

The Workers' Advocate

Supplement



50¢

Vol. 4 #12

VOICE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA

December 20, 1988

Following this path, the working class will construct a new world

The Dec. 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate** announced the holding of the Third Congress of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA and carried its resolutions. Here we begin further coverage. Below is the opening speech, edited for publication.

Opening Speech at the Third Congress Fall 1988

Welcome to the Third Congress of the Marxist-Leninist Party. The Congress reviews the work of the Party and sets the course for the coming period.

In the five years since the last Congress, there have been a number of developments in our work.

*We have carried out the line of steadfast revolutionary work, persisting in party-building under difficult conditions. We have shown in practice that it is possible to maintain contact with the masses even under the conditions of stagnation in the general movement.

*We have regularized the **Workers' Advocate** and continued to improve our revolutionary agitation.

*We have further developed our theoretical understanding on various issues, such as the black national question, and the origins of revisionism in the world communist movement.

*We are taking part in the gradual development of a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist left-wing in the world movement.

*And we have begun a major program of studying the principles of socialism, strengthening socialist agitation, and analyzing the degeneration of socialism as revisionism took over the Soviet Union

The Third Congress does not fall on some natural division in our work, as some of our recent conferences have. For example, the Second National Conference dealt with the black national question and provided materials allowing

the Party to finish its analysis of the question of self-determination with respect to the black people in the U.S. The Third National Conference elaborated our established line on the working class movement and also recorded the success of the regularization of the **Workers' Advocate**. Since then, we have begun to emphasize the study of socialism, but we are still in the early stages of the work at this time.

Nevertheless, the speeches at this Congress will give an overview of the state of our Party and its work among the masses.

What Follows Reagan?

One of the speeches will be on "what follows Reagan". It deals with the actual forces that determine American politics. It deals with the monopoly capitalist groupings in the U.S. that determine the bourgeois consensus within which the allegedly democratic elections are held.

The reformists put their hopes, as always, in the Democrats. Meanwhile the Democrats were seen once again as the servile lapdogs of the Reaganite bourgeoisie, a bourgeoisie which decided on a Republican president and a solidly Democratic Congress as the appropriate way to carry out the Reaganite program. The reformists were caught up in the superficial rhetoric of the capitalist parties,

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**New York Police Department tries to eliminate witnesses to its drug-dealing
LARRY DAVIS ACQUITTED**

From the Nov. 29 issue of **New York Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP-New York:

For the second time in a year, a jury has acquitted Larry Davis of all major charges. These verdicts do not make Davis some kind of hero. Rather, they are an indictment of police activity in New York City.

By pleading self-defense and telling a tale of police crime and vengeance, the Davis defense team succeeded in putting the police on trial in a way that the supposed "prosecution" never did in cases such as the Eleanor Bumpurs' or Michael Stewart murders [by the police]. And twice, by counts of 12-0, the Davis juries voted to convict the police.

The story that came out at these trials was a sordid one of police drug dealing at the 77th precinct in Brooklyn. Using Davis as a point man and accomplice, the police robbed and, perhaps, also murdered various drug dealers, going into the drug business themselves.

The Workers' Advocate



**Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the
Central Committee of the
Marxist-Leninist Party, USA**

Rates: 75¢ for single copy; \$4.50 for 6 issues; \$9 for 12 issues by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).

From distributor: 25¢

ISSN 0276-363X

The Workers' Advocate Supplement



Rates: \$1 for single copy; \$12 for one year by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).

From distributor: 50¢

ISSN 0882-6366

LETTERS: The Workers' Advocate or The Supplement
P.O. Box 11942 Ontario St. Stn. Chicago, IL 60611

ORDERS: Marxist-Leninist Publications
P.O. Box 11972 Ontario St. Stn. Chicago, IL 60611

Shaken by the sting at the 77th, these police criminals decided it was time to eliminate witnesses. First on the list was Larry Davis. Shot down in a blaze of gunfire, "wanted" for murders he was later acquitted of, few would have mourned or missed Davis. Surrounded by his own weapons, there would have been no outcry of police murder. But something went very wrong--Davis escaped to tell his tale.

A reign of police terror exists in New York. Over the decade since the celebrated murders of Arthur Miller and Luis Baez at the hands of the police, dozens and dozens of entirely innocent people have died on the streets or in custody. Hundreds more have been seriously injured, maimed, assaulted, or shot. And many thousands more have been subject to harassment, false arrest and the swift blow across the head.

Yet few of these cases even come to public attention. In fewer still are the policemen indicted. And not even a handful do time in jail.

This is because of the complicity of the other arms of government with this police terror. The Medical Examiners' offices botch and destroy evidence. The prosecutors barely go through the motions. The judges openly sympathize with the police. In these circumstances, it is easy to understand why juries do not convict cops.

Not so in the Davis case. Asked to convict Davis, two juries in two separate trials instead passed judgement on the murderers of Bumpurs and Stewart and on the would-be murderers of Larry Davis. They said police terror is an official policy in the city of New York and, because it exists, Larry Davis acted most reasonably, in self-defense.

As to Larry Davis, the jury is still out on whether he is or ever will be anything more than a hood. Let's hope for the best. But for the police, that instrument of terror against minorities, youth and working people, the verdict is in.

The answer to police terror is not simply this or that individual firing back, as one of Davis' lawyers suggested. The answer is to build the mass struggle against police terror, racist attacks, and all forms of racism. It is the anti-racist movement that strikes fear into the hearts of the police, as well as their masters. Building this movement is the legacy we owe Eleanor Bumpurs, Michael Stewart and the hundreds of others who were not so fortunate as Larry Davis. <>

IT FALLS TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY TO DEEPEN AND EXTEND SOCIALIST CONSCIOUSNESS

**From a Speech at the Third Congress
of the Marxist-Leninist Party
Fall 1988**

In this speech, I want to talk about the Party's current work on socialism and the stage of this work today. There will also be two additional speeches on socialism: one on our national [i.e. party-wide] study of the Marxist-Leninist conception of socialism and one on some issues in the study of Soviet history.

What Is the Party's Work on Socialism Today?

Sometimes it's thought that by our work on socialism we simply mean the theoretical work on Soviet history. But there's more to it than that. Our work on socialism involves work on several fronts. Although all these fronts are essential, the pace at which we've been able to work on them differs considerably. And while more certainly needs to be done, the Party has been able to make significant advances in our socialism work during the past period.

The fronts we are working on are:

- 1) Developing our socialist propaganda and agitation;
- 2) Developing the criticism of revisionist "socialism", especially of Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union;
- 3) The study of the Marxist-Leninist ideas of socialism; and
- 4) The study of the history of the Soviet Union.

**Developing Our Socialist Propaganda
and Agitation**

This is a vital issue for any workers' party fighting for class emancipation. For communists it is not enough to fight for the immediate demands of the masses. As the **Communist Manifesto** put it, no matter what stage of development the working class movement is passing through, the communists must always represent the general interests, the future goal, of the movement.

Capitalist oppression does indeed bring to the workers the thought of a new world without exploitation, but it falls on the communist party to deepen and extend this socialist consciousness.

This involves showing the workers how capitalist profit comes from the wage slavery of the workers. It involves developing the workers' hos-

tility towards the whole capitalist system. And it also involves showing in outline form the essential features and advantages of the socialist society we want to build. This is not a question of building up elaborated utopias of the future society but of showing the basic principles of socialism in a living manner and of showing how such a social order springs from modern day development.

Being able to promote a socialist alternative is important for the advance of the class struggle. The class struggle does not develop strongly when the workers think that all they have to look forward to is an unending cycle of struggle against capitalism. The workers will fight ever more strongly when they are fighting with the conviction that we are building towards a new world. And when they feel confident that they can indeed build a better alternative on their own shoulders.

In our work today, besides the value of socialist agitation among the masses generally, it is particularly important for building up the pro-party trend. After all, the pro-party trend essentially is that section of workers who aren't content to just be militant fighters but who want to support the program of the Party as a whole. In other words, those who are inclined towards building the revolutionary movement for socialism. But we cannot leave the socialist education and training of the pro-party workers to chance; we have to use our work on socialism to reinforce the convictions of the pro-party workers in the fight for socialism.

Our Party has always done socialist propaganda. In the past however it's been posed mostly in general terms or based on popularizing what we considered the advances of socialism elsewhere--historically in the Soviet Union, and in China and Albania. This kept up a certain socialist edge in our work, but it also had its limits. With manifestations of degeneration showing up in Albania, the question of developing our own socialist agitation became posed sharper than ever. All comrades began to feel a definite "hole" in our work.

But this has given a positive impulse to rethinking the question of our socialist agitation. This experience poses sharply that our socialist agitation cannot simply be based on promoting socialism elsewhere. Of course, if there were contemporary socialist models to promote it would help--and help immensely--but even then it would not be enough. We have to be able to show the masses something of what socialism means right here in the present-day conditions of U.S. society.

In the last few years, we've made some attempts to deal with this. We wrote on socialism and the fight for jobs. We agitated for socialism in the midst of this year's election campaign. But frankly, we have only made a few steps on this front. Since this work involves breaking new ground, it is something which requires a great deal of thinking and will develop only through a series of efforts. Not just by the **Workers' Advocate** staff but by the whole Party.

Day-to-day life presents considerable raw material for agitation in favor of socialism. For example:

****The economic crisis of capitalism is of course one obvious field. At a time when anxiety about a major economic collapse is spreading, there is an excellent opportunity for discussion about an alternative to the rule by the rich.**

****The fiasco of capitalism on the environmental front, on the question of housing and homelessness, on health issues and decaying urban services--all provide good raw material.**

Such issues can be used not just to talk about socialism in general, as we have always done, but also to bring to life, for example, how socialist planning can actually deal with such huge problems in face of which the competitive profit system is frankly bankrupt.

The capitalists constantly demand "belt tightening", but socialist agitation can show that not only could a planned economy unleash new mobilizations of human and material resources but how it would also do away with the tremendous waste that takes place under the dog-eat-dog capitalist order.

Socialist agitation can show the gulf between the growing technological achievements under present-day capitalism and the needs of the masses, and it can show how many of these very same technological achievements can be harnessed for making a planned socialist economy easier than it's ever been in history.

Our socialist agitation should of course be closely linked to the mass ferment and struggles. In this regard, I want to add a final note that it is also useful to keep in mind that the objective situation puts limits on how much can be accomplished with our socialist agitation in these times. Like any other front of agitation, the impact is greater during times of upsurge. Because, just as a period of mass upsurge brings with it widespread discussion of policy, orientation and tactics, a social upheaval also brings up a broad discussion of alternative ways of organizing society.

Comrades are familiar with such discussion from the 60's. Similar discussions also took place in the

30's. And at the turn of the century. Of course these discussions embraced all sort of ideological views, from mere reformist tinkering to "back-to-the-soil" schemes and other types of utopianism.

My point here is not to evaluate any of these particular schemes but just to note that there is a striking difference of atmosphere during such times as today and those periods of social upheaval when many people feel the need and are willing to raise issues of radically altering the society. It is in that kind of atmosphere that socialist discussion flourishes. And it falls on the communists to represent the scientific socialist viewpoint in that mass discussion.

What this then means is that every effort we make to develop our socialist agitation today will put us in a better situation when it comes to the next upsurge.

The Criticism of Revisionist "Socialism"

In fighting for proletarian socialism, we have to distinguish it from bourgeois and petty-bourgeois concepts of socialism. The communists have faced this task from the outset. In the time of Marx and Engels, it involved refuting such theories as those of Proudhon, Dühring and Lassalle. Lenin exposed the socialist pretensions of the "Socialist-Revolutionary" peasant party in Russia. In our day, we not only face all sorts of non-proletarian "socialist" theories, but we also face various societies which falsely bear the socialist label. Indeed the revisionist varieties of socialism are the biggest thing debasing socialism before the world today.

The fight against revisionist socialism has become an especially sharp issue at this time. The capitalists are using Gorbachev and the crisis in Russia, China and Eastern Europe for an intense campaign against the socialist idea. Many opportunists have jumped on this bandwagon. This entire campaign is aimed at demoralizing the working class. It seeks to destroy among the workers any idea that they might be able to build a socialist alternative to capitalism. Thus the fight to defend proletarian socialism has become a key front of battle for the revolutionary working class movement.

And indeed, the impact of the anti-socialist crusade is something we today confront all the time in our work among the workers. This is one of the major ways that the question of socialism comes up these days among the workers.

It is a definite success for our Party that we've been able to respond to this issue during the last period. It took us a bit of time to get the analysis of Gorbachev off the ground, but we have been able to come up with a vigorous and

hard-hitting line of agitation towards Gorbachev. This cuts against both the capitalist campaign here and the revisionism of Gorbachev.

I don't want to go into any of this in detail. The subject has been elaborated in our journalism. And the main issues are raised in the draft resolution on Gorbachev. [For the Third Congress resolution **Against the anti-socialist crusade of Gorbachev**, see the Dec. 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**.]

Before I conclude this point, I want to note that the criticism of Gorbachev and "market socialism" in general brings up a whole slew of theoretical questions.

One issue in this is the need to develop the critique of Soviet state capitalism. The Chinese and Albanian analysis of revisionist state capitalism was both inadequate and flawed. To develop this analysis further is important because this is the system Gorbachev wants to reform, and also this other model is still being upheld by such regimes as East Germany and Cuba. Some opportunists are trying to hold up these models as they seek to distance themselves somewhat from Gorbachev's market socialism.

The Study of the Marxist-Leninist Ideas of Socialism

I only want to touch on this because discussion of our party-wide study of the Marxist-Leninist principles of socialism will be covered by a separate speech.

Here I just wanted to note that this is obviously connected to other sides of our work on socialism. It is useful in guiding the improvement in our socialist agitation and the critique of revisionism.

As well, this study is essential for the Party as a whole to make and judge the analysis of revisionist degeneration in the Soviet Union. And also to be able to judge other critiques of revisionist degeneration. For example, this study was useful in developing our comradely criticism of the Communist Party of Iran's mistaken views on socialism and industrialization. [See **A comment on some views of the Communist Party of Iran on socialism** in the April 15, 1988 issue of the **Supplement**.]

Besides the national study program which covered key items from the Marxist-Leninist classics, the Central Committee also initiated a gathering of quotations from Marx, Engels and Lenin on socialism. Those from Marx and Engels have been mainly done and need to be drawn together for publication. The material from Lenin still remains to be done.

The Study of the Degeneration of Socialism in the Soviet Union

Here we have only begun to scratch the surface. In the Central Committee, there has been some work on developing an idea of available research sources and limited discussion of some of the issues to study. But in the main this is a topic that will have to be gone into in the post-Third Congress period.

In a separate speech I will present some issues on Soviet history, but from this comrades should not get the idea that we have already made a lot of progress or that further work will be easy sailing.

As we have noted before, this research is quite different from other historical work we've done. The study of issues that came up in the post-World War II and Seventh Congress periods concerned things that our Party has experience in. But the work of setting up working class power and of building socialism are different. And also, for example, the study of the Soviet Union involves the study of a peasant and agrarian situation quite different than the agricultural situation we are familiar with in this country. Everyone has received a small taste of the complexity of all these issues from the national study of Lenin's writings that we've done from the immediate period after the October revolution.

Clearly this work will take a good deal of basic research, spadework, thinking and discussion. But our Party will be able to make the needed progress on this question too, of that I'm confident.

Conclusion

I want to wrap up here by going back to summing up our work on socialism. What then is it that we hope to accomplish through all this work?

****We will strengthen our socialist agitation.** This is in the long run one of the crucial tasks in developing the revolutionary workers' movement for socialism.

****We will be able to push ahead the criticism of bourgeois and petty bourgeois conceptions of socialism.** In particular, we will not allow the bourgeois anti-socialist campaign around Gorbachev to go unchallenged.

****We will strengthen the theoretical foundations of the Party on what type of new society we are fighting for.**

****And our work will contribute to the international discussion on socialism, thus helping to rally the world forces for Marxism-Leninism.**

**Shanties to be banned by University of California administration
DEFY THE CLAMPDOWN ON STUDENT PROTEST!**

Reprinted from the Nov. 28 leaflet of the MLP-San Francisco Bay Area Branch, supporting a CAA-sponsored demonstration for Dec. 1:

The UC administration is taking new repressive measures against the student movement. It is proposing a new amendment to the Student Conduct Regulations which says that shanties and other "unauthorized structures" are to be banned, demonstrations are to be further limited to take place only on upper and lower Sproul and no overnight protests involving any "structures". Coming right after Campaign Against Apartheid's Torchlight march, this latest move is clearly designed to protect UC's investments in South Africa and to make sure the racist, militarist status quo on campus isn't rocked by protest in the spring.

Militant demonstrations like the Torchlight march against apartheid are a valuable tradition at Berkeley. At this march, 500 demonstrators took the streets carrying torches and shouting slogans against apartheid and racism on campus. Speakers exposed UC's phony divestment maneuvers and tacit support for racism. Calls were given to build the movement independent of the capitalist politicians. Effigies of South African president Botha and his collaborators were burned amid cheers from hundreds of students.

This is the kind of protest which UC officials want to suppress. They know the important role militant mass actions play in building the student movement, especially ones that bring UC's dirty business to the light of day. Their reasoning is simple...if they can tame the protests, they can tame the movement. So, Mr. Heyman and company have decided to further dictate the parameters of student protest.

"Confine demonstrations to Sproul Plaza," they say. After all, marching around the dormitories might arouse a little too much interest. "Cut out the militancy, no more shanties," they say. "What do you want to do, start a riot?" And what is next? Making **all** terms of protest subject to approval? Banning all but "legitimate", i.e. milquetoast protests? Targeting militant student leaders for persecution?

Such attempts to squash the movement are nothing new, but they represent a serious challenge which students must unite to oppose. In 1985, after the Biko sit-in against apartheid, the administration came out with its "time, place and

manner regulations" which placed numerous new restrictions on where, how and when demonstrations could take place. Then, to back up its threats the administration led the nation in harassing anti-apartheid activists. Apart from arrests and banning of activists, internal disciplinary hearings were used to threaten students who were active in the shantytown demonstrations in 1986 with expulsion. But this tactic blew up in the administration's face as the hearings became the scene of militant demonstrations. When, after months, the demonstrations persisted, the hearings were finally abandoned.

UC administrators have good reasons for wanting to suppress the student movement. They would prefer that their billions worth of investments in companies doing business with South Africa were not a subject of public debate. They would like to keep the growth of racist attacks on the campus in the dark and quietly allow the multitude of racist practices and policies at UC to continue unchallenged. And they do not want students to understand UC's role as a supporter of US imperialism. They want to hide such crimes as UC's contributions to the nuclear arsenal, its funding from the Department of Defense for weapons research, or its open arms for CIA recruiters, to name but a few.

Today, in addition to the new wave of restrictions against the movement, university officials are after CAA for organizing a successful Torchlight march. They claim CAA violated health and safety regulations by lighting torches and burning effigies. Interestingly, this is the third Torchlight march where these things have been done, but the first time the officials have cared to claim violation of health and safety regulations.

It is no surprise that the administration has targeted CAA with this attack. CAA consistently organizes militant actions. It calls on the students and activists to build up the movement independently and not rely on politicians who posture left today only to derail the movement tomorrow. CAA holds no illusions that the UC administration may have some progressive side, but rather exposes its reactionary, pro-imperialist nature. When similar stands are taken up broadly by the activists, the campus movement can become a powerful force.

We cannot abide by the restrictions of the UC administrators! Support the demonstration against the clampdown this Thursday and help build the movement into a militant force for the actions this

spring. In South Africa, accepting the restrictions of Botha means accepting apartheid slavery. In Berkeley, giving in to UC's clampdown on protest

means giving up the student movement. This is why we raise the slogan: From Soweto to Berkeley, the people fight back! <>

**SPEECH BY THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST APARTHEID OF UC-BERKELEY
AT THE TORCHLIGHT MARCH, OCTOBER 29**

The following speech was delivered at the torchlight march referred to in the preceding article:

I'll talk about three main ideas this evening: UC's phoney divestment, why we want real divestment, and why revolution in South Africa.

UC's phoney divestment should be understood in the context of the administration's history of hostility to the anti-apartheid movement.

In 1985, Chancellor Heyman sent in the cops to bust the anti-apartheid sit-in on these steps. Next, the Regents tried to wait us out by "studying and evaluating" in the face of mass opposition. After a student referendum 5-1 in favor of divestment, after a 40 day sit-in, after an effective student strike, the UC Regents voted to continue supporting the South African racists.

These Regents, many of whom hold powerful positions or own stocks in corporate proppers of apartheid, assured us that they too were against apartheid. Heyman, the man responsible for arrests, beatings, and South African-style bannings of anti-apartheid protestors, assured us he too was against apartheid.

Nor have the politicians waged a fight against apartheid. Both the Democrats and Republicans have sent military advisors to help South Africa in its war to destabilize southern Africa, both have encouraged U.S. business and trade with South Africa, and both have turned a blind eye to israel's arming and training of the racists.

In 1986, the shantytown protests turned this campus upside-down and the regents were feeling pressure on all sides. The Regents had to act, so they pulled a sham divestment.

So far, not a penny has been divested because of the '86 Regents resolution. Take IBM, the biggest computer company in South Africa, IBM has excellent relations with UC. IBM recruits, sells computers, gives to building funds, and has research gifts and grants on UC campuses. President Gardner and Regent Watkins own stocks in IBM.

Under pressure in the States, one of the biggest collaborators with apartheid claimed to pull out of South Africa. What they didn't say is IBM-South Africa gets its parts and supplies from IBM-USA. IBM can actually increase blood profits, because it is freed from US sanctions

legislation prohibiting sales to certain sectors of the South African government. IBM can now openly sell to the South African military and police. Other corporate collaborators did the same thing. And the Regents call these companies out of South Africa, and acceptable for investment. In 1987, UC increased its investments in IBM by 240,000 shares for a total of 1/3 billion dollars.

UC pulled its sham divestment for one reason--to quell the tide of opposition to UC's collaboration with apartheid, while continuing support for Pretoria. Unfortunately, some of us in the anti-apartheid movement have not been as clear as to why we want actual divestment from South Africa.

We don't want divestment to morally purify the University, to put UC on the right side. A University that has manufactured every weapon of mass annihilation in the US arsenal, a University of war research and training for war in Central America, a University where white history and culture take precedence, and the history and culture of people of color is often excluded or distorted, a University whose law school sees scholarship only in white males, such a University cannot be purified, cannot be put on the right side.

We don't want divestment as only a symbol of opposition to apartheid--a red ribbon does the same thing.

We don't want divestment to try and perk up the ears of the long deaf Pretoria racists.

We want divestment because the vast majority of black South Africans have said to get the blood money out. Steve Biko said, "Foreign investments support the present economic system of injustice. We blacks are perfectly willing to suffer the consequences of corporate withdrawal. We are quite accustomed to suffering."

We want divestment because the blacks in South Africa are fighting a revolution for their liberation, and we must force these home-town collaborators to stop arming the South African government, military and economically.

Revolution?--you may say. What about non-violence? What about negotiated settlement? Before we ask blacks in South Africa to be non-violent, remember that for decades blacks dedicated themselves to non-violent protest, only to be shot down in the streets. Remember 21 March '60 in Sharpeville, where police opened fire on peaceful protestors of the pass laws, and 69 were killed.

20,000 were arrested thereafter, many detained without trial, many tortured in jail. The African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress were banned. Through terror the regime smashed resistance.

Before we ask blacks in South Africa to be non-violent, remember the Soweto schoolchildren in '76, protesting against being taught in Afrikaans and their inferior, racist education, to be gunned down in the streets. Remember the detentions, arrests, and bannings that followed. The banning of all the main legal anti-apartheid organizations.

Before calling for non-violence, remember the recent protests and strikes, met again with guns, arrests, detentions, and bannings. Since February, almost all anti-apartheid organizations are prohibited from engaging in political activity. Many leaders have been detained or restricted. 30,000 have been detained without trial since June '86. Many are tortured, some die in jail. Many of these detained and tortured are small children. As a Soweto mother said, "the children are dying like flies".

Before calling for non-violence, think of the everyday violence against blacks in South Africa. The squalid townships without plumbing or electricity, the forced removal of Africans to 13% of the country's worst land, the low life expect-

tancy and high infant mortality, the low wages and forced migration. Some black miners see their wives only a few weeks each year. When the miners went on strike in '87 for better wages and working conditions, security guards and police forced them to work at gunpoint. This from the so-called liberals at Anglo-American corporation.

Before calling for non-violence, remember that for decades the homes and swimming pools, the University education, and the servants for the whites have depended on the subjugation of the blacks. The white minority population lives off the backs of the vast black majority; the whites have much to lose, the blacks everything to gain.

When the white racists have a gun man at the black man's door, ready to kill for the least infraction of servility, don't ask the black man to get on his knees and beg for an end to apartheid and racism in South Africa. Don't ask the black man to accept the gun-laden racist to his table to talk--first, he must be stripped of his guns, his diamond mines, his palaces, and his contempt for blacks. At that time we can speak of a free, democratic South Africa, in Steve Biko's words, a South Africa with the greatest gift possible--a more human face.

Victory to the Revolution in South Africa! <>

THE FLOOD AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TYRANNY IN BANGLADESH

For years Bangladesh has been ruled by military despotism and corrupt capitalism. In November 87 there was a strong upsurge against the rule of the latest tyrant, Gen. Ershad. There were big clashes. The regime responded by declaring a state of emergency, but struggle continued during the winter and into early summer of 1988.

Then came huge floods in September, the worst ever, submerging most of the country. Yet shortly afterwards, the struggle resumed, further fueled by outrage over the way the regime reacted to the flood. The first week of November 88 was the "Week of Struggle". There was a general strike, and more shootings by the police.

Right afterwards, Bangladesh was again hit by a natural catastrophe, this time a devastating hurricane, among the most terrible ever. But the mass anger can be expected to break out again shortly.

Below we reproduce a leaflet of the Democratic Revolutionary Front on the flood. It shows how what revolutionary elements in Bangladesh think about the social implications of floods and other disasters. Translated by the **Workers' Advocate** staff.

**We demand work, land and education. We demand a living wage.
BUILD UP A BROAD MOVEMENT AGAINST THE RULE OF THE EXPLOITERS WITH THE AIM OF
RELIEF AND A LASTING SOLUTION OF THE FLOOD PROBLEM**

This year's flood in Bangladesh has broken all previous records in its dreadfulness. It has made 50 million people homeless. The majority of them have had their homes completely destroyed. Crops

have been destroyed. There is no work. What was saved up through a lot of hard work is gone. The poor fishermen and peasants have lost their implements and crops.

The debt-ridden poor toilers are becoming still more indebted, for the moneylenders have raised their interests. Rural rogues are buying up land, cattle, and implements at low prices. Corruption in relief activity is spreading. There has begun the carving up of construction work worth millions of Takas. A hundred million Takas worth of goods from last year's relief have been sold in auction for 15 million Taka--these are being sold in the open market. The secret travels of this year's relief goods have just begun.

Those who have come forward to confront this terrible tragedy, whose strong will, work and commitment have written yet another bright chapter in the history of our people's struggle--they are the ordinary people. They are the nameless youth, and social, political, cultural and class organizations. The D.N.D. dam was saved by hundreds of thousands of ordinary people, young and old, men and women. In the entire country whatever relief is taking place is almost wholly going on outside of government auspices, in the form of spontaneous and united efforts of ordinary people.

But the government mass media is merely talking of the activities of the president, ministers, secretaries, different forces of the government party. The money that goes into false propaganda and helicoptering is money that does not go into relief for the masses. The relief funds are being built with the people's money and loans from abroad, but what gets built up is the cult of the regime. What is more, the real causes of this flood are being hidden with talk of "God's anger". And they are taking refuge in deceit by speaking about regional efforts, foreign aid, and foreign experts.

The flood is a disaster for the masses but for those who are in power--for those because of whose unlimited and unregulated exploitation the flood problem becomes worse and worse--for them this is the month of Poush [month of harvest]. That's why these hyenas are all active now.

The rich of town and country are working to grab the property of the poor and helpless. The brokers and the powerful are busy trying to make money off moneylending and by seizing the relief goods. The bureaucrats and contractors are carving up the construction work. And the merchants want to make the most profit in these circumstances.

Along with these hyenas there are also the people's enemies who hide behind masks. In the name of flood relief, imperialism is strengthening its chains, pressing new agreements, and putting out false plans--and sending its experts. At a time when the people have lost all confidence in its entire rule, the government which is corrupt

from top to bottom is reinvigorating the NGO's as yet another effort to preserve its rule and domination. These are disseminating their program in the name of flood relief. [NGO's refer to United Nations-linked "Non Government Organizations," such as OXFAM. These are mostly Western humanitarian groups who promote apolitical reformist activism.] The fundamentalist and sectarian religious forces are also coming before the masses masked under the guise of flood relief. The big opposition parties are not talking about the real causes of floods but instead peddling their politics of votes.

If we look for the cause and origins of the terrible flood that ravages Bangladesh today, we will see that those who are most responsible for the tragedy are the above-mentioned hyenas and all the various reactionary national and foreign forces. Floods have been taking place in Bangladesh for a long time. In the British colonial days, flooding took on a major scale, as a result of their greedy and irresponsible activities in this region. In the days of Pakistani rule, floods were given a religious sectarian character by raising anti-India hysteria over the Farakka Dam, but with that same India Pakistan came to an agreement over the problem of river waters in the Sind. [The Farakka Dam was launched by the Indian government north of Bangladesh. It is mentioned in this leaflet to contrast how the Pakistan government adopted two different attitudes in coming to agreements with India over the problem of river waters in Bangladesh which was then East Pakistan and in the Sind region of what was then West Pakistan.] The problem of the waters of the Ganga and Padda were kept festering. In those days, building up dams in an unplanned way did not reduce the flood problem, but made it worse. After the establishment of Bangladesh, no government has taken any initiatives to solve this problem. This is despite the fact that in the war of liberation in 1971 the people of Bangladesh had struggled with great determination with the hope of having such problems solved.

The rivers that pass through *our country* have their origins in other countries; in those places the destruction of forests and soil erosion, earthquakes, etc. have led to the swelling of the rivers. There can indeed be regional plans to limit the problem at the source but that by itself will not solve the flood problem. It is essential to solve the problem of water flow inside the country, which has come about over many years due to the national and foreign exploiters and oppressors. Because of silting over many years the rivers have swollen, the canals and streams have rotted. There are no efforts to dredge these waters. Unplanned construction has destroyed reservoirs in

most cases and put obstacles in the flow of water. The unplanned use of pesticides, artificial fertilizers and plant killers have damaged the ecological balance. The erroneous construction of dams and culverts have damaged the water flow.

Therefore, looking at the problem from a technical angle it can be said that one side of the solution of the flood problem is regional, the other is national. For this funds are required, but those funds are no bigger than the black money that is being plundered or those Takas that are being shipped outside the country. Experts are needed, but there is no shortage of experts in Bangladesh. In addition to all this, the active participation of the broad masses of people is also needed.

But in the conditions where the aim of the ruling class is the quickest profit, where the main basis of the ruling class is not productive activities but business scams, indenting [middleman activities to help other firms acquire government contracts], and export/import, where the main feature of the present system is a deformed capitalism indissolubly connected to imperialism--in such a situation it is baseless to expect a lasting solution to the flood problem from this ruling class. There is no reason to believe that this class can provide a lasting solution to the flood problem when this class is up to its necks in corruption over the distribution of flood relief. This class will not solve the flood problem, this class will only use the opportunity of the flood to steal relief goods, to carry out thievery and take over property. To stop the angry demands of the masses they will talk deceitfully, as they are doing now with the claim that the problem is "God's anger". With this they are trying to set the masses on the path of praying while they themselves go about undisturbed with their plunder and wantonness.

Thus the solution of the flood problem is a political question. Because of the floods tens of millions of people in Bangladesh are in turmoil, having lost their property and struggling to stay alive. To merely adopt an attitude of charity at the condition of the masses will not do. Many political parties of the left have also put aside politics to join the crowd of charity-givers. No lasting benefit to the masses will come from this. The responsibility of progressive political forces does not end with relief alone.

For our part we have mobilized ourselves fully in carrying out relief work among the flood victims but at the same time we are saying loud and clear that we do not want alms, we want a lasting solution to the problem. And we want an end to this whole system. We want a state of the toilers instead of a state of the imperialist-lackey exploiters. At this time, we have to build in every

region a fighting front of workers, peasants, field laborers, working people, employees and progressive forces and carry out the following tasks:

1. We must carry out relief work among the victims of the flood. We have to try to establish minimum conditions for medical care, food and shelter.

2. As the flood waters recede, we have to carry out united efforts to rebuild houses and provide clean water.

3. We have to build up a resistance everywhere against corruption in flood relief.

4. We have to build up movements so that farm loans reach those in need.

5. In the widespread post-flood construction work, we have to stand up against corruption and efforts to steal the workers' wages.

6. Everywhere we have to spread the word about the real causes of the flood problem and, with the aim of a lasting solution to it, we have to develop the political strength of the toilers against the exploiting forces.

We have to make it clear to the victims of the floods that there will be no lasting solution to the flood problem without the establishment of the rule of the toiling people.

Today it is extremely urgent that we unite and develop the political forces of the toilers everywhere and bring the relief activities under the leadership of the revolutionary political movement.

Thus today we raise our call: along with relief activities we must organize meetings and rallies, militant demonstrations and gheraos. [Gheraos are a militant form of struggle in South Asia. They are similar to plant and building occupations. Demonstrators surround company bosses, officials, etc. and refuse to let them go until their demands are addressed.] We must fight for: just distribution of relief goods to the flood victims, reconstruction, the just distribution of farms loans, and a lasting solution to the flood problem. We must fight for work, land, a living wage and democratic rights. Everywhere we must build up the revolutionary front of the toilers.

**Democratic Revolutionary Front
Central Executive Committee
September 20, 1988<>**

To reach the Democratic Revolutionary Front, write the Bangladesh Writers Camp (Bangladesh Lekhok Shibir), which is one of its constituent organizations:

Bangladesh Lekhok Shibir
24/3 Chamelibagh (4th Floor)
Shantinagar Turning
Dhaka 1217
Bangladesh

MARCH AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

Excerpted from the October 17 issue of "Auckland Worker", paper of the Marxist-Leninist Formation of New Zealand:

This MARCH AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT provides common ground, for workers in jobs, out of work, or perpetually denied work, to organize together, not only against the symptoms of the latest capitalist crisis as they beset the working class, but against their origin in the class relations of the capitalist system itself.

A common ground on which we can unite, in such massed and angry rejection of what is being done to the members of our class, that the capitalists who run this anti-social system for their private benefit, on the backs of workers and workers' hard labor, might get just a glimpse of the full measure of our rage.

Just a shiver of fear. Just a momentary terrible insight into the enormity of their brutality, that it reaps such mass anger:

When their contemptuous denial of the keen abilities for work of even one young adult--based on their cold calculation of capital's prospects; when their casual dismissal of even one wage worker--based on their canny reckonings of profit and loss; are multiplied by the assault done by that to even one family; multiplied by thousands and tens of thousands, of workers and families; by years and scores of years, and by generations; and by the workers of this country and of the host of countries; and when all that is no more than a fractional part of the picture of flourishing capitalism;

It may be that the capitalists, from this march, might get a glimpse of what will be their just desserts, when the working class rises up united to pay them back in kind, yet in far less than kind;

When we rise up to trample finally underfoot the entire political structure of this wretched system, and so smash beyond the possibility ever again of its repair, the obscenity of exploitation that has been the foundation of previous economic systems, and is the foundation of capitalism;

When the workers' state we create will abolish forever, anyone's power to inflict the violence of exploitation on another. <>

AND WHAT SAY THE UNION LEADERS?

Excerpted from the Nov. 21 issue of "Auckland

Worker":

Under capitalism, two classes are in collision. At the time of this award round in New Zealand, the ruling class continues its offensive. It wants a deregulated labor market--no national awards [nation-wide contracts]--no trade unionism--a tame work force.

Workers want to fight back, and the strikes already being fought show the willingness for struggle.

The CTU [official trade union federation] has called the 21st Nov. mass meeting of Auckland workers to show workers that the CTU can lead. But workers must judge that 'lead', not from the fine words used, but from the actions flowing from the mass meeting. And those actions will reveal **the other reasons** the CTU has for calling the meeting....

The CTU has already virtually abandoned national awards [nationwide bargaining], and bent to the employers' demands for enterprise bargaining--while preparing workers for 'moderate increases only' in this award round.

The CTU aims to show the capitalists that it's in the ruling class's own interests not to axe official compulsory unionism. It signals to capital that workers in 'super unions' [the NZ government forced the amalgamation of unions into large super-unions, thus submerging various unions that had waged strikes] will come under even more tightly centralized control, where the ACCORD (peace pact) will deliver a pacified working class into the labor marketplace.

And the CTU leadership will take the burning spirit for struggle of those thousands of workers at the mass meeting and deem it to be endorsement of their conciliatory policies.

The ACCORD is the latest tactic of class collaboration. It serves to promote the ruling class's own 'national interest', patriotism, and protection of local industry, etc. etc.

BEWARE THE ACCORD! BEWARE THE SUPER-UNIONS! <>

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SWEDISH RED DAWN ON THE PLO'S DECLARATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE

Below is the lead article from the November 15 issue of **Röd Gryning (Red Dawn)**, journal of the Norrköpings Kommunistiska Förening (Communist League of Norrköping), No. 8, 1988:

FOR A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE!

Right at this moment, the "parliament" of the PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organization], the Palestine National Council, is meeting in Algiers in order to proclaim an independent Palestinian state. In the present situation, such a state can of course be nothing but a paper construction, but nevertheless this decision must be regarded as a programmatic stand from the PLO leadership, as an expression both of its national-reformist line as well as of the whole complex of problems which the uprising of the masses--the intifada--has put on the immediate agenda.

When the PLO was created by the Arab regimes in 1964 in order to try to gain control of the thriving national liberation struggle among the Palestinians, its slogan was: "An Arab Palestine". That was a narrow-minded nationalist line which completely neglected the fact that Zionism had succeeded in creating--although in an artificial way, through mass immigration from all parts of the world--something that is regarded as nothing less than a Jewish nation. The war in June, 1967 was a fiasco for the Arab states, another catastrophe for the Palestinian people, whose land now was completely occupied by the Zionists. This meant a painful awakening to realizing that the liberation of Palestine can only be the work of the Palestinians themselves. The various liberation organizations, with al-Fateh at the head, who earlier for natural reasons had not wanted to have anything to do with the PLO, now intervened and took it over and gave this organization a clearly national-revolutionary direction. The goal was determined as "A free and democratic Palestine", i.e., a secular, bi-national state. They distinguished between the Jewish-Israeli people and the Zionist state. Mass struggle in combination with armed guerilla actions became the most important methods of struggle.

But as no nation is homogeneous, but consists of different classes with different class interests, this is also reflected in a national liberation movement. Already in the very struggle, methods,

direction and goal is determined by which class is dominating the struggle politically. Both the toiling masses and the bourgeoisie might under certain circumstances unite around certain patriotic and democratic slogans in general, and thus find themselves a common denominator. But these slogans can be shared precisely because they can be interpreted in different ways, i.e., be given different significances! Since the bourgeoisie, including its "national" part, in an oppressed nation never can free itself from the imperialist world system except in a very limited degree--this because of the various roles and tasks which this world-wide system assigns respectively to imperialist and non-imperialist countries--the working class and the toiling masses are the only ones who are really interested in a consistent national liberation. It is the same with bourgeois-democratic freedoms and rights.

So, what happened to the PLO was that its line, especially after the war in October, 1973, step by step was adapted to the interests of the national bourgeoisie, which was expressed in a greater and greater willingness to compromise with imperialism, and thus with its extended arm, Zionism. This, in its turn, has meant a return, on several points, to the PLO that existed in the first years. On several points--but not necessarily all. The PLO has a mass base, and the national bourgeoisie can take advantage of it in order to maneuver, in order to not have to bow too much before this or that Arab regime. Something which, however, in itself does not for a single moment change the willingness to compromise with imperialism in general. The PLO has, with its stand for a two-state solution, also gone back to the policy of "an Arabic Palestine", but now with the difference that it is to exist side by side with the Zionist state of Israel. But from the viewpoint of the working class, this is just as unrealistic in neglecting the colonial and racist character of Zionism, as it is in neglecting the existence of the Jewish nation. Therefore, we have to keep the

goal of creating a joint state for both these peoples, embracing the whole country.

Now, does that mean that we always and under all conditions oppose a dividing of Palestine, i.e., a two-state solution? No, it does not. Compromising with the enemy does not necessarily have to be evil, be to one's own disadvantage and the enemy's advantage. It is a matter determined by several factors, like the proportions of strength, the possibility of alternatives, etc. The proportions of strength are undoubtedly to the advantage of the state of Israel, despite the intensity of the uprising. It is not unbelievable that the struggling masses, who feel both their strength and the strength of the enemy as well, have reached the conclusion that a min-state is what they, in a first stage, are able to achieve, and that the continuation of the struggle in any case would be the next step, when a "liberated territory" has been established which might serve as a basis for liberating all the country. Something that might point in this direction is that the leadership of the intifada publicly, in a leaflet, has urged the PLO to work for a prompt two-state solution. Sure, the local underground leadership consists of the same factions as the PLO leadership, but nevertheless it must be under pressure and control from below, something which clearly is not the case with the Arafat clique. But, be aware, even if this is the actual case, it is clearly a completely other line, seen in a longer perspective, and with other points of departure, than the pro-imperialist, national-reformist line. As long as a partitioning into two states is regarded as a tactical question, as a partial goal, then it is something which at least might be a matter of consideration under certain circumstances. It is another thing to regard it as a definite strategical compromise. It was not wrong to fight against zionist before 1967 [when the West Bank and Gaza were occupied]! In the same way, it is necessary to stick to the stand that it is not only the West Bank and Gaza that is occupied territory.

We support the PLO's proclamation of a Palestinian state. But what we thereby support is the right of the Palestinian people to their own state. We do not support the recognition of the UN partitioning plan of 1947 or UN Resolutions Number 242 and 338. We oppose that the PLO beforehand limits the territory of the Palestinian state through recognizing the state of Israel. A possible two-state solution can only be discussed if the zionists are forced to the negotiating table. And they are not likely to go there unless the intifada is spread also to the areas inside the state of Israel which are inhabited by Palestinians--something which, in fact, seemed to be beginning last winter, but which was stopped by the Israeli pro-Moscow revisionists

of Rakkah [the CP of Israel], with the silent approval of the PLO!

Communists and anti-imperialist activists in the solidarity movement must continue to direct fire against imperialism, zionism and Arab reaction, and to concentrate all support to the intifada. The demand for recognition of the Palestinian state is correct, but it must also in the future be combined with the demand for breaking off all relations with the state of Israel (diplomatic relations, trade, tourism, exchanges of sporting activities and culture, etc.) The argument which some rightist forces inside the solidarity movement and the "left" are putting forward, that the slogan "Break with Israel!" is now getting out of date since the PLO recognized the state of Israel, is completely nonsense. Even if Israel would have some right to exist side by side with a Palestinian mini-state, it is a fact that the Israeli government has not recognized the Palestinian state. So, even from that point of view, this argument is wrong: in such case it would at least be right to break with Israel until the Israelis accept a partitioning. However, we think that even if the state of Israel would be forced to accept a compromise with the PLO (something which is rather unbelievable until a distant future, especially after the victory of Shamir and the black-coats in the recent Israeli elections), then that would not for a single moment make zionism less racist and colonialist, and thus such a thing would not in any way oblige the solidarity movement to, after such a compromise, change its attitude towards the state of Israel. On the contrary--the task will then consist in supporting the struggle for the liberation of that part of Palestine, too.

--Break with Israel--recognize Palestine!

--All support for the intifada of the Palestinian masses!

--Smash zionism! Victory to the Palestinian revolution--for a free and democratic Palestine!

Other articles in this issue of Röd Gryning:

News from abroad;

Swedish strikes and workplace news;

Eight articles from **Prensa Proletaria**, voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua on the class struggle in Nicaragua; and

The resolution issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran on the ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war.

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SWEDEN

OPENING SPEECH

Continued from the front page

and failed to see what was most essential--that both these parties are promoting the offensive of the bourgeoisie. And both these parties carry out the bourgeois election to decide issues among themselves and to mobilize the masses behind their capitalist program.

The capitalist parties also made use of the election campaign to promote their various themes. The bourgeoisie today likes to boast of its sophistication and modernity. But it used the election campaign to promote the most backward sludge of history.

There was Bush mobilizing his racist forces through dangling in front of the country the picture of a black murderer, Willie Horton.

There was the religious fanaticism of the anti-abortion movement.

And there is one subject which the bourgeoisie does not need an election campaign to do work on. One subject on which, elections or no, they have a constant campaign of mud-throwing on.

The Ideological Struggle on Socialism

The ideological struggle on the issue of socialism is quite intense these days. A major issue for the bourgeoisie is the constant denigration of the ability of the masses to run society. They are constantly harping on the alleged failures of socialism. They are attempting to demoralize the working class from undertaking any independent action.

And this has intensified with the crisis of revisionism, reflected in Gorbachevism. For the time being, Russian revisionism no longer seeks to hide its degeneration under pseudo-revolutionary banners, as it did under Leonid Brezhnev. Today Gorbachev and company are trampling on the class struggle and drooling over the methods of the Western bourgeoisie -- just in time as this bourgeoisie skirts on the edge of deep crisis. This is a replay, in its way, of the ideological offensive for revisionism carried out in a big way by Khrushchev.

In this situation, we are stepping up our work on socialism. There will be several speeches in the Congress on this work. There will be material on our socialist agitation, and on our study program on the principles of socialism. And there will be particular attention to outlining the general issues involved in the analysis of degeneration of the Soviet Union.

The State of the Party

There is a report on the situation of the Party. It includes the organizational state of the Party, and the pressures on organizational work during the period of stagnation in the mass movement. It includes a review of the overall state of the fronts of the Party's work, including building ties with the masses, theoretical work, and certain organizational questions.

Connected to these topics, there may be a separate speech, if there is time, concerning the fight against liquidationism in Party circles. Liquidationist influences are reflected around the Party, and it is necessary for our Party to maintain its vigilance. The literary debate that was brought into the pages of the **Workers' Advocate** Supplement last year was one of the major incidents of this struggle. The speech will not deal with the literary issues, which have been covered extensively in the **Supplement**, but with the general features of the grouping which promoted these liquidationist ideas and that has sometimes been called the "Mid-west gossip corridor".

Build up ties with the masses

There will also be speeches on some examples of our development of mass ties in this period. There will be a speech on the development of the work among the postal workers, and on the work among the activists in the Campaign Against Apartheid at the University of California at Berkeley.

These examples illustrate that it is possible to build ties among the masses in this period, and to continually replace those ties which are unavoidably broken. But they also underline the stand of our Party to oppose reformism and trade unionism. And not just the most blatant reformists, but various left-posturing reformists must be opposed as well in order to build up a trend independent of bourgeois politics.

The Unemployed Movement of the 1930's

There also will be a speech on the CPUSA's work in the unemployed movement of the 1930's. As the economy worsens, we can expect the question of the unemployed to become more and more of an issue. Here we deal not with exact prescriptions for future work, but with the overall orientation of the work at that time. It shows how the struggle of political trends came up in this work, the difficulties the CPUSA had in dealing with this, and how the change in line of the CPUSA in the mid-1930's corrupted their work on this front.

International Marxist-Leninist Movement

There will also be a speech on the international Marxist-Leninist movement.

One of the exciting developments in the last period is the slow but definite progress in the grouping together of revolutionary Marxist-Leninists around the world. A process we have been in the thick of. This last period has seen the trip to Kurdistan, more trips to Nicaragua, and the development of contacts with additional groups in other countries. Once again, the character of the communist movement as a world movement, an international movement, is being manifested. It shows that the painstaking work of the anti-revisionist activists around the world in upholding class solidarity with the revolutionary struggles in other lands and in criticizing rightist errors and revisionist crimes has not gone in vain.

Election of the Central Committee

As well, as this is a Congress, there will be elections to the Central Committee. And there will be discussion and adoption of the Congress resolutions.

At this time there is certain business to take care of. [At this point the speech went into the credentials report. There was also the election of a committee to preside over the Congress, and the approval of the agenda. After this the speech resumed.]

Twentieth Anniversary of ACWM(ML)

Next year marks the twentieth anniversary of the founding of our predecessor, the American Communist Workers Movement (Marxist-Leninist). The direct roots of our Party go back to the stormy movements of the upsurge of the 1960's. It goes back to the GI newspaper FTA, the Cleveland Draft Resistance Union, the Cleveland Workers Action Committee, and various groupings and individuals in different cities and in different movements. From their experience, these activists saw the need for Marxism-Leninism in the struggle. And they were dissatisfied with the revisionist party and with the right opportunist or neo-revisionist groupings in the anti-revisionist movement.

On May 12, 1969 a definite change took place when these activists decided that it was necessary for them not only to be skeptical of the various opportunist groupings, but to themselves take up the heavy responsibility of organizing a nation-wide Marxist-Leninist center.

These activists founded the ACWM(ML) and took upon themselves the task of propagating the need for a single Marxist-Leninist Party to unite the revolutionary forces. Thus began a long fight,

which we are still waging today, for the Party principle.

The ACWM(ML) did not have the knowledge we now have of Marxist-Leninist theory. But the decisive point was that it stood for developing the revolution, for developing the class independence of the proletariat, for developing the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary trend among the workers, and had contempt for bourgeois politics in all its forms.

The ACWM(ML)'s features included:

A Tradition of Action

It was an organization of action. It sprung from activists from the mass struggles who wished to use Marxism-Leninism to advance their struggle. It didn't just have left-sounding phrases, but had the spirit to fight in the real world for the interests of the revolution. Although it was a small organization, it took one hundred or so arrests in the first few years. And it engaged in direct confrontation against various reactionaries including such once-vaunted forces as the so-called "hard hat" movement, which was a bunch of racist reactionaries, masquerading as construction workers by putting on hard hats.

In those days, as today, there were groupings that occasionally spouted left words, but had no spirit to fight the class enemy at all. Take some examples from today. When the Arias plan came out, there were certain Trotskyist groups and others who actually didn't like the Arias plan and who might write the odd phrase against it. But, in the face of the fervent pressure of the reformists and the bourgeoisie for this plan, most of them had no spirit at all to campaign against it. They were prostrate on this issue. If you said something against the plan, they might nod that "that's good." But they didn't have the spirit themselves to fight the Arias plan and agitate against it inside the mass demonstrations or at reformist-dominated events.

There are even Trotskyite groups like "Bolshevik Tendency" who, not just on the Arias plan but in general, go so far as to mock the sacrifice and struggle of the activists, saying that you wouldn't have to suffer all these unpleasant things if you had the mass labor movement behind you.

Our Party however has the standpoint of struggle. It stands up against the repression and the intimidation and the ideological campaigns of the bourgeoisie. This dates back to the tradition established in the days of ACWM(ML).

Revolutionary Capacity of the Masses

The ACWM(ML) had faith in the revolutionary

capacity of the working class. It did not just keep its communist views to itself, but spread them widely among the workers. At that time, and not just at that time, it was typical in certain circles to proclaim that they were communists, but to produce for mass distribution the most economist agitation and the most vulgar newspapers and leaflets. It was advocated that the masses won't accept communism, that they will be scared if they see a communist paper or a hammer and sickle. The ACWM(ML) went against this and carried out revolutionary agitation among the masses.

Proletarian Internationalism

The ACWM(ML) was a proletarian internationalist organization. The original activists were inspired by a number of struggles around the world, including the Vietnamese people's liberation war, the mass struggles in China, and the Naxalbari struggle in India. The ACWM(ML) was founded as part of the world anti-revisionist wave of that time.

In the Face of Setbacks and Difficulties

ACWM(ML) did not have much Marxist-Leninist experience yet, and it came up in a time of great confusion theoretically. And we made many errors at that time. There was the glorification of Mao Zedong Thought. There was the inability to separate out the correct from the incorrect in the things we heard from the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist). And we had many problems and difficulties in learning how to carry out our revolutionary tactics in the trade union struggle. And so on. But it is precisely ACWM(ML)'s path of struggle that allowed us to work through and correct mistakes and overcome difficulties.

Take the question of theory. The ACWM(ML) did not wait to have perfect theoretical understanding, but started out with what it knew and sought to connect theory with revolutionary practice. Marxist-Leninist theory is somewhat different from certain types of theory, or rather from what the bourgeoisie regards as theory. It is *not* something cut-and-dried. Not something you can develop by just reading a lot. It requires being connected to practice. It is necessary to stand on the side of the revolutionary struggle in order to understand the real meaning of the phrases and formulations that appear in the Marxist-Leninist writings. It is necessary to have a revolutionary spirit in order to be able to penetrate through the fashionable right opportunist distortions that have gained a hold on the movement.

All this took time and effort.

Those who were around at that time can probably remember the difficulty even in analyzing various revisionist and opportunist statements and seeing what the error was, what the bourgeois standpoint was, in these statements. One knew that these groups lacked spirit, that they were capitulating to the bourgeoisie. But which of the formulations given was the expression of this? Even seeing this took time and effort.

Following This Path...

To solve this question required more than just passing a resolution that we are going to do more theoretical work, or that we are going to do so much study. By taking revolutionary theory seriously, and by persisting in work to advance the concrete tasks of the revolution, we have gradually corrected our errors and deepened our grasp of Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics.

These basic stands of the ACWM(ML) were not invented by it, but are features of the path of revolutionary Leninism generally.

Following this path we will succeed.

Following this path, the Marxist-Leninist communists around world, who also have various questions and face difficulties, will advance and unite.

Following this path the American working class will eventually separate itself off from the bourgeois parties and enter upon the path of revolutionary class struggle in full force. Following this path, it will take part in constructing the new socialist world.

Today the bourgeoisie is gloating about the victory of Reaganism in the elections. Meanwhile it is worrying in the economic sphere and trying to balance one thing against another, in order to stave off crisis. Will a weaker dollar help the foreign trade deficit or increase inflation? Should interest rates go up or down? Is the stock market too high or not high enough? Is the burgeoning budget deficit too big or is it spurring on the economy? Should the hundreds of bankrupt savings and loans companies be allowed to collapse or saved through the infusion of dozens of billions of dollars?

But a time will come when they will wake up and find that there is no stock market, no profit margins, no rate of return on hoarded dollars. Factories and farms will remain, but not stock certificates and positions as overprivileged overseers. It will all be swept away by the working class, which will rise, tortured by deprivation, sick of incessant capitalist wars, and confident that it can run society itself. It is our job to prepare the working class for this day. <>