area, and in certain parts of Queens. However, these struggles are all isolated from each other. Each district fights around its own particular concerns. They see the demands of other districts not as part of the same overall struggle, but as demands raised in opposition to their own. Each district raises its particularities to the level of being the fundamental issue that must be focused on. To fight back in an effective manner, a common basis for struggle must necessarily be developed.

The localism on the part of the school districts is a direct result of NYC's decentralization plan. With the division in 1969 of the city's schools into 32 separate districts, communities no longer focused on the needs of the entire school system, but rather on the benefits their own particular district could gain. (See OEM, Vol. 1, No. 17, Myth of Decentralization). Decentralization proved to be an effective way of dividing the working class and oppressed sectors. Rather than focusing their struggle on the Central Board, communities ended up fighting each other for crumbs thrown to them by the Board.

HOSPITAL CONT.

York. Indeed, among its outstanding features are audio-physiological monitors in each ward, a 12 bed intensive care unit where patients can be viewed on a screen by nurses and doctors, an emergency room that contains two operating rooms and one medical trauma suite, and a nursery with equipment capable of handling premature and neonatal patient care.

However, this equipment is collecting dust as are the 420 beds that were intended to fill part of the void left by the closing of the two municipal hospitals.

At one point, the HHC threatened to layoff the employees at NCB, members of DC 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal employees. In response, over 600 NCB employees staged a demonstration to demand that the institution be opened. In spite of this one action, however, the response of the DC 37 leadership, headed by Victor Gotbaum, has been — as it has been throughout this period of massive hospital workers' firings — to spout empty rhetoric of resistance and militancy in order to cover its collaboration with the various levels of government.

Significantly, the issue at NCB has not only been the State Health Department's refusal to issue an operating certificate but also the struggle between Montefiore Medical Center and Misericordia Hospital, both private, "voluntary institutions", to obtain the affiliation contract with the HHC over NCB — rights that would make the responsible institution in charge of

BUILD A CITYWIDE MOVEMENT

As we have posed in other articles on the present city crisis, the fundamental task that lies before us at this time is the need to develop militant citywide organizations which not only take up the struggle of one issue, but which also link that issue to the common struggle of all workers in defense of their democratic rights and standard of living. Within education, the need for the development of this type of organization is a reality. The localism of the school districts must be broken down.

One existing organizational form that can be utilized as a basis from which to build a united citywide movement is the Parent Association. Many schools already have PA's, but they are for the most part ineffective organizations that have little contact with the majority of the parents in their school. Few see it as their role to organize and mobilize parents against the attacks on them and their children. Often the PA's are led by a small sector of petit-bourgeois elements in the school that through their inaction sell out the working class majority.

Strong and militant parents associations must be established whose primary function is to defend the rights and interests of the parents and children both in that particular school as well as citywide. At the same time, these local organizations must actively work to break down the isolation of the school districts through the formation of a movement of parents and working people throughout the city. Such a movement must be based on the one hand on a clear understanding of the particularities of the different districts; and on the other hand have a program of general demands and common tactics that will guide the citywide struggle. The development of this or similar movements is not a task that is easily accomplished. However, this form of organization is necessary if the working class and its allies is to successfully mobilize against the attacks on its democratic rights.

providing doctors and other professional staff members for NCB. In this struggle, the State Health Department is applying pressure to the HHC to select Misericordia Hospital over Montefiore, which was the hospital chosen by the HHC, in order to save money on Medicaid payments (the average daily Medicaid rate of Misericordia would be \$210 compared with \$257 for Montefiore); despite the fact that Montefiore has a better medical reputation and is adjacent to NCB. But the State attempts to cover this fact with the questionable statement that Misericordia has more badly needed community medicine.

For Misericordia, this insures the "established" doctors and well to do patients of the hospital access to the most modern facilities presently available in the City. On the other hand, for the poor and working class patients that use the municipal hospitals, it does not insure anything. They will continue to pay the price for living in this society of dual social services — one for the rich and another for the working class and poor.

Without a doubt, after all the furor is over, NCB will open. But, most certainly, there will be further cuts in the municipal hospital system. Indeed, the prospects are that one or two hospitals will be designated to be closed, but this is not inevitable. It can be fought and stopped if there is a united and organized struggle to stop them. However, we can not any longer fight isolated and dispersed struggles as each sector being affected by cuts attempts to salvage its piece of the pie. The struggle has to be a united effort to end all the budget cuts and a restoration and increase in the budget for all social services. This is the only path to stopping the budget cuts.

PLANS FOR OCT.30 ANNOUNCED

On October 30th of this year, the 26th anniversary of the Nationalist rebellion in Puerto Rico, EL COMITE-MINP will hold an activity which will honor the historical significance of this date and which will focus on placing this heroic action within its proper historical context. Moreover, the activity will examine the lessons of October 30th and the present tasks confronting the revolutionary forces in Puerto Rico as well as discussing the efforts of solidarity with that struggle.

Due to the significance of this date, and present developments in Puerto Rico, in particular the electoral participation of the PSP and PIP as well as the formation of the ANTI-ELECTORAL FRONT (FRAE — POPULAR SOCIALIST MOVEMENT-MSP-SOCIALIST LEAGUE and the COMMUNIST PARTY of Puerto Rico), we have extended an invitation to these organizations to join us in discussing their views on this important question. Moreover, the invitation has been extended to sectors of the progressive movement in this country who have demonstrated consistent support or preoccupation with the cause of Puerto Rican Independence.

This activity, as well as the character it assumes, is in keeping with our responsibility to this historical date, and its invaluable lessons. It follows a trajectory established during the forming years of EL COMITE-MINP, when the significance of October 30th to the efforts of Puerto Rican independence were recognized as a matter of organizational principles. Consistent with this preoccupation, our organization has initiated and participated, in efforts toward the freedom of the still imprisoned Nationalist prisoners. In this context, in the year 1970 we organized the first Conference on Political Prisoners ever held in the U.S. by essentially Puerto Rican organizations. This led to the first united collective efforts among Puerto Rican organizations who in 1973 organized a March to Washington that counted thousands among its participants in the largest public manifestation to this date in support of the freedom of the five political prisoners. At that time we stated:

"The Nationalist prisoners are products and consequence of the struggle for national liberation of the Puerto Rican people. True anti-imperialist vanguard, shapers of history, heroic examples of patriotism, they were determined, in the prime of their youth, to sacrifice everything for the independence of their country. The Nationalist prisoners are, and represent, living examples of the Puerto Rican people's struggle for national liberation."

The above synthesizes our views on the Nationalist Political prisoners and, in this respect, our activity on October 30th will render honor to these heroic figures. Since our origins as a local organization we, in keeping with the laws of history, have gone through a process of development and transformation which has resulted from our serious study of Marxism-Leninism. In this respect, the science of Marxism-Leninism has facilitated and enriched our understanding of the significance of October 30th to the revolutionary process in Puerto Rico and, consequently to the struggles for socialism in the U.S. Indeed, the intimate relationship between Puerto Rico's struggle for national liberation and the Proletarian Revolution in the U.S. demands the resolute support from the U.S. working class and its leading organizations as a fundamental task in upholding the principles of Proletarian Internationalism.

In light of the above, the activity of October 30th, can be a vehicle to provide a deeper understanding among all of us, of the developing revolutionary process in Puerto Rico, as well as the different forces that make up the Puerto Rican liberation movement. Similarly the activity should serve to initiate the propaganda and mobilization efforts for the activity on November 13 which is being organized by the COMMITTEE TO FREE THE FIVE NATIONALIST POLITICAL PRISONERS.

OCT. 30th— 26th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONALIST REBELLION IN PUERTO RICO

"TASKS OF THE PUERTO RICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT"

PARTICIPANTS

COMMITTEE TO FREE THE 5
EL COMITE - M.I.N.P.
GUARDIAN
P.R.S.C.
P.S.P.

AND
(F.R.A.E.) - REVOLUTIONARY ANTI - ELECTORAL FRONT
(M.S.P., SOC. LEAGUE, P.R. COMMUNIST PARTY)

SAT. OCTOBER 30 - 7.30 P.M.
WASHINGTON IRVING H. S.