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TORCH

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Newspaper of the
**Revolutionary
Socialist League**

Reconstruct the Fourth International!

CRISIS ROCKS PORTUGAL

REC. SEC.
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MFA

by Chris Hudson
and Jack Gregory

Portugal is once more in open crisis. In recent days, the country has been rocked by a bitter power struggle inside the ruling coalition and shaken by police machine-gunning of workers' demonstrations. The pre-revolutionary situation opened up by last April's coup has not been resolved.

On January 14, the Portuguese Communist Party summoned a mass demonstration of over 100,000 workers under slogans such as: "freeze prices," "no to unemployment," "against the monopolies," "down with the latifundistas," "one single union, unity under the law," and "support the MFA (the ruling Armed Forces Movement military junta)." The fact that the

PCP, which is part of the ruling coalition, was forced to call such a demonstration can only be explained by the severe pressure they feel from the proletariat.

The economic crisis remains unsolved. Inflation in Portugal is upwards of 30 per cent, the highest in continental Europe. Trade deficits have increased since the April coup. Meanwhile, the Portuguese proletariat has suffered no major defeats and is a continual danger to bourgeois rule.

PCP'S "LEFT" FACE

The mass mobilization and "anti-capitalist" slogans of the PCP must be seen in this context. In order to contain the class struggle, the Portuguese Stalinists must put on a "left" face, and perhaps even

make a few concessions to the working class. The bourgeoisie, which is not in a position to take the workers on directly, desperately needs such a front to co-opt the proletariat while it seeks methods to solidify its class rule.

The role of the PCP in doing the bourgeoisie's dirty work can be gleaned from the demonstration's slogans "one single union, unity under the law" and "support to the MFA." These are the two main levers through which the PCP seeks to strengthen the grip of the bourgeoisie. They were the real intent of the mobilization.

"One single union, unity under the law" was directly in support of a proposal to outlaw the formation of any trade union federations other



Workers demonstrate under Stalinist leadership. Bourgeoisie relies on Stalinists and reformists to prevent workers' struggles from getting "out of bounds."

than the PCP-dominated Intersindical. It was not directed at the bourgeoisie or the government: a majority of the Council of Twenty, the power elite of the MFA junta,

supported the proposal. It was aimed at the CP's reformist partner in the National Front, the Socialist Party.

The SP opposes the single-federation legislation for two reasons. First, it would cut them out of trade union leadership by ceding that to the Stalinist Intersindical. Second, and related, the SP views it as a step towards strengthening an MFA-CP coalition which would circumvent parliamentary democracy, thus hamstringing the Social Democrats.

This is clearly true. Public

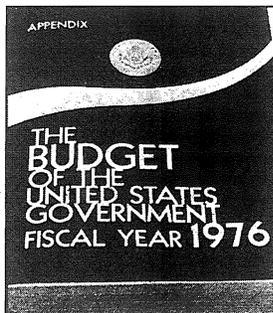
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Ford Cuts Back for Depression

In the midst of the deepening economic crisis, President Ford has unveiled his recession-fighting program. In his State of the Union message on January 15, and then again in his proposed budget submitted to Congress on February 3, Ford has taken what seems to be a daring new pose. Gone is the budget-balancing, down-with-government-spending Neanderthal of last fall. The new-model Ford is proposing a \$50-billion budget deficit—the largest ever in peacetime.

Recession has dislodged inflation as Ford's "Public Enemy Number One." The prayers to the Lord Almighty,



the exhortations to every citizen to "give it his all," have been redirected. After months of blissfully denying that we were in a recession at all, Ford and his advisers now admit that the situation is

indeed severe, that unemployment will be at least 8 per cent for the next two years, and that, in the words of the normally pollyannish Council of Economic Advisers: "the momentum of the decline is so great that a quick turnaround and a strong recovery in economic activity are not yet assured."

One constant factor remains. Ford's new program, like his old, is one of the most flimsily-attired attacks on the working class to be presented in recent memory. Virtually every plank in the program is directed towards getting the big corporations back on their feet by soaking workers and

the poor. So while the severe recession has forced Ford to abandon the austerity program that only worsened the

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CRISIS ROCKS PORTUGAL

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opinion polls show that the PCP has only about ten per cent support for the national elections slated for April. The Stalinists are trying to postpone the elections, the most overt act in a general strategy of fighting for influence behind the closed doors of the junta. Thus the "support the MFA" call.

SPLIT AT THE TOP

On January 20, the Portuguese cabinet approved the "one trade union" bill in principle. The government crisis broke out immediately, as SP leader Mario Soares announced that his party would resign from the government.

The split at the top opened the way for intensified class struggle. The open mass struggle of last spring had never fully subsided—strikes and building occupations had continued all along, and in late October workers at the Lisnave shipyard (Portugal's largest single enterprise) had mounted a mass march against government anti-strike proposals.

The rank and filers at Lisnave refer to both the PCP and SP as reformists. They exemplify an advanced sector of the Portuguese proletariat who have broken beyond both of these parties

attempt of the MFA and PCP to push through a "left" dictatorship has been jarred by the escalation of the class struggle. It is the proletariat, not the SP, that these collaborators really fear. The working class, which will remember the decades of dictatorship under Salazar and Caetano, will not willingly submit to its restoration, even under Stalinist and left military cover. The motion inside the MFA to remove the Premier reflects the fact that a sector of the bourgeoisie realizes that it may have to alter its strategy. The drive towards strong-man rule under the cover of Stalinist "workers' leaders" may have to be temporarily side-tracked in the face of the workers' response.

THE APRIL COUP

The current crisis can only be understood in the context of the way in which the Portuguese situation has matured since the April coup. The drive towards strengthening the state under a left cover by the MFA and the PCP, and the role of the proletariat in forcing developments have had a clear pattern of development for the past nine months.

The coup in Portugal was part of an explosion of class forces throughout Southern Europe. Not only in Portugal, but also in Greece, rightist dictator-

and a reorientation of the Portuguese economy toward the European Common Market. But it did not agree on what the African "solution" might be—independence for the colonies or some lesser measure. And it did not agree on the political forms of a new regime. The relatively weak Portuguese bourgeoisie, which had required the Salazar and Caetano dictatorships to protect them from the working class since the 1920's, had no real traditions or institutions of bourgeois democracy.

JUNTA RULE: LEFT OR RIGHT?

While everyone gave lip service to democracy, the real alternatives posed by the bourgeoisie boiled down to two: a conservative, semi-Gaullist regime based on the actual power of the upper-level officer corps, with its ties to the landowners and industrialists, and headed by Spínola or a similar figure; or a more radical-sounding regime modeled after the "modernizing" army regimes of the "Third World," based on the junior officers who primarily reflected the world view of the petty bourgeoisie and middle classes. Both, however, would rest on the power of the army.

These two currents were present in the armed forces from the start; the captains worked behind the scenes while the generals—Spínola and da Costa Gomes—provided a conservative public face for the new regime. But a third force existed to complicate matters for both military elements: the proletariat. With a large proletariat, which exploded into militancy with the April 25 coup, it was necessary to tack and veer. The decisive role in the developing revolution came to be played by the Communist Party, which had survived the Salazar-Caetano years as the best-organized political force in Portugal.

The fundamental perspective of the Communist Party was the Stalinist strategy of "two-stage" revolution, with the present stage (the only one in reality) meaning in practice that the Stalinists prop up the bourgeoisie and help it consolidate its rule. As the Stalinist leader Alvaro Cunhal, said in an interview in Lisbon in December:

We are in no hurry to build socialism.... To establish a stable democracy is our first task and now we sacrifice other tasks to that. Things are very indefinite here. If we have a real democracy, peaceful, electoral, we can get socialism without great upheavals.

BLOODY BETRAYAL

Every word in this formula is a promise of bloody betrayal. As Lenin taught, "The more highly-developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie" (The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky). Even if a "stable democracy" could be established, the sweet words about socialism "without upheavals" would merely serve to betray the proletariat. But no such democracy can or will be established. The only true words in Cunhal's statement are: "Now we sacrifice other tasks (i.e., the working class) to that."

The PCP's betrayal goes far back into the history of the Salazar-Caetano regimes, when already the Stalinist perspective was one of democratic, not socialist, revolution. This the PCP rationalized with an analysis which portrayed Portugal as an underdeveloped country oppressed by British imperialism. It is true that over 20 per cent of Portugal's capital is foreign-controlled. But aside from putting the crucial question of Portugal's own colonies on the back burner, this analysis provided the basis for the PCP supporting the "progressive" (anti-Salazar) bourgeoisie on a nationalist basis, and assuming the role of the best defender of Portuguese capitalism. The stage was set, before Caetano fell, for the PCP politically substituting itself for the weak bourgeois parties in propping up capitalism.

ALLIANCE WITH CAPITALISM

To betray the Portuguese revolution Cunhal and the PCP used a variation of the Popular Front. The classic Popular Front betrays the proletariat by forging an alliance between the Communists and Social Democrats and "left" bourgeois or petty-



CP organized demonstration in support of bill to amalgamate labor movement under control of the Stalinists.

politically. It is the struggle of these advanced workers, it is the need to attempt to co-opt them or at least prevent other workers from joining them, that forced the PCP to raise the more radical slogans at the January 14 demonstration. It is this struggle that underlies the split in the ruling coalition. But while such militancy has been present for months, the January events intensified the level of struggle.

On January 25, thousands of workers encircled the convention hall of the right-wing party calling itself the Social Democratic Center. They were met with mounted cavalry sabre charges by the police, and then by the machine-gunning. Later, commando parachutists, police dogs and tear gas were turned against the demonstrators.

This, combined with a general increase in activity by militant workers, caused Soares to reverse his decision to resign from government. On January 26, the SP announced that it would stay in the coalition government as a result of the precipitous political conjuncture. The following day, Soares announced that he would press for a new ruling agreement between the MFA, the PCP and the SP. Meanwhile, MFA members led by Major Eduardo de Melos Antunes were reportedly leading a move to oust Premier Vasco dos Santos Goncalves (also of the MFA), ostensibly for seeking too close a relationship with the PCP.

That is how the situation stands as we go press. Obviously, the crisis remains unsolved. The

ships have fallen; the explosion in Spain awaits only the approaching death of Franco.

Similar forces lie at the bottom of all these situations. The Southern European countries are the weak links in European capitalism. Inflation and unemployment have undermined their regimes. The right-wing regimes, incapable of coping with the economy, increasingly lost their power to rule. To pre-empt proletarian struggle for power, the bourgeoisie has sought "democratic" cover. The result has been bourgeois coups to throw out the tottering dictatorships. But at the same time, this has loosened the noose on the working class and brought the proletariat front and center. This, in turn, has prevented the bourgeoisie from achieving stabilization.

The April coup was rooted in the economic and political crisis of the Caetano dictatorship. With the economy hurt by a 30 per cent inflation rate and with 40 per cent of the state budget drained off into the colonial wars, intolerable tensions built up in Portugal. The working class was going on the offensive. As a Portuguese employer told British capitalists in London months later, without the Spínola coup, "the social tensions that were brewing at that time would have provided a very different kind of revolution, not with carnations, but with guns."

But the Portuguese bourgeoisie, which gave its blessings to Spínola, was not unified about its goals. It wanted a "solution" to the African wars

bourgeois parties. In this way, for example, the "Popular Unity" coalition of Allende kept the Chilean proletariat within the bounds of capitalism and paved the way for the coup of Pinochet. But the Portuguese CP has gone one step further: any alliance between Cunhal and the Socialists or "progressive" bourgeois parties is secondary to the PCP's main goal of a direct alliance with the ruling bourgeoisie within the military junta.

Less than a month after Caetano's fall, on May 17, Cunhal proclaimed, "It is absolutely essential . . . to make the new alliance of the working class and the armed forces irreversible." Seven months later, in the interview quoted earlier, Cunhal still took the same line:

If the Communist Party is on its own, democracy can't be won. A coalition is the only possibility . . . The Armed Forces Movement (MFA) is not a political movement in that sense. It was something specific. It reflected and interpreted the aspirations of the people . . . In our view the MFA has a word to say about the new constitution in Portugal. It is unthinkable to establish a constitution in Portugal without them. Unthinkable.

NATIONAL FRONT

This "National Front," unlike the classic Popular Front, aims to include not just the "left" bourgeoisie, but the entire bourgeoisie, if possible. In the beginning, therefore, Cunhal's references to the "alliance of the working class and the armed forces" included the right wing of the military coalition, Spínola.

The PCP sent its Labor Minister in the Spínola government, Avelino Pacheco Gonçalves, to break up strikes. It mounted its own demonstrations attended by faithful hacks to denounce strikers as "fascists." It cheered when Spínola outlawed the Maoist weekly *Luta Popular*. It was silent when Spínola banned a demonstration by the Maoist MRPP on August 7 and a demonstration in favor of the Angolan MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) on August 14. Cunhal, declaring the question of the colonies "a very complex question," covered for Spínola's fraudulent "Lusitanic Federation" scheme to deny independence to the colonies. And of course the CP gave assurances that it meant Portugal to remain in NATO and the Iberian Pact (with Spain)—two potential sources of foreign aid for a new military coup.

The PCP's "National Front," in short, was aimed at solidifying the strongest possible capitalist regime, implicitly a semi-Bonapartist military-backed regime with a strong right-wing flavor (in the person of Spínola). This scheme broke down, but not because of the PCP. It broke down because the class struggle continued to mount despite Gonçalves' strike-breaking. Because the African nationalist movements refused to accept the "Lusitanic Federation." And most of all, because the mounting class struggle drove Spínola to attempt a show of strength when the main body of the bourgeoisie knew that the working class was still too strong for such an attempt to succeed.

SOARES

In Portugal, it was the Social Democratic Foreign Minister Mário Soares—reflecting the interests of the West European capitalists through his international ties to the European Social Democratic parties—who saw the possibility of getting Portuguese colonialism off the hook better than Spínola and Cunhal. As Soares' fellow-SP'er, "Inter-Territorial" Minister Santos, put it, independence was possible provided that the agreements guaranteed "the continuity of Portuguese commercial and cultural interests." This the leaders of FRELIMO and other nationalist movements have agreed or are agreeing to do.

Spínola resisted the momentum toward independence for the colonies as long as he could, then was forced to agree. His own position weakened as a result, he launched a campaign to bolster his own authority and the kind of conservative Bonapartism he favored. Failing to schedule an early date for Presidential elections—when still-conservative rural votes might boost him into permanent power—Spínola called for a rightist mass rally over the weekend of September 28.

This was essentially a move towards a rightist coup, against the Armed Forces Movement, against an aroused working class that had not been defeated, without reliable troops. At the last minute, the PCP was forced to order its supporters out, setting up barricades and controlling all routes into Lisbon. But the main fact was that the dominant sections of the bourgeoisie were not yet ready to back a coup. Consequently the upper officer corps remained neutral or sided with the Armed Forces Movement.

Spínola was out, replaced by the equally conservative General Francisco da Costa Gomes, with the Armed Forces Movement more openly in control in the person of Premier Vasco Gonçalves. To draw a parallel with the history of the Russian Revolution, this was Portugal's "April Days"—the first tentative test of strength between the bourgeoisie and the working class, with neither side yet prepared to go all the way. But the crucial ingredient of revolutionary Bolshevik leadership—which turned the "April Days" into a political defeat for the Russian bourgeoisie—was missing. Not only did the PCP call out the workers only at the last possible moment; from the moment of Spínola's resignation they sang the praises of the new military rulers and ordered the workers to turn over to the Armed Forces Movement the weapons taken during the defense of Lisbon.

With the full backing of the PCP—and with the workers able to make only confused and sporadic opposition—the new regime moved to the right, breaking up strikes and occupations, harassing the Maoist MRPP, proposing anti-strike legislation and an electoral law allowing the banning of parties when their "real aim is unlawful or against moral and public order" or "systematically to disturb the discipline of the armed forces."

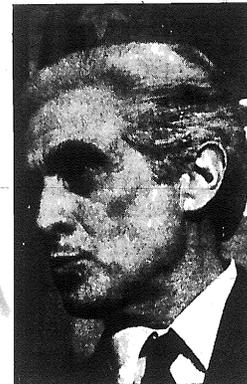
Despite this, the PCP has maintained its National Front line. In a special congress held in late October the PCP removed all references to the working class conquest of power from its program, and declared that "The alliance between the people and the Armed Forces Movement (is) a long-term policy . . . To break the alliance between the democratic forces and the MFA would be fatal for democracy in Portugal."

This brings us to the present crisis. The downhill slide of the Portuguese economy is quickening, propelled by the general crisis of the international

undermine stability. For example, on January 16 the PCP organ *Avante!* editorialized against SP opposition, warning against "The policy of acting as an apprentice sorcerer releasing forces that cannot be controlled."

BOURGEOIS UNITY NEEDED

The last thing that the SP wants is to open the way for a workers' upsurge. But in the face of the moves by the MFA and PCP to cut the SP out of decision-making, it



CP head Alvaro Cunhal

was forced to move into verbal opposition. If the MFA-PCP alliance had a stranglehold, if there were not large sections of the class who opposed their moves towards strong-man rule the SP could have been ignored. But at present, unity of the ruling group is essential.

It's impossible to precisely predict the future. It now appears that the workers may have temporarily stalled the drive towards military rule. At the level of militancy remains high, the bourgeoisie may be forced to make still further concessions, perhaps subordinating the open rule of the military in a more openly "democratic" regime.

But at the same time, the bourgeoisie must find a way to stabilize its shaky rule. The strengthening of an MFA-PCP National Front, with the military running the state and the Stalinists delivering the trade union base, will re-emerge. And this ultimately is a prelude to outright Bonapartist rule. The National Front will be forced to take ever-harsher measures against the workers, and at a certain point the military will dispose of its Stalinist cover, and the right military will replace the left military.

All of this—the drive towards strong-man rule which will lead to Bonapartism and finally fascism—will take place unless the proletariat can smash these plans. The present conjuncture is favorable to the workers—the split in the ruling coalition has weakened the state power and forced minimal concessions. But there is no revolutionary party in Portugal capable of leading the workers against the bourgeoisie, the military and the reformist and Stalinist betrayers. The bankruptcy of the PCP and SP, the high level of struggle, the emergence of advanced sections of the proletariat—all of these provide the opportunity for revolutionary socialists to build the vanguard party needed to lead the working class to power, the only lasting alternative to the bourgeoisie's Bonapartist and fascist plans.

THE ROAD FORWARD

The fundamental program upon which such a leadership must be built has been outlined previously in *The Torch*. The demands outlined in previous months—a program of transitional demands incorporating the most radical democratic demands—remains entirely valid today. The key slogans for the immediate period are:

For a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly to Establish a Workers' Government! The Constituent Assembly elections promised for March may never be held; even if held, they will most likely be a powerless rubber stamp for the junta. To build a revolutionary party in Portugal, it is necessary that the revolutionaries fearlessly embrace the demand of the masses for the most democratic solution to the crisis, and give it revolutionary content. It must be explained that only the formation of a Workers' Government can defend democracy and end the capitalist attack; but this is in no way contradictory to advocating the most radically democratic measures. Together with this demand, full political liberties must be demanded—no restrictions on parties or associations, full freedom of the press and speech!

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Bourgeoisie looks to SP and CP to maintain capitalism in Portugal. Above, Soares of SP.

economy. Layoffs are on the rise, one important bank has failed, and thousands of small firms are on the verge of bankruptcy. This, combined with the workers' struggle, spells severe danger for the bourgeoisie.

The split in the ruling coalition was both caused by the pressure of the masses and at the same time opened the way for raising the level of militancy. The PCP had warned the SP all along that by opposing the single-federation law, the SP was opening the way for "extremist" elements to

Editorial

Shachtman-Burnham Revisited

On February 10, as this issue of *The Torch* was going to press, a minority tendency headed by former *Torch* editor Bruce Landau and Central Committee member Eric Olsen resigned from the Revolutionary Socialist League. The resignations ended a four-month factional dispute in which the minority sought to revise the revolutionary program from beginning to end, and to turn the League away from active intervention in the class.

The minority represented the demoralization of the petty-bourgeois at the current lull in the class struggle. The current conservatism of the working class leads such types, as it has countless centrists before them, to turn away from the proletariat. Under the guise of carrying forward revolutionary struggle, they sound a retreat. In this case, the retreat was back to the universities and libraries. And the temporary nature of the calm in the struggle, their capitulation on the eve of great class confrontations, writes volumes about the calibre of the recently departed minority.

The Olsen-Landau minority was a textbook case of a petty-bourgeois minority. They had no common stand on theoretical and programmatic questions. Like a faded copy of the petty-bourgeois Shachtman-Burnham opposition in the Socialist Workers Party of 1940, this minority was a bloc of those who explicitly repudiated Trotsky and those who claimed agreement with Trotskyism.

"MECHANICAL" TROTSKY

Olsen and his theoretical mentor, Fred Larson, repudiated Trotsky's analysis of the epoch of imperialist decay, labeling it "utterly mechanical and wrong." Landau termed it "an analytical question, one which may or may not have programmatic implications." But Larson wrote, "The epoch question stands at the heart of revolutionary Marxism. In one way or another all the major questions of our world-view depend on it."

One week after Larson's statement appeared, the minority resigned. One side of the petty-bourgeois minority said that the epoch question is the heart of Marxism and attacked Trotskyism on this, the central question. The other side, claiming to agree with Trotsky, cried that the analysis was of no importance. When this rotten bloc exposed itself, the petty-bourgeois elements fled.

For four months, the minority had operated fractionally. They had resigned their posts, refused to write for *The Torch*, and attempted to evade organizational assignments. Landau and Olsen announced at the outset of the fight that they would propose a new leadership at the League's convention. Yet, until February 6, they presented no statement of tendency to the organization, claiming that they were "exploring" areas of agreement. Four days after presenting their statement, these heroes crawled out the back door.

"LENIN THE ACADEMIC"

The statement was a codification of petty-bourgeois demoralization. Its "political" basis was Landau's academic vulgarization of Leninist organizational methods. From the outset of the fight, Landau had whined that the League must follow Landau's "lessons of the *Iskra* period," namely: devote years to studying and reading to the exclusion of all else. This, Landau claimed, was what Lenin had done in 1902-04. The League was too weak to intervene in the class, he claimed, and in the same breath declared that the Bolsheviks had likewise been too fragile to engage in mass work before 1905. Indeed, Landau blamed a "premature" orientation to the Russian proletariat for Economism.

When the majority made the simple observation that the *Iskra* period was a time of mass agitation, when we cited Lenin as blaming Economism on over-reaction by elements who had previously walled themselves off from the workers with an

overly literary perspective, the minority dropped Lenin like a hot potato.

They then transferred their academic affections to Trotsky, claiming that he really wanted to study in isolation from the class. The International Left Opposition and the Communist League of America, we learned, were smart enough to spend years and years reading before attempting to intervene among the masses. All of this would be news to Trotsky, who correctly attributed the isolation of the early Trotskyists to their forcible exclusion from the mass movements by the Stalinists.

On the epoch question, the admitted "heart of revolutionary Marxism," the petty-bourgeois minority could not agree. But they could unite in seeing their image in Lenin and Trotsky, the image of the petty-bourgeois intellectual. And they could join together to twist history to their ends.

This particularly served Olsen's purposes. Olsen spent the past year pleading for a period of study to "reconstruct the program." The Transitional Program was not good enough for this stalwart. He demanded a program for "the last twenty five years of this century." Just as Trotsky was "utterly mechanical and wrong" in his analysis of the epoch, so too must the revolutionary program be jettisoned. Nor was this the final stop. Olsen wanted every question, from dialectics to the dictatorship of the proletariat, opened up for "restudy" (read revision).

Indeed, as Larson so aptly put it in attacking RSL leaders Ron Taber and Jack Gregory's document on the epoch question: "What Trotsky, Pablo, Mandel, Taber and Gregory have all done is to give us a classless definition of the productive forces." There we have it. Taber and Gregory are Trotskyists—and Trotsky is a Pabloite? Larson has a better idea. In its epoch of decay, capitalism develops the productive forces more rapidly than in its progressive epoch. From here a truly limitless vista opens up for our revisionist friends.

Politically bankrupt, the petty-bourgeois minority leaned heavily upon a tried and true battle cry of revisionism: "Down With the Internal Regime?" The majority leadership would not sit still while the minority declared open season on the revolutionary program. It would not refrain from calling centrism and Kautskyism by their rightful names. It would call an academic an academic. It wanted a revolutionary organization, not a discussion circle. Could there be clearer proof of an internal regime?

Long before, Trotsky had written of another Landau (Kurt):

What does Landau do? He tries to bloc with the Bordigists against the nucleus of the Left Opposition. Is it because he agrees with the Bordigists on the question of democracy? Oh, no! Landau is not preoccupied with this. He is concentrating on correcting Trotsky's organizational ways, and for this he needs allies. . . . Of course, Landau will say: "We have serious differences with the Bordigists, but" . . . etc. . . . (All opportunists and adventurers sing this song.) the differences do not prevent us from working together."

FREEDOM OF CRITICISM

Like Kurt Landau, like Shachtman and Burnham, like the Economists, the petty-bourgeois minority wanted "freedom of criticism," the better to junk the old Bolshevism. While Olsen used his cover to push his revisionism, Landau proudly proclaimed himself to be an ignoramus. On issue after issue, he refused to take a stand, claiming that he needed time to study: "I don't know what to do, but neither do you," was his refrain.

On the rare occasions when Landau did step out politically, he demonstrated the reasons for his reticence as well as his rightward flight. For example, in capitulating to integrationism, he tried to distinguish himself from the Spartacist League, which also bows before this bourgeois strategy. But Landau almost made the SL look like Leninists on the question. He attacked them for opposing sending bourgeois troops for Boston!

And so, barely six weeks before the League's convention (a convention postponed for months to give the minority time to "prepare"), and just four days after submitting their tendency statement, the petty-bourgeois minority resigned. The brutal internal regime, unfortunately, had not expelled them. It had taken no organizational measures. It had allowed them to resign their posts, to refuse to write for the newspaper, to duck out of their assignments. It had flown them to the branches at organizational expense to put forward their perspectives. But the "regime" had raised the temperature—politically. And this was more than the cowardly centrists could bear.

Just when the majority's refutations of the minorities lies about the *Iskra* period appeared in print, just when our response to their distortions of Trotsky and the CLA was being typed on stencils, and just when a reply to Larson's revisionist document on the epoch neared completion, the minority fled. Rarely, if ever, has a grouping been so willing to identify itself as cowards, for all to see, in so sniveling a fashion.

FREE AT LAST!

The petty-bourgeois minority is free at last. Free from the blistering criticism of revolutionary Marxism. Free from the methods of democratic centralism. Free from a proletarian orientation. Free, at long last, to study unobstructed. Study well, friends.

The Revolutionary Socialist League trusts that the departed minority will find its appropriate callings in life. We trust that Landau will someday obtain the Chair in History at a great university. We trust that Olsen and Larson will make their way onto the editorial board of a noted academic "Marxist" journal. We trust that the Detroit branch's bank account (which they made off with after refusing the branch's demand that they turn over the funds) will serve them in good stead.

For our part, we emerge from the fight far stronger. The numerical loss will soon be more than overcome. The loss of our Spanish-language translator on the eve of publication will temporarily cancel *La Antorcha*. We have gained theoretical and programmatic clarity. We have lost elements who found themselves in the revolutionary organization by mistake, and quickly realized the error of their ways. Individuals who cannot sustain the pressures of a period such as the present would surely desert at the first serious test. As we march down the revolutionary path, the petty-bourgeois minority will find its proper centrist burial ground.

League Forum

—New York

HOW CAPITALISM WAS RESTORED
IN RUSSIA: MARXISM VS. MAOISM

22 EAST 17 ST., ROOM 927

SPEAKER: WALTER DAHL,
RSL CC MEMBER

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—What Lies Ahead—

Lessons of the Miners' Strike

by Brent Davis and James Martin

In November and December 120,000 coal miners fought one of the most important class battles of 1974. With favorable bargaining conditions and sky-high morale and militancy, the miners were in position to take long strides towards safety, protection against inflation and dignity on the job. Under class struggle leadership, the UMW would have been able to appeal directly to the miners' class brothers and sisters, organized and unorganized, throughout the country to support the miners' right to strike and right to a decent wage and to safe working conditions. The full power of the working class could have been unleashed to stop the threat of state intervention, and to open the way for a broad class offensive.

The miners' strike was a decisive test for the left-talking Miller leadership, one which has transformed Miller's image in the minds of many miners. His clear failure in that test should convince all militant class-conscious workers that the view of the Revolutionary Socialist League is correct: Miller, like the rest of the treacherous labor bureaucracy, is an agent of the capitalist class. This has been proved in the struggle. Failure to begin the fight to remove him will guarantee disaster.

THE SELLOUT

The unison chorus of the coal companies, the government and Arnold Miller sings that the new UMW contract is the largest settlement in years. But these vacuous sounds cannot hide the sellout. The mine operators were forced to give a little more than usual in contract negotiations. But then they were dealing with an unusually aroused labor force. Compared to what the miners were ready to fight for, this contract is one more addition to the long list of labor sellouts. Miller dresses up a series of anti-wildcat measures as gains for the ranks.

The total economic package is pitiful. With inflation running at 12 per cent, the miners get 10 per cent in the first year, then four per cent and three per cent in the following years. The COLA formula is one cent for every 0.4 rise in the Consumer Price Index—which won't meet inflation. And on top of this, there will be no cost-of-living adjustments after an eight per cent rise in prices.

The small gains include five paid sick days, disability pay, improved pension funding. None of these are more than token or at best half-way measures. Pensions will still be a disgrace. A 62-year-old miner with 30 years underground will get only \$390 a month.

Grievance procedures have been "modernized." Instead of spending to provide real safety in the mines, the operators want to stop wildcats (which are mainly caused by unsafe conditions, as well as by arbitrary firings and seniority violations) through improved grievance procedures. But Mine Safety Committees will not convince the operators to take orders from the miners. They will simply give Miller an excuse to crush wildcats.

The most important demands passed by the miners at their convention were junked. These were the 30-hour week, an end to involuntary overtime, over-time rates and the demand that the miners decide whether they should have rotating shifts.

THE CONTRACT "SOLD"

When Miller announced the settlement, Tom Shoemaker, an official in District 12, stated, "I think the miners will vote it down 50 to 1 in Illinois." Miners in Ohio's District 6, a stronghold of anti-Boyle sentiment for years, organized a demonstration of 300 against the contract, copies of which they burned in disgust. In District 29, southern West Virginia, caravans of miners spread through the hills urging a "no" vote. These sentiments resulted in 34,741 (55 per cent) votes against the contract, and partly accounted for the close to 30 per cent of the miners who did not vote

at all. Tens of thousands of miners disobeyed Miller's order and stayed out on strike past the ratification in solidarity with the mine construction workers, whose contract had not been ratified.

In the face of this opposition, Miller had to work overtime to get his contract through. The contract ran into serious difficulty in the bargaining council, the 30-member committee of UMW tops. Despite several days' pressure from Miller, the council sent him back to the bargaining table anyway.

On November 26, Miller brought back the second offer. There were no major improvements. The bargaining council rejected the second version 23-11.

Miller insisted this time that he would not go back to the bargaining table again. The council could not continue to oppose him without challenging him for leadership. To challenge Miller, they would also have to challenge the Federal government. Miller had invited Usery, the head of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, into the negotiations. Usery had been joined by William Simon, Secretary of the Treasury, whom the operators invited in. A Taft-Hartley injunction was threatened. The bureaucrats on the council especially feared this.

Only if the bureaucrats were willing to take a hard line against the state as well as against Miller personally could they continue to oppose the contract. For the bureaucrats, this choice was obvious. A few hours after rejecting the second offer, the council reversed its position and approved the contract 22-15.

With the bargaining council broken, Miller turned to the ranks. Miller lied outright. (In the words of the pro-Miller New York Times: "In explaining the contract, he showed unfamiliarity with its terms, or else misspoke them.") Miller violated UMW procedures. He refused to call the national meeting of 830 rank and file delegates to discuss and vote upon the contract, illegally substituting regional gatherings instead. Scared of a nationally organized opposition, Miller's talk about union democracy proved to be pure rhetoric.

Miller's success in convincing a majority of the voting union members to approve the contract was the result of the handful of concessions, the government pressure, the lying, the violation of democratic procedures and finally Miller's own prestige. Without a leadership willing to stand up and say "Miller must go," the opposition to the contract, large as it was, was still unable to convince the majority. In southern West Virginia, in District 29, the small Committee to Defend the Right to Strike fought against the contract. Any organized opposition to the contract was valuable. Such opposition implied opposition to Miller's leadership, since Miller would be in an impossible position had the ranks rejected the contract.

But that was the problem. If this contract was rejected, who would face the companies? The failure of the Committee to Defend the Right to Strike to oppose Miller explicitly and openly—its failure to call for Miller's removal from office, or at the very least from leading the negotiations, meant that they could not convince the ranks that rejection of the contract would lead to significant gains. The call for Miller's removal from office could not guarantee that the ranks would vote down the contract but it could only have helped win them over to opposition.

Miller always accepted the limits of capitalism. It was not a question of his sincerity in wanting to improve conditions for the miners. He only wants to 'improve' capitalism, not to overthrow it. At the same time that Miller was talking about democracy,

he was relying upon the Federal government to sponsor the union election, instead of relying upon the ranks' own mobilization and organization to ensure a fair election. This action alone proved the capitalist nature of Miller's program.

But even the most militant miners did not yet see this. They did not yet understand the need to fight to overthrow the capitalist system itself in order for the workers to survive.

The task of revolutionaries is to win the most militant and dedicated fighters among the miners to the revolutionary program.



Federal mediator Usery glowers while Treasury Secretary Simon steals the spotlight to announce sell-out of coal miners.

The opportunist International Socialists have learned nothing. Before Miller's election, Brian Mackenzie of the I.S. repeatedly stated that reformist leaders of rank and file movements would not betray because economic pressures would inevitably force them to the left. Today Mackenzie at last publicly notes that Miller "agrees with the rest of the American labor leadership" that "you have to watch out for the interests of 'the industry,' that is, the bosses." ("Why Miller Sold Out," Workers Power No. 111, Dec. 74-Jan. 75) But Mackenzie claims that this is something that came only after Miller's election—he was converted by the bureaucrats in other unions, especially the UAW.

But before the UMW election, Mackenzie's internal position in the I.S. (for the benefit of other "socialists" only) was that Miller's program was reformist, exactly what he now claims is the result of post-election conversion. Mackenzie said that since Miller was the extreme left wing of reformism, that was the most that could be expected at that point in time since the workers are so backward. Since Miller was so far "left," events might push him further left. Socialists should put up with Miller's "shortcomings" and "problems" and not criticize him, not warn the workers, so as not to "alienate" the backward masses. Today Mackenzie has to rationalize: "History did not predetermine that Arnold Miller would have such ideas or make the choices he made. But social forces were hard at work to make him do so."

SL

The Spartacist League has learned nothing about their sectarian approach to Miller. The SL believes that the Miller victory over Boyle was in no sense a step forward. It would be just as happy to have seen Boyle win. Thus the SL can print: "The International Socialists gave their backing because Miller was a step forward compared to Boyle. The Revolutionary Socialist League claims to have no

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such illusions; it supports Miller because the workers think he is a step forward." (Workers Vanguard No. 58, Dec. 6, 1974)

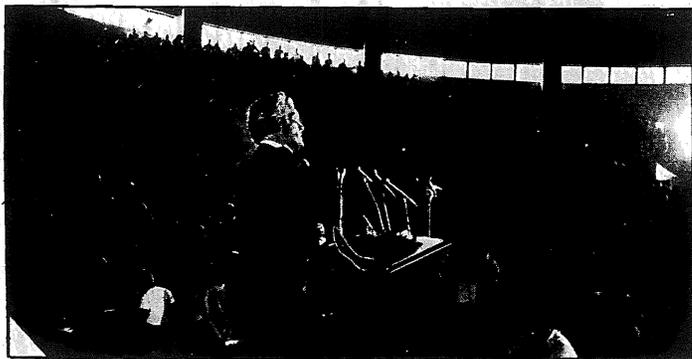
First, the SL fails to point to the real error of the I.S.—their capitulation to Miller's program. Second, they falsely claim that the RSL "supports" Miller. This formulation exposes the SL's conception of critical support. To Lenin critical support was a method to expose misleaderships in action. The "support" in critical support is, as Lenin said, support the way a rope supports a hanged man.

The RSL gave critical support to Miller in the election against Boyle. In doing that we made clear our opposition to Miller's program and predicted that he would betray the miners unless they organized to throw him out as well as Boyle. In this way we not only warn the miners of Miller's betrayal but also demonstrated this in practice without breaking the ranks of the advanced miners who correctly sought to remove the gangster Boyle.

The SL cannot understand this Leninist tactic. To them a bureaucrat "deserves" or does not "deserve" critical support. The exposure aspect of the tactic is gutted. When the SL finds a bureaucrat "deserving" of critical support, they will support the bureaucrat and not expose him.

In addition, the SL said that Miller does not "deserve" critical support because he brought the state into the union. The SL perverts the principle of opposition to state intervention into an absolute moral scruple. Every reformist bureaucrat is tied to the state. Boyle was no less tied to the state than Miller; Boyle's ties were merely with the less sophisticated elements of the ruling class.

But the SL thinks that Miller is tied to the state but not Boyle. Boyle was too craven for the SL to support although to do so would have been consistent with their method. As in the case above, when the SL "finds" a bureaucrat not tied to the bourgeois state, it will capitulate to him completely. Thus the SL's formal opposition to Miller served to protect the SL from its own opportunism. When it finds the "right" bureaucrats it will capitulate to them: We will in time see the SL abandon most of its sectarian tactics in favor of fullblown opportunism.



Miller relies on his militant past and radical rhetoric to sell out the miners. Here he addresses Duke Power Co. miners in Harlan County, Kentucky.

The Revolutionary Socialist League understood that the main task today is to win militant workers to the revolutionary program. This can be done because the revolutionary program is the only practical way out—it's not a formula for the future or a set of lofty principles high above the real struggle. The Leninist tactic of critical support, calling for a victory to Miller against Boyle while at the same time clearly demonstrating Miller's reformist, pro-capitalist program, predicting that he would betray the struggle, was the only way revolutionaries could intervene in the election to win the most class conscious of Miller's supporters to the revolutionary program.

Miller dissolved the Miners for Democracy as an organization shortly after his election. Once in power, once having used the MFD to get into office, Miller wanted to prevent the membership, especially its left wing, from criticizing him. This was also a concession to the right-wing bureaucrats, both those who supported him and especially those who supported Boyle. Rather than continuing to combat the right wing bureaucrats, Miller implicitly agreed that basically his program was no different

from theirs by his "heal-all-wounds" rhetoric. Any wounds now to be inflicted would be aimed at the militants in the ranks.

Immediately following the election, Miller began fighting against wildcats. Wildcats do not always win anything, but neither are they always mistakes. The ranks had been building up a strategy of their own, mounting wildcat on top of wildcat. The miners were moving towards a broad direct-action movement that was training them for an all-out battle by the time of the contract negotiations.

Instead of leading this strategy, Miller opposed it completely. He did his best to persuade wildcatters to go back to work, arguing that they should save their fighting for the "big" strike. As long as Boyle's contract was in force, Miller did not go beyond trying to persuade the miners not to wildcat, he did not then employ the thuggery that marked the Lewis and Boyle regimes. Under the new "democratic" contract, the story will be different.

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

During the strike and ratification period, open opposition to Miller surfaced for the first time. But the shattering of illusions does not automatically lead to increased political consciousness. A tendency towards increased cynicism will emerge among some miners in reaction to the way Miller burned them. Their faith in union democracy and militancy has been weakened by Miller's betrayal.

This is the biggest danger now. The movement which was saved from destruction by Miller's defeat of Boyle may now be destroyed at the hands of Miller. Unless a revolutionary leadership emerges, the UMW may once again be in the vise-grip of a dictator. Miller knows that if he can't subdue the militants in the ranks, there are other candidates for the job within the UMW bureaucracy.

Miller will be forced to deepen his attack on the democratic concessions he allowed so recently. If locals insist on wildcatting, Miller will put them into trusteeships. The thuggery that marked the Lewis and Boyle regimes will return, although in a somewhat more hidden "liberal" guise.

Beyond Miller is the bourgeois state. Miller will again bring in the Federal government if necessary to crush the ranks, just as he did during the negotiations. Miller will not fight injunctions; he will thank the government for them. Miller's promise to President Ford to "get the coal flowing again" and his seat on Ford's "Labor-Management Committee" are a warning of what he will do when wage controls are re-imposed.

Miller has already used the cops to prevent leftists from distributing their literature. If other means do not suffice, he will use them

more directly on the UMW members themselves.

REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP

The miners are not yet licked. There is a vanguard among them who are determined to keep on fighting, to throw out Miller, to throw out as many of his successors as necessary to build a fighting union. These miners are moving towards revolutionary consciousness. They cannot help but see the limitations of Miller's entire ideology. The first and most pressing task in the UMW today is the cohering and organizing of the best of these vanguard miners into a revolutionary leadership fighting for a program of socialist transformation and a workers government.

Miller has already shown what happens when the power of the capitalists over their property is not challenged. A revolutionary leadership would oppose Miller with a real solution—nationalization of the mines under workers' control. To enforce this nationalization, the workers need political power, a workers' government. To fight for a workers'

government, they need their own party: all illusions in the Democratic Party must be destroyed. To build a labor party and a broadly based movement of all kinds of workers throughout the country.

LABOR PARTY

The first step towards building a labor party is to build a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed that would represent as many unions, organizations, rank and file caucuses, etc., as are interested in uniting against the big corporations and their stooges. This congress could build a real fighting party that would oppose the new proposals of the Democratic Party to begin wage controls again. A new labor party could lead a broadly based, class-wide fight against inflation and unemployment. Armed with a revolutionary program, the labor party could lead an offensive against the capitalist class and establish a workers' government.

If the most advanced miners are to build a movement that can get to the bottom of what is wrong with Miller's approach, they must be agreed upon this kind of strategy. Programmatic clarity is absolutely necessary to prevent future backsliding.

But this clarity and agreement on the long-range program does not mean that the revolutionary leadership stands aside from the on-going struggle of the masses of miners. Wildcatting locals will be attacked by Miller. Revolutionaries will have to take the lead in their defense. They cannot assume that others will do the job. Miller's every retreat on union democracy must be made a public scandal in the union. To cut through the cynicism that the ranks will never be able to control the union, revolutionaries must constantly pound away at the source of Miller's attacks on workers' democracy: his loyalty to the capitalist system and his reliance upon the state.

To struggle for union democracy is bound up with the struggle against the bourgeois state. Workers' defense guards must be prepared to defend the miners against police and troops. Democracy is not real unless it can be defended. The miners must raise the slogans "Fight the Injunctions," "Miller Off Ford's Committee," and "No Wage Controls."

Miners must demand that organizing drives throughout the coal industry fight to eliminate scab coal entirely.

CLASS UNITY

Only if the miners tie their interests as miners to a class-wide strategy can they tear their union from the claws of the capitalists. Conferences between rank and file miners and the ranks of energy-related industries, especially the oil industry, conferences between coal miners and other kinds of miners, conferences between miners and steelworkers, could build the kind of unity needed to oppose the giant corporations.

Suppose the UMW leadership were really interested in class solidarity. Miller would have appealed to the energy workers in the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union to go out on sympathy strikes with the miners strike. 420 separate OCAW contracts came due on January 7. The miners could have stayed out to support the oil workers, who were also sold out by their leadership. Miller also should have called on all workers to refuse to handle coal in any way during the strike.

The Miller leadership passes off elbow-rubbing with bureaucrats of other unions as adequate "gestures" of solidarity. Miller therefore invited I.W. Abel of the United Steelworkers to the UMW convention, where the UMW bureaucrats made no mention of Abel's plot to ram the ENA no-strike deal down their throats.

But what is needed is real labor solidarity. If a major wildcat strike breaks out in steel, miners must be prepared to support such a strike by refusing to mine coal and by organizing transportation workers to refuse to ship coal in any form to struck steel plants until the wildcat is settled.

These are only examples of the forms the struggle could take. What is needed is a leadership able to seize opportunities as they arise. Miller has been totally exposed as an agent of the capitalist class. Reformist trade unionism must be replaced with revolutionary class struggle.

HOW THE R.U. RESTORES CAPITALISM

Part Three: STATE CAPITALISM IN CHINA

by Walter Dahl and Jack Gregory

As loyal followers of Stalin and Mao, the RU maintains that while capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union, China remains "socialist." By their allegiance to China as opposed to the "revisionist" Soviet Union, the RU and other Maoists attempt to establish their revolutionary credentials.

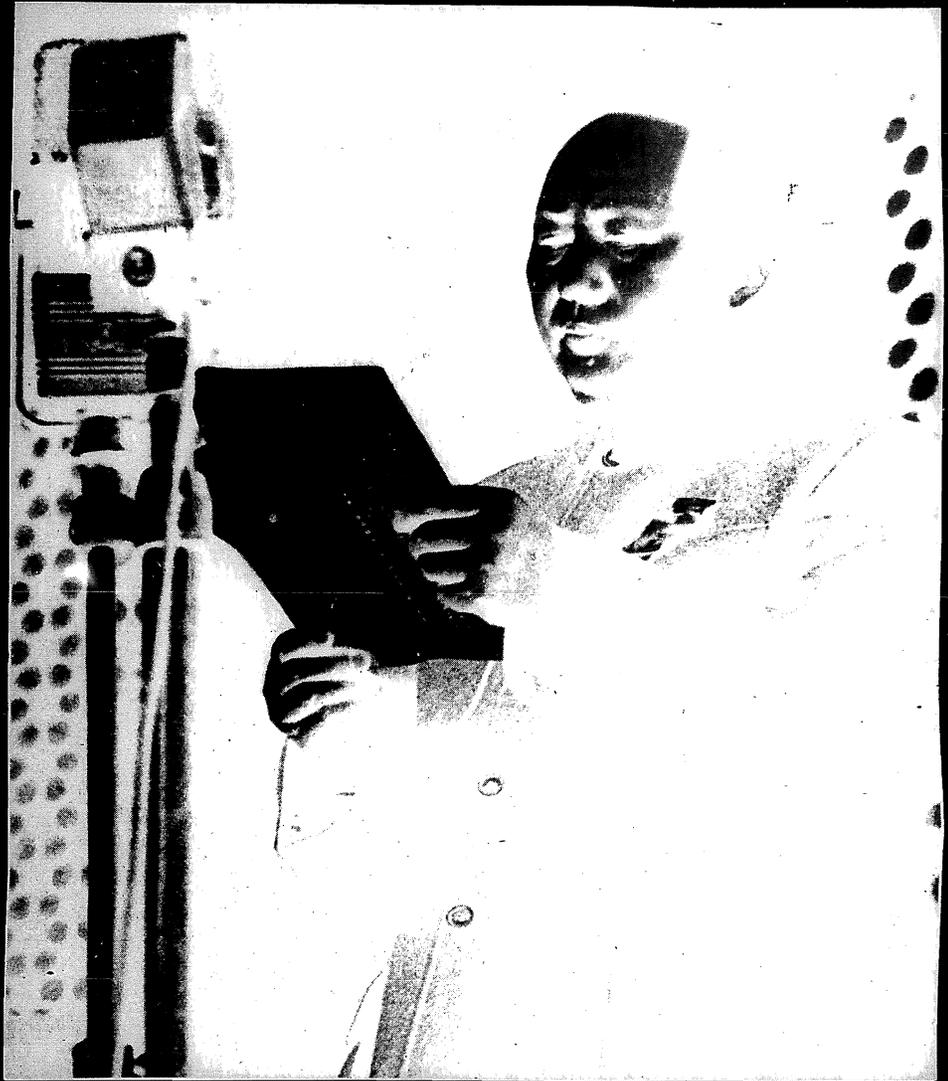
But today's China is not revolutionary, and never was proletarian. The would-be revolutionaries who have allied themselves to China and who try to draw political lessons from the Thoughts of Mao Tse-Tung have in fact committed themselves to a section of the world bourgeoisie, the Chinese bureaucracy.

Maoism is not and never has been a theory of proletarian revolution: it stands for the national interests of the Chinese ruling class in exploiting the Chinese proletariat and peasantry and for the derailing of revolutionary struggles around the world in the interests of the world bourgeoisie.

NEW DEMOCRACY

The Maoist theory of New Democracy, designed to explain the Chinese revolution and pose the correct strategy for national liberation struggles throughout the world, declared in advance that a revolution led by Maoists could not be socialist. It would be limited to establishing New Democracy, or a "united-front democratic alliance based on the overwhelming majority of the people, under the leadership of the working class" (Mao, On Coalition Government, 1945). This rhetoric translates to one word: capitalism.

Some people cannot understand why the Communists, far from being antipathetic to capitalism, actually



October 1, 1949: Mao proclaims People's Republic of China. Despite progressive victory over Chiang Kai-Shek and his sponsor, U.S. imperialism, Chinese revolution never went beyond capitalism.

promote its development. To them we can simply say this much: to replace the oppression of foreign imperialism and native feudalism with the development of capitalism is not only an advance, but also an unavoidable process. (Mao, The Fight for a New China, 1945)

This is naked Menshevism. It is true that prior to 1917 Lenin had believed that the underdeveloped nations would have to pass through a bourgeois stage before becoming ripe for socialism. But as opposed to Mao, Lenin even then understood that the proletarian vanguard must maintain complete independence from the bourgeoisie, and he consistently opposed the "coalition governments" that became Mao's hallmark.

APRIL THESES

And in the crucible of war and revolution, Lenin abandoned completely all aspects of stage theory:

Whoever now talks only about the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" has lost touch with life, has, in virtue of this circumstance, gone over in practice, to the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle; and he ought to be relegated to the museum of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiquities (or, as one might call it, the museum of "old Bolsheviks"). (Lenin, April Theses)

Only two months after the February revolution, and immediately upon his return from exile, Lenin thus reversed the previous Bolshevik policy of conditionally supporting the bourgeois Provisional Government, a policy carried out under the leadership of Kamenev and Stalin. To the consternation of revisionists of all colors, Lenin proclaimed that because objective conditions internationally were ripe for socialism, the Russian proletariat need not wait until the productive forces further matured inside Russia. Socialist revolution

Maoism is not and never has been a theory of proletarian revolution. It is pure Menshevism. It stands for the national interests of the Chinese ruling class and the derailing of revolutionary struggles around the world.

was on the agenda.

What was true for Russia was true for the underdeveloped nations in general. Expanding on the April Theses theme three years later, Lenin urged,

The Communist International should advance the proposition . . . that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage. (Lenin, Report on the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions)

Contrast this with the already-cited statement by Mao that a capitalist stage in China is "not only an advance, but an unavoidable process"!

MENSHEVISM

There were "socialists" who argued that the development of capitalism, a capitalist stage, was unavoidable for Russia. They were the Mensheviks, Kautsky, and the Second (Yellow) International. As opposed to Lenin and Trotsky, they cried that the productive forces were not sufficiently developed, that the proletariat could not rule in backward Russia. But the Bolshevik leaders countered that the Russian proletariat's task was to promote international revolution, so that it could take advantage of the ripeness of material conditions internationally and rule in conjunction with the world proletariat.

Mao's resurrection of Menshevism was not accidental. It was part of the general process of Stalinist annihilation of Leninism. In the previous part of this series, we discussed Stalin's destruction of the Comintern and his substitution of the Popular Front and "two-stage revolution" class collaboration for the united front and proletarian revolution. By following this line, Mao destroyed the potential for socialist revolution in China time and again, in the end turning the Chinese Communist Party into a bourgeois machine at the head of a bourgeois state.

Before Mao assumed command of the CCP, this trail was already being blazed. In the mid-1920's, the Communists liquidated themselves into Chiang Kai-Shek's Kuomintang (KMT). Russian advisers trained Chiang's troops at a military academy in Wuhan. The Chinese Communists were told by Stalin that the bourgeois revolution was on the agenda, and so they should throw all efforts into support of the Kuomintang. This theory, paraded under the label "bloc of four classes" (proletariat, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie), meant in fact the complete subordination of the working class to the capitalists. As we described last month, the CCP leadership forced the Shanghai proletariat to end its general strike on the eve of Chiang's brutal anti-Communist coup, resulting in the slaughter of thousands of the best worker-militants.

The two-stage theory had in practice proved to mean the direct shackling of the proletariat by its supposed leadership. The CCP, claiming that the bourgeois and not the proletarian revolution was on the agenda, restrained the Chinese workers and led them to the capitalist slaughter.

But the CCP learned no lessons. Since Chiang was clearly no longer a "revolutionary," they turned to the next best thing—the "Left" Kuomintang. Once more, the bloc with a bourgeois party resulted in defeat, as the "Lefts" went over to Chiang. All the while, Chiang was destroying whatever power the Communists retained in the KMT. In late 1927, when the Canton proletariat rose up, the CCP had been completely outflanked. The Canton insurrection was smashed.

GOODBYE, PROLETARIAT

Following the destruction of the Chinese Revolution, the CCP turned away from the proletariat. The Communists had been separated from its proletarian base by force, after its bankrupt strategy had led to tragedy. But it accepted this separation and made a virtue out of it. It is in this period that Mao Tse-Tung emerged as the leader of Chinese Communism, with a theory of basing a revolutionary strategy not on the proletariat but upon the peasantry.

The Chinese Communists retreated to the most

remote rural areas. Mao eliminated the party's work among the Chinese working class, and the party's proletarian membership consequently dwindled down to a handful. Mao's "adaptation of Marxism to Chinese conditions" overturned the fundamental premise of Marxism that only the proletariat can lead the socialist revolution.

In The Eighteenth Brumaire, Marx had described the peasantry as "a sack of potatoes." By this he meant that their scattered, isolated existence and socially-enforced low cultural level made it impossible for the peasantry to act as an independent social force. It could only follow the lead of one or the other of the decisive classes—the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. Under the leadership of one of these groupings, the massive numbers of the peasantry could indeed exert force. But it could not throw up its own program or rule its own state.

MARX VS. MAO

By the same token, Marx had declared in the Communist Manifesto that "the emancipation of the proletariat is the task of the proletariat itself." Until Mao, every party calling itself a working class party had sought to base itself in the urban working class. Only in this way could the claim of representing the working class be made. But Mao added a new twist. The party represented the proletariat because of its ideas, and therefore could base itself on any strata of society. The class composition of the party served no purpose whatsoever. Materialism was turned on its head and transformed into complete idealism. Material conditions had nothing to do with theory and practice; all of these were determined by the "good ideas" in Mao's head, which apparently were placed there by some divine power.

One grouping called clearly and persistently for a return to a proletarian orientation—the Chinese Trotskyists. But the Trotskyists were driven out of



1925-27: Workers' and peasants' movements mount until derailed by Stalinist class collaborationist line. Above, workers' militia in 1925

the CCP, hounded and persecuted. In their attempts to organize the Chinese workers, they were set upon by the KMT and the CCP alike.

The Chinese Communists had torn themselves away from the only revolutionary class, the proletariat. In pre-revolutionary Russia, the Narodniks and then the Social Revolutionaries had attacked revolutionary Marxism for "ignoring" the peasantry. But the Marxists replied, Lenin first among them, that the peasantry can only be organized in a revolutionary way if revolutionaries place their first priority as organizing workers. The peasantry, because it cannot act in its own name, must follow the decisive lead of the organized workers.

Mao returned to the road rejected by the Bolsheviks. The CCP turned from a revolutionary organization to a centrist group and finally to an explicitly anti-working class formation.

While abandoning the proletariat, Mao did not forget the mistakes made in the bloc with the KMT. He remembered them well, well enough to embark upon the same course himself. During the anti-Japanese War, Mao constantly made agreements with Chiang, which Chiang would keep as long as they served his purposes. In particular, the CCP agreed, in the 1938 Chungking Manifesto, not to maintain any party organizations in the areas controlled by the Kuomintang, which included all of China's major cities that were not under Japanese rule.

As long as Chiang had been hostile to Mao, Mao had reciprocated. But when, under the military pressure of the Japanese armies, Chiang sought conciliation, Mao greeted him with open arms. Commenting on Chiang's acceptance of joint struggle against Japan in late 1936, Mao commented: "The indication that Chiang Kai-Shek is beginning to wake up may be considered a sign of the Kuomintang's willingness to end the wrong policy it has pursued for ten years." (Mao, A Statement on Chiang Kai-Shek's Statement, December, 1936)

What was responsible for this new enlightenment on the part of Chiang? Mao had a ready answer:

As the contradiction between China and Japan has become the principal one and China's internal contradictions have dropped into a secondary and subordinate place, changes have occurred in China's international relations and internal class relations, giving rise to a new stage of development in the current situation. (Mao, The Tasks of The Chinese Communist Party in The Period of Resistance to Japan, May, 1937)

So now we see that class contradictions, the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, have taken the back seat in the struggle against Japanese imperialism. While communists unite militarily against the imperialist aggressor, they must in no way capitulate to the notion that the proletarian revolution is put in cold storage, and the working class vanguard can give up its independence and mingle with and politically support the bourgeoisie. But that is precisely what Mao meant and did:

Far from rejecting the Three People's Principles (the program of the Kuomintang), we are ready staunchly to put them into practice; moreover, we ask the Kuomintang to implement them together with us, and we call upon the whole nation to put them into effect. We hold that the Communist Party, the Kuomintang and the people of the whole country should unite and fight for these three great objectives of national independence, democracy and freedom, and the people's livelihood. (ibid)

In case there were any questions remaining, Mao addressed the bourgeoisie directly in this same essay, assuring them that his policy had never really been revolutionary:

Was our past slogan of a workers' and peasants' democratic republic wrong? No, it was not . . . This slogan was not in conflict with the task of bourgeois-democratic revolution but signified that we were resolutely carrying out this task. Not a single item of policy adopted in our actual struggle was out of keeping with this task. Our policy, including the confiscation of the land of the landlords and the enforcement of the eight-hour day, never went beyond the bounds of capitalist private ownership: our policy was not to put socialism in practice then. What will be the composition of the new democratic republic? It will consist of the proletariat, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie, and all those in the

country who agree with the national and democratic revolution. The salient feature here is the inclusion of the bourgeoisie . . . it is absolutely necessary for us to turn from the method of forcible confiscation of the land to appropriate new methods.

It was correct to put forward the slogan of a workers' and peasants' democratic republic in the past, and it is correct to drop it today. (Mao, Selected Works, Vol 1, pp. 271-72)

Mao said it all. The CCP will remain firmly within the bounds of capitalism, and had never really wanted anything more than agrarian reform. The bourgeoisie must be included in the "new democratic republic." All Chiang had to do was beckon, and Mao came running. Previously, Mao had been denouncing Chiang as a renegade in whom no trust whatsoever could be placed. Now he was ready to form a government with him.

There is not a shred of Leninism in any of this. The proletariat is told that the proletarian

period. Mao was still determined to hold back the revolution, to make sure that the struggle was confined within bourgeois channels.

All of this was carried out under Mao's theory of "adjusting class contradictions." Just as the proletarian party could do without the proletariat, so Mao theorized that the class struggle could be turned on and off like a faucet. It consistently and vigorously opposed the struggles of the workers, peasants and students against Chiang in this period, still hoping for the coalition government.

The CCP finally changed its line, but only after two necessary pre-conditions had been met. First, the urban movements had been crushed by the Kuomintang. Second, significant sectors of the bourgeoisie had come over to the CCP out of desperation at Chiang's thuggery. Only then did Mao change his line and call for Chiang's overthrow.

to defeat the Kuomintang forces. But the grouping that came to power immediately made it clear, by its actions against the proletariat, that it was just another bourgeois clique.

We have already cited a few of the "labor discipline" measures. There were no Soviets in China, as there had been in Russia. There was no internal party democracy—Mao polemicized against any such notions as "ultra-left" and "Trotskyite." There was not even a proletarian party of any sort—the CCP, again, had divorced itself from the working class. Indeed, every aspect of the Russian workers' state that Stalin overturned in his bloody counter-revolution never existed in China under Mao. Mao's anti-proletarian party with its professedly bourgeois program had seen to that long before seizing power.

Indeed, it is surprising that ostensible Marxists can view China as anything other than capitalist. How can a proletarian revolution be made without the proletariat? Isn't it clear that Mao simply accomplished what he had proclaimed all along that he would do? When Mao said that he would lead a bourgeois-democratic revolution, and lead it without the bourgeoisie if necessary, he meant exactly what he said. Indeed, the Eighth Congress of the CCP (First Session) adopted, in 1956, a resolution designating China as state capitalist. This precisely what the theory of New Democracy said would be done: first, establish capitalism securely, and then (the second stage) comes the proletarian revolution. The problem was that the ostensibly proletarian party was at the head of a self-avowed bourgeois state.

The RU, which knows that state capitalism exists in practice as well as in theory, should know that China is state capitalist. After all, its main criteria for the restoration of capitalism in Russia is the destruction of the proletarian nature of the CPSU. But the CCP had decades before its rise to power renounced its proletarian heritage in all but words. To the RU, China's nationalized property by itself cannot make it a workers' state, or otherwise Russia could not be capitalist. The rule of the CCP cannot be the deciding element, for this party is no more proletarian than the CPSU (indeed, from the Cultural Revolution until 1971 the CCP was dissolved—a workers' state without a proletarian vanguard leadership!) All the RU can tell us is that they like China and don't like Russia, and that's why one is not capitalist and the other is.



1948: Post-war chaos combined with weakness [caused by Stalinist betrayals] of the working class facilitated Mao's victory. Above, with inflation skyrocketing, workers rush to exchange depreciating currency for gold.

revolution is not on the agenda. The party's program, the program of the Communists(!), is wholly and admittedly bourgeois. It is a program oriented to and addressed to the peasantry—not surprising, given Mao's discovery that the proletarian vanguard has no use for the proletariat. The proletarian revolution cannot be struggled for during imperialist invasion, according to Mao—despite the fact that the national bourgeoisie (as Mao well knew) was the most untrustworthy ally imaginable.

After Japan's defeat in World War II, the anti-proletarian policies of the CCP came out even more openly. Having forsaken any chance of taking power during the war by its class collaboration, Mao now extended this policy even when the Japanese threat no longer existed.

CHINA IN TURMOIL

The defeat of Japan left China in misery and turmoil. The rotting and corrupt Kuomintang government disintegrated, along with its armies. Chiang's regime tyrannized the Chinese people, conscripted and over-taxed the peasants, squandered its financial resources, disrupted commerce and industry and based itself on nothing except its military forces and support from U.S. imperialism. The Chiang bandit regime even turned on the Chinese bourgeoisie, driving it over to Mao.

The post-war period was chaotic. The massive resentment against Chiang led to urban anti-government movements and mass strikes. At one time in 1948, 200,000 workers were on strike in Shanghai alone.

But still, Mao maintained his call for coalition government with the Kuomintang until 1947. He retained it even though the CCP was under constant attack from the KMT armies throughout this

The collapse of the Kuomintang was not sufficient for the victory of the CCP. The demoralization of the proletariat and the support of the bourgeoisie assured Mao that he could indeed establish the kind of state he wanted—one which remained within capitalist bounds. Right until Chiang's downfall, the CCP would not call for the workers in the KMT-held cities to rebel. Instead, they were ordered to wait peacefully for their "liberation." Mao had no use for a militant and mobilized proletariat that might choose to settle its own accounts with its oppressors.

When the CCP armies took over China's cities, they were greeted with enthusiasm by the mass of the population, ecstatic at the end of Kuomintang tyranny. But the CCP immediately set itself in opposition to the proletariat. In many cities, the entire Kuomintang civil apparatus was retained (including the police) and incorporated into the new "People's Republic." Trade union laws were adopted and enforced forbidding strikes. Unions were permitted only to "observe labor discipline." Policies modeled after Stalin's counter-revolutionary labor codes were established to combat all forms of working class resistance, including labor books and an anti-equalitarianism campaign. The CCP's model for the state it now ruled was not Lenin's Soviet state of 1917, but Stalin's state capitalist empire.

The "new" China was indeed capitalist. And this should come as no surprise to Marxists. The CCP had taken power without the proletariat—indeed, it had actively strived to suppress any independent activity by the Chinese working class. For two decades prior to Chiang's overthrow, Mao had systematically cut all ties between the party and the working class. The weakness of the bandit Chiang regime had allowed the CCP's peasant-based armies

BERNSTEIN AND MAO

Mao's version of how China changed its class nature under his rule is the second half of the New Democracy theory. In New Democratic (that is, bourgeois) China, socialism was gradually created through a process of evolution under CCP rule. This is classical Bernsteinist revisionism, the idea that capitalism gradually transforms itself into socialism through the working out of its own inherent laws. Mao's theory is a variant of this only in the sense that the added ingredient of "Communist" leadership is thrown in for flavoring. But remember, to Mao communist leadership does not mean the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat, but only state power in the hands of a grouping calling itself Communist, but which long ago turned its back on the Chinese working class.

Here is how the RU describes the "transformation to socialism" after 1949

The first stage of the Chinese revolution did not immediately aim at socialism but was directed against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism . . . In this struggle, the national bourgeoisie, or sections of it—those capitalists not directly tied to the imperialists—sided with the masses of people, because of the objective contradictions they faced with imperialism and feudalism. As soon as power was seized the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie centered around the question of whether China would carry through the revolution to the socialist stage or would instead pass through an extended period of capitalism.

The RU has made one minor improvement upon Mao. While swallowing whole the need for coalition with the bourgeoisie, the RU does see the need to add that there had to be a class struggle to determine whether China under Mao would remain capitalist or pass on to socialism. Unfortunately,

Mao did not agree. Praising his New Democratic state idea to the skies, he wrote: "This kind of state system . . . truly meets the demands of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese population."

He went on to make this explicit, noting that "there are still contradictions among these classes, notably the contradiction between labor and capital," but that,

throughout the stage of New Democracy these contradictions, these differing demands, will not grow and transcend the demands which all have in common and should not be allowed to do so; they can be adjusted. (Mao, On Coalition Government, 1945)

Where for the RU the class struggle would decide the fate of the New Democratic state, for Mao the struggles and aspirations of the working class were things to be "adjusted" to meet the needs of a bourgeois state.

SCAPEGOAT

Who can be the scapegoat, who can be made to bridge the gap between the RU and Mao? A candidate is close at hand. In the RU's words, "The latter path (i.e., an extended period of capitalism and "adjusted" class struggle) was advocated by Liu Shao-Chi, with his line that exploitation is a merit."

The RU certainly has justification in identifying Liu with this position. But they somehow neglect to add that this was Mao's program to begin with, a program which included the "guaranteeing of legitimate profits . . . so that both the public and private sectors and both labor and capital will work together to develop industrial production." The RU does not care to recall what Mao actually stood for. Instead, they bald-facedly lie:

The revolutionary line of Mao Tse-tung, which called for immediately embarking on the socialist revolution, won out, and by 1956 the transition to socialist ownership of the means of production had been essentially completed insofar as the cities and industrial enterprises were concerned.

By 1956 socialist ownership of the means of production had been completed! Someone should inform the RU that in 1956 the CCP Congress declared China to be state-capitalist. But no matter. The RU knows that China is socialist, and if it has to obscure a few trivialities, such as what Mao Tse-tung really thought and did, it's all in the service of the same cause as the whitewash of Stalin in Red Papers No. 7.

Aside from distorting "Mao Tse-tung Thought," the statement cited above sums up the RU's general anti-Marxist confusionism. What does the RU mean by "socialist ownership of the means of production?" That the factories were nationalized, no doubt. That is indeed what happened during the first Five-Year Plan of 1953-57. But since the RU has already agreed that nationalization does not mean socialism, what does it mean to say that Mao stood for "immediately embarking on the socialist revolution?"

The RU, we recall, has already informed us that the 1949 revolution "did not immediately aim at socialism" and therefore was not the socialist revolution. Mao assures us of the same thing—that the 1949 revolution was bourgeois. But then, to the RU, the socialist revolution in China took place sometime between 1949 and 1956 when nobody, least of all the Chinese proletariat, was aware of it.

Here Menshevism reaches its Bernsteinist end. A bourgeois state is transformed into a proletarian state quietly and peacefully—Kautsky's longed-for "peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism." Not only was it not necessary for the Chinese Communists to base themselves on the proletariat, not only was the proletariat a hindrance to the "New Democratic" revolution, but now we find that the working class is extraneous to the proletarian revolution.

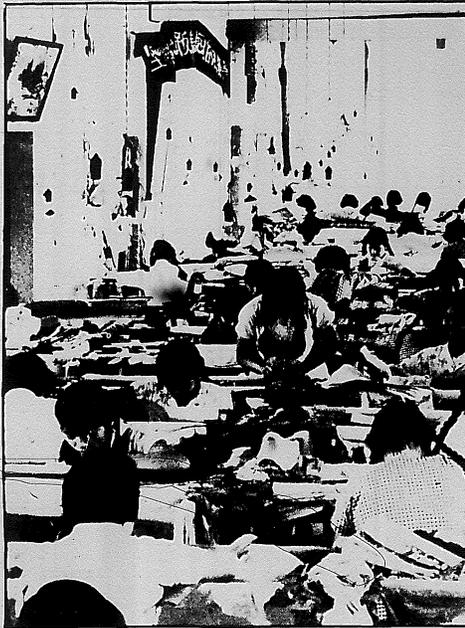
This is a marvelous theory: Who knows what new wonders will be discovered by Mao. Perhaps the nobility will be the future agent of revolutionary change? Mao's idealism can accomplish anything:

In these areas (Asia, Africa, Latin America), extremely broad sections of the population refuse to be slaves of imperialism. They include not only the workers, peasants, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie, but also the patriotic national bourgeoisie and even certain kings, princes, and aristocrats who are patriotic. ("Proposal Concerning the General Line of the

International Communist Movement," June, 1963

How did socialism triumph in China, RU? How did it come to power without the proletariat? Where were the institutions of dual power, the Soviets? Where was the proletarian party? Where indeed was the proletariat?

One thing should be crystal clear. The RU's whitewash of Stalin was absolutely essential for them to term China as "socialist." For by calling Stalin's Russia socialist, they established a model for themselves. Socialism means applying the most ruthless conditions to the proletariat. It means a state in which the proletariat is bitterly exploited, and a party which has shed its proletarian nature (in Part One we showed how Stalin turned the CPSU from the proletarian vanguard to a technocratic elite, just as Mao destroyed the proletarian nature of the early CCP).



1967: Despite the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," exploitation of the working class remains the basis of the Chinese economy.

Socialism, by using Stalin as the guide, is demonstrated by labor pass-books, the banning of the right to strike, the destruction of the trade unions as anything save a tool for labor discipline. It means "anti-equalitarian" campaigns to insure the widest possible wage differentials. It means making sure by every means necessary that the proletariat be given no opportunity to act in its own name.

It means complete idealism. Stalin's theory of Socialism in One Country has been dealt with in earlier parts of the series, where we showed that it was completely counterposed to Lenin's proletarian internationalism. Lenin tirelessly repeated that the proletarian revolution would fail unless the revolution spread internationally. Stalin declared that the Russian people could construct socialism themselves. Material conditions had no place in his "theory." But in his practice, he ruthlessly and brutally exploited and oppressed the Russian workers and the national minorities to wring out the maximum of surplus-value. Socialism, in these terms, means the construction of a class society that uses every means at its disposal to stand over the working class, rather than the rule of the workers themselves (as Marx defined the dictatorship of the proletariat).

Mao followed the same path as Stalin. Because there was never a proletarian revolution in China, Mao was able to move immediately to solidifying Chinese state-capitalism. He was able to skip over the counter-revolution, since the workers never ruled China to begin with. This simply made his job easier.

Like Stalin, Mao had no intention of fostering proletarian revolution internationally. Instead he chose to rely on blocs with kings, princes and the bourgeoisie. Internally, meanwhile, Mao like Stalin

embarked on building "socialism" in one country. This could only mean wringing brutal concessions out of the masses. Unfortunately, a systematic analysis of the Chinese economy and social conditions under Mao is beyond the scope of this article. It required all of our present space to deal with Mao's version of Marxism, the Bernsteinian New Democracy, and to demonstrate that Mao consciously set out to establish a capitalist state by systematically subordinating the proletariat long before he came to power. We will take up this question in future issues of The Torch, as it demonstrates how state-capitalism functions in practice.

For now, we will sum up what the Chinese Revolution of 1949 has meant. The 1949 revolution, by temporarily halting the imperialist robbery of a nation of hundreds of millions, enabled China to expand its economic base gradually on the basis of surplus-value produced by the Chinese peasantry and proletariat. When the tool of Soviet imperialism became too great, Mao was able to break with the Russians—although the costs were severe (the Great Leap Forward, the attempt to place China on independent economic footing, virtually destroyed China's internal market and resulted in severe depression, famine and mass emigration from 1961-63; this is when Liu Shao-Chi, advocating a policy of concessions to plant managers, came to the fore).

What Mao's revolution meant, all in all, was the ability to step up the exploitation of the Chinese masses. Without the right to resist, with the workers forbidden to organize in their own interests, facing an organized bourgeoisie, indoctrinated with an upside-down idealism masquerading as Marxism, the Chinese workers and peasants were shut off from the struggles and cultural heritage of the world proletariat.

Still, the CCP could produce only limited solutions to China's desperate problems—the need to revolutionize industry and agriculture out of their historic backwardness in the face of hostile imperialist powers—not the least of which was the Soviet Union, as we pointed out in Part Two of this series. Unable to break the bonds of imperialism, state capitalist China was trapped.

In the conditions of extreme scarcity, and having to support an enormous military sector, China's state-capitalist class has been under enormous pressures. We noted above how Liu's dominance, his program of fostering consumer-oriented industry, arose out of the abysmal failure of Mao's Great Leap Forward crash program. But Liu came into conflict with the military, who objected to his draining capital to light industry and away from them; he also came into conflict with Mao, who feared his increased power. These constant tensions inside the ruling class underlie the violent explosions that periodically shake the CCP. Liu is cast out by the military headed by Lin Biao; then Lin in turn is purged. This history has gone on consistently in Mao's China, as the different sectors of the bureaucracy battle each other for shares of the social product. Out of these pressures come today's splits over whether to orient to the U.S., Japan, Russia, or attempt to go it alone; does China need foreign capital, and if so what is the best source; etc.

The RU ends its pamphlet on Soviet capitalism by quoting Lenin: "Imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat," and then concludes itself:

The emergence of a new imperialist power—Soviet social-imperialism—can in no way change this truth. The day is not far off when the people of the entire world will rise up and bury Soviet social-imperialism, U.S. imperialism and all reactionaries and open a bright new page in human history.

Chinese state capitalism will also be buried, and so will the reformists and centrists who, one way or another, erect in themselves the last bastions of the bourgeois world order. The RU among them—for the Maoists do not simply support state capitalism in China, but they also defend it at home. The theory of capitalism on which their analysis of Soviet imperialism is based is a pseudo-Marxist sham derived from Stalin, a theory that strengthens the hand of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

That is the subject of our next article.

DEPRESSION LOOMS IN RUBBER

by Paul Aldridge

The economic crisis, already the worse since the Great Depression, continues to slide downhill, paced by the depression in auto. With 300,000 auto workers laid off and production slashed to the bone, the situation in auto gives a glimpse of the desperate times coming to all American workers.

Industries which supply the car manufacturers with parts and materials will soon be in no better shape than auto. Already, these sectors are slashing their production schedules, laying off thousands of workers, and intensifying speed-up and stretch-out. As the crisis deepens, these attacks will be ever more vicious.

Rubber is the key auto-related industry. Tire-making center Akron may soon become a mirror of auto capital Detroit, where the jobless rate is over 15 per cent. The United Rubber Workers (URW) will be subjected to the same brutal attacks as the UAW is already suffering.

These attacks—layoffs, speed-up, wage cuts—have already begun. They will intensify. Every worker should look closely at the rubber industry, for its plight makes clear that the current crisis is not just a symptom of problems in auto. It is a fundamental crisis plaguing every sector, which will drive the capitalists on to ever fiercer attacks.

LAYOFFS

Immediately following the announcement of the cutbacks by the auto bosses in December, Goodyear, Uniroyal and B.F. Goodrich responded with a number of layoffs and work week reductions. This reaction came as no surprise, as over 70 per cent of their production is directed for use in auto. Since that time, Firestone has laid off 1,000 workers in eight of its twelve plants and Goodyear has forced another 773 of its workers into the unemployment lines. Far worse is on the way.

Rubber workers cannot afford to have any illusions about the future of the rubber industry. The recent decrease in auto production only adds to the problems already faced by the rubber barons. At an international conference in September, industry forecasters said that "the general outlook for the rubber industry this year (1975) is not very encouraging. The most that can be looked for is a modest increase; the years of dynamic growth have gone . . ." (Rubber World, Nov. 14, 1974) The prediction has proven correct on two counts: that the perspectives for rubber are, in fact, discouraging and that the years of dynamic growth are definitely gone. The "modest increase" represents only wishful thinking.

The reasons for this flow from the very nature of the post-war boom. The U.S. established its dominance over the other western capitalist states through World War II and its aftermath. Emerging from the war unchallenged, it was in position to take advantage of the defeat of the international proletariat through war and fascism, and to utilize the devastation of the European econom-

ies, to force concessions from the European bourgeoisie. The U.S. took advantage of favorable trade agreements, cheap labor and profitable investment opportunities in Europe, but this was done directly at the expense of modernizing domestic industry.

While real production was being increased in Europe, the U.S. economy was stagnating. Instead of introducing new production techniques in the U.S. and thereby increasing productivity, capital was increasingly channeled into the more profitable European market. Now with the break-up of the post-war agreements, U.S. companies must compete on the world market with their outmoded machinery against the modern plants of Europe.

RADIALS

This has particularly grave consequences for the rubber barons. For the last 20 years, the U.S. rubber industry has watched the growth of the radial tire market. Even while acknowledging that it represented the future in tire production, they failed to make the necessary investments in the new machinery for radial production. Why was this the case?

The rubber companies were not able to generate enough capital to undertake the conversion of their tire-making plant. Their only alternative was to try and block the move to radials. Goodyear attempted this through the introduction of the bias-belted tire in the late '60's. The net effect was a heavy commitment in machinery and resources for a tire which proved to be far inferior to the steel-belted radial. As a result, Goodyear did not begin converting its plant until 1973.

The fact that the conversion was necessary is clearly demonstrated by the sales statistics on radials in the U.S. market, which represents one-third of the world market. In 1969, one out of every fifty tires sold in the U.S. was a radial. Last year, the figure had jumped to one out of every four. By 1980, radials are expected to represent two-thirds of all tires sold.

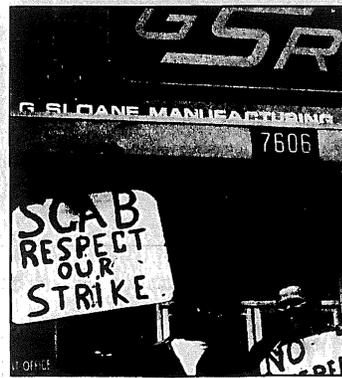
MICHELIN

Another indicator is the penetration of Michelin into the U.S. tire market. This French tire producer invented and introduced the steel-belted radial in Europe nearly 25 years ago. Radials are its sole product. It is now ranked third behind Goodyear and Firestone in total tire sales. In Europe, where radials account for more than 90 per cent of the market, Michelin is first and outsells Goodyear, Goodrich and Uniroyal.

Michelin has already captured a sizable share of the U.S. market. In 1973, they exported more than \$400,000 worth of tires to the U.S. In 1974, seven per cent of the original tires mounted by Ford were Michelin radials. With the hope of capturing a still larger share, Michelin is in the process of building a rubber-mixing plant in Anderson, South Carolina and an assembly plant in nearby Greenville. When these are completed, they will produce six million radials per

year for the American market. The initial investment for this venture amounts to \$300 million. This alone is more than Goodyear spent worldwide for new construction in all of 1974.

Michelin's strength can be seen in the fact that one-half of its forty-five plants are less than six years old, while in Akron, the center of the U.S. rubber industry, most plants predate the Depression. The corresponding superiority in productivity has provided the basis for Michelin's ability to have quadrupled its sales in the last ten years; producing a growth rate



Year-long Sloane strike of 1973-74 showed what to expect from URW hacks. Despite high level of militancy, workers were sold out.

twice that of any of the Big Four rubber companies in the U.S.

Still, Michelin is not invincible. It too will be affected by the declining tire market. During the late '20's, it tried to expand in the U.S. and was unable to maintain production due to the Great Depression. Once again, Michelin's dreams of conquest may be crushed beneath the iron heel of world economic collapse.

Also, Michelin has not had to face any strong competition on the radial market, as yet. The gains it has won have been largely through default. With the conversion of the rubber baron's tire-making plant, Michelin will have to do battle with them for a share of the shrinking tire market. This competition will be a matter of life or death for the U.S. companies, as well as Michelin.

Consequently, the intensity of this competition will not be a matter of choice, but one of necessity. As was mentioned earlier, the U.S. rubber companies did not have enough capital to carry through the conversion to radials on their own. Goodyear, for instance, was forced to raise its long and short-term debt by 14 per cent. What these debts represent are claims on future production. Goodyear and Firestone borrowed the necessary capital (\$1.25 billion for Goodyear alone) with the intention that they would repay the debt from the increased profits received on future sales.

PLUMMETING SALES

The combination of the fuel crisis and the slump in auto sales has greatly reduced the market from which these sales were to have come. In the past, tires have accounted for

two-thirds of the rubber companies' annual sales. The legacy of the fuel shortage—in terms of the shift to smaller cars, less driving due to higher gas prices and lower speed limits—has cut deeply into the tire replacement market. With new car sales down also, the rubber baron's profits will plummet. Already in the first half of 1974, tire sales had dropped off by more than 26 per cent.

What this means is that those companies which are not able to increase their share of the market may be forced to default on their debt. Bankruptcies on the scale that this would involve would make the failure of the Franklin National Bank last year look like a picnic. In any event, they would deal a serious blow to the precarious international financial agreements.

One alternative which the rubber companies point to is the diversification of their interests. This would tend to alleviate their overwhelming dependence on the Detroit auto-makers. Companies such as Goodrich, Firestone and Uniroyal have been able to make some headway in other industries, mainly chemicals and plastics. However, 85 per cent of the raw materials used in this production are crude oil derivatives. And the main market for these products, besides auto, is the housing industry, which has been in a shambles for over two years.

The major rubber companies realize that they are in desperate straits. This is behind the frantic efforts to clear the way for increasing productivity. Charles J. Pilliod, chairman and chief executive officer of Goodyear, has demanded that the government grant tax incentives to those companies which undertake "capital expenditures in expansion and modernization that is directed toward increased output and/or efficiency." (Rubber Age, Dec., 1974) Such incentives would include accelerated depreciation, increased investment credit, and tax cuts on expenditures for environmental protection. The effect of these proposals is to pass the costs of modernization of the rubber industry on to the working class through increased taxes.

CONCENTRATION

Along with this has come a more vicious policy of driving smaller competitors from the market. The price on radial tires is now being cut with the intention of forcing the smaller interests, like General Tire, Armstrong and Sears out of the market altogether. This will lead to mergers with the larger companies and an increased concentration of the rubber industry into the hands of the most powerful corporations.

The rubber bosses are also pressing for increased duties on imports and higher taxes on profits drawn by foreign-owned companies from U.S. markets. These protectionist measures are directed primarily at Michelin. If implemented, they would greatly reduce the profitability of its production and exacerbate the inter-imperial-

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ist rivalries between the U.S. and France.

In any event, these are only temporary measures. The only way that a sufficient concentration and centralization of the existing capital can be achieved is through depression and war. The weight of accumulated debt and the sheer size of the industry is too great to be overcome by any means short of this. As in the last depression, the major rubber companies will be among the most hawkish in the ruling class. It was not until the war contracts were granted in the late '30's that rubber was really able to pull out of its depressed state. This will again be the case and the rubber barons will be among the most active supporters of a new imperialist conflict and the demand that it will produce for rubber products.

The circumstances in rubber typify the general state of the capitalist system. In the process of its decay, capitalism increasingly depends on wars and the destruction they entail for its very survival. If the entire system is not overturned, it promises the complete destruction of humankind. What the capitalist mode of production created in its ascendancy, it will destroy in its decline.

Central to the above perspectives of the rubber barons is smashing rubber workers' standard of living. One of their most accommodating allies in this struggle is the union bureaucracy

less than a year later, was the handiwork of the union leadership. Using Firestone's threat of closing the plant if the proposal were not accepted for leverage, the local president, Gerald Gelvin, pleaded, "We must develop a positive attitude and appreciation of the problems of our company."

This capitulation paved the way for Goodyear and Goodrich to follow the lead of Firestone and demand the same concessions from their own workers. The union bureaucracy proved itself to be a willing accomplice in the bosses attack on the ranks of the URW. From Bommarito down, the bureaucracy demonstrated that it was more interested in the profits of the rubber companies than in defending the rubber workers.

This point was reemphasized in the 1973 contract negotiations. At the time, tire sales were at a record high. Bommarito had threatened an international boycott if the contract was not settled on acceptable terms. It would appear that the rubber workers should have won a substantially better contract. The opposite was the case.

This was the period when all the major rubber companies were in the process of converting their machinery. The union negotiators, fully appreciating the predicament of the rubber barons, settled for an 81 cent raise over the life of the contract with no cost-of-living protection. The result was that rubber workers were forced

again that PVC is a direct cause of angiosarcoma—cancer of the liver—and certain degenerative bone diseases. The bureaucrats have been unable to stop its production. When faced with the choice of defending the very lives of their membership or permitting this outrage to continue, the hacks can only shrug their shoulders in apology.

Given the general decline of the economy and the present state of the rubber industry, there can be no doubt as to what the future holds for the ranks of the URW. Massive unemployment, inhuman speed-up and severe wage cuts will be the price demanded by the rubber barons for the maintenance of their rule. The union bureaucracy will do its best to see that the price is paid.

Thus, the critical task before the most class-conscious elements of the URW is the mobilization of their fellow-workers for this fight. As yet, the power of the rubber workers has not been realized. The class-collaborationist policies of the bureaucracy have divided the ranks and weakened their ability to resist the bosses' attacks. This fact must be demonstrated in the process of building the unity necessary to defeat the rubber barons.

Akron workers have an especially important role to play in this struggle. It was here, in the heart of the rubber industry, that the URW got its start. It was here that the sit-down strike was first employed by American workers in their battle for union recognition. Now, the fruits of those victories are being taken away. Once again, the struggle to regain the six-hour day is on the agenda. Once again, Akron tire-builders must take the lead in preparing the rest of the URW for this battle.

UNITED ACTION

Key to this is the need for a unified response by all workers. Rubber workers cannot allow themselves to be isolated from their class brothers—all workers are under attack today, the only variable factor being the different speeds at which the bourgeoisie moves in different sectors. Bommarito and the URW bureaucracy follow the same treacherous course as the UAW hacks, playing dead in the face of the industry's blows, and refusing to take real steps towards united action.

It is as plain as day that the UAW and URW are under joint attack and that they should work in a coordinated way to plan a response. Further, workers in other auto-related unions should be drawn into such plans. If the bureaucrats were anything other than willing tools of the bosses, they would have already called an emergency congress of all workers in auto and related industries, employed and unemployed. They will not. It is the job of advanced militants to fight for this.

And because the bureaucrats will not take even minimal steps, they expose again their role as agents of the capitalist class. The entire situation demonstrates that the bourgeoisie cannot and will not provide for the needs of the masses—instead, it must systematically drive workers down to the most inhuman conditions. Workers cannot content themselves with waiting for "things to get better." The need for a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions to fight for workers'

control of production and distribution—a workers' government—is posed today.

Action is needed. Most workers today will not accept the need for the revolutionary solution; advanced workers must couple this with a concrete strategy for fighting the bosses' offensive, and demonstrate in practice as well as in words that such a strategy requires rejecting the limits imposed by the capitalist system.

PROGRAM

Therefore, the demands for united class action must be coupled with the slogans necessary to defend workers' living standards. In response to the growing unemployment, jobs for all—shorten the work week to divide all work equally among all willing to work, with no loss in pay. In response to inflation, full cost of living protection.

Meet the threat of plant closures with the demand for nationalization of industry under control of the workers. Oppose the protectionist schemes of the bourgeoisie and its bureaucratic helpers with international trade union solidarity—full employment in all countries, at uniformly high skilled labor rates.

These are the only measures that can insure a real defense of the working class. But they cannot be met under capitalism. Workers who believe that they can must be convinced in the course of struggle for these minimal pre-conditions for a decent life.

Workers in rubber, and indeed workers in all trade unions, should take this program to their locals. The bureaucrats must be put on the spot. These demands should be coupled with the call for emergency conferences in each union, to give workers the right to democratically decide on methods to combat the bosses' attacks. Support for such national union conferences can be built through local and regional conferences.

These conferences are the means to build for the emergency congress in auto-related industries. And this, in turn, should be viewed as just part of the real need—a national Congress of Labor and the Oppressed, of all employed and unemployed workers, to present a united, militant alternative for workers. At such a conference, revolutionary workers would present the demands outlined above, together with the call for a labor party on this program to battle the bourgeoisie and its political arms, the Democrats and Republicans.

Advanced workers must take up the struggle for this strategy today. It is the key to a winning response. Strikes, for example, cannot be left isolated in today's defensive situation. They should be coordinated between the various unions, as all are under attack, and build towards regional and national work stoppages against unemployment and inflation. Everything points to the need for class unity and for a clear program that both spells out the immediate needs of the working class and demands that they be met.

Revolutionary workers should heed the lessons of auto and rubber. They apply across the board. The time is now to begin the struggle for the only response that can smash the bosses' brutal plans once and for all—the revolutionary response.



Rubber companies expect workers to make up for their dwindling profits. Above, Danville workers are asked to freeze so that Goodyear can bolster its profits.

itself. This fact is clearly demonstrated by the events of the last few years. The attacks on the URW, which flow from the need of the bosses to modernize their plants and increase productivity, have met with little or no resistance from their loyal labor lieutenants. In fact, the union hacks have been instrumental in assuring their success.

For example, Firestone began its conversion program in 1972. At the same time, it launched a major campaign aimed at 1) replacing the six-hour day with an eight-hour day; 2) establishing an annual two-week vacation shutdown; and 3) paying pieceworkers not covered by negotiated rates according to individual production averages. These work-rule changes represented an outright attack on the gains the URW had won in its organizing drive in the '30's. Yet, they were accepted. The important question is: why?

Earlier, in 1971, Firestone had attempted the same changes. At that time, the proposal was overwhelmingly rejected by Local 7, the immediate target of the attack. Its acceptance,

to directly pay part of the costs of the conversion.

Not all were willing to accept this betrayal, though. The day after the contract with Goodyear was signed, there were wildcats in the Firestone plants in Decatur and Bloomington, Illinois and in Salinas, California. One day later, 1,500 Goodyear workers in Union City, Tennessee went out on strike. Bommarito's response was to order the men back to work. His ability to carry through on this betrayal was rooted in the divisions he had fomented within the URW. The Akron locals were forced to accept the contract under the threat of layoffs and plant closures. Without the support of these critical forces, the wildcatters were left with no alternative but to retreat.

To underline the full extent of this treachery, one need only look at the bureaucracy's record on its fight against the production of poly-vinyl chloride (PVC). Month after month, the *United Rubber Worker* is packed with articles on the fatal effects of prolonged contact with this material. It has been documented time and

FORD CUTS BACK

Cont'd. from p. 1
 crisis; his fundamental approach remains unaltered.

The thoroughly reactionary nature of the president's proposals leap out from beginning to end. Start with unemployment. In his proposed budget, Ford asks for barely one billion dollars for new public service employment. This contrasts with the eight billion extra asked for the already bloated military budget. To call Ford's unemployment proposal a drop in the bucket would be a gross overstatement. And to add his characteristic touch, Ford then commiserates that "the American people" will have to "sacrifice" for the next three years, putting up with the highest sustained unemployment in nearly four decades.

In the face of rising unemployment, the working class more desperately than ever needs expanded social services. Ford proposes cutting them back. Education, health and food stamp outlays are being slashed. A cap is being placed on Social Security, so that it will not increase with inflation—thus making worse the already critical situation of the elderly.

These are examples of the programs Ford wants to slice. In all, he is asking for \$17 billion of existing programs to be pared—almost all of them essential social services. In one fell swoop, this would wipe out any gains coming from Ford's widely-heralded \$16 billion tax rebate program. Furthermore, out of the \$16 billion in rebates, four billion consists of investment tax credits to businessmen, bringing rebates to individuals down to \$12 billion. If, from that, we subtract the amount being rebated to professionals and the rich, the rebates to workers drop well under \$10 billion—more than seven billion dollars less than Ford is taking away in the form of essential programs.

And then there is inflation, Ford's erstwhile nemesis. The proposed \$50 billion deficit virtually assures that inflation will remain in double figures. This will eat away the tax rebates and cut real wages. Inflation and unemployment, then, would remain sky-high under Ford's program. But this is not all.

Ford proposes a five per cent cap on pay increases for government workers. This guarantees that their real pay will fall. It also indicates the encouragement that the administration will give to the bourgeoisie, which will similarly be resisting wage increases that meet inflation.

Ford caps his program with his much-heralded "energy conservation" platform. In the name of achieving energy independence, Ford has asked Congress to impose a three dollars per barrel tariff on imported oil. On top of this, he is moving to eliminate price controls on domestic crude, which, according to *Business Week*, would raise its price from the present \$5.25 per barrel to \$14 per barrel. The final measure is a request for a two dollars per barrel excise tax on all domestic crude oil.

All told, these measures would raise the price of oil by four dollars per barrel.

Because oil is central to nearly every domestic industry, these increases would mean across-the-board acceleration of inflation. The energy program is just another means of soaking working people—wage-gouging through inflation.

The real beneficiaries would be the energy cartels. First, the tremendous increase in the price of domestic crude would make it profitable for them to increase production, drilling for oil that they are now unwilling to extract because prices are too low. The price increases, of course, mean increased profits. And they double Ford's two dollars per barrel excise tax, billed as a way to reduce the profits of the oil industry.

Furthermore, the energy corporations want higher oil prices for another reason. The major oil companies also monopolize domestic coal and uranium deposits. Coal gasification and nuclear energy are not competitive at present price levels, and therefore the companies cannot attract capital to invest in these areas. By raising oil prices, these new energy sources controlled by the same trusts that monopolize oil will become attractive. Ford is seeking to guarantee the dominance of the energy giants, no matter what source of



Ford and his economic advisers ponder disintegrating American economy. Their "solution:" make the workers pay.

energy is used.

Down the line, Ford's program is designed to bolster the bourgeoisie's profits at the expense of the working class. It will not end inflation. It will not lower unemployment. Rather than alleviating the desperate conditions of American workers, it will make them far worse.

The administration's openly reactionary proposals give the Democrats the opportunity to pose as the friends of the working man. They are for restoring many of the social service programs Ford wants to slash. They are for moderately increasing the outlay for new public service jobs. They are opposed to Ford's energy program, instead talking about rationing.

Further, the increase in the public debt will make the already severe liquidity crisis far worse, threatening outright depression.

Rationing, the Democrats' alternative energy program, is not needed today. There is no immediate shortage of oil internationally. In fact, prices are lower than they would be under either Ford's protectionist tariff plan or under rationing. Both Ford and the Democrats are concentrating on this area for one reason—in order to increase imperialist pressure on the Arab states, to attempt to roll back whatever concessions they have managed to get in the past year through the "oil weapon."

A shorter work week, guaranteed cost-of-living protection, massive pub-



District 65 workers at the Capitol demonstrate for improved unemployment benefits. Labor bureaucrats organize these demonstrations as an alternative to militant struggle.

But the Democrats only took good in contrast with Ford. Like Ford, their goal is to maintain the stability of bourgeois rule—they differ only over the means of achieving that end.

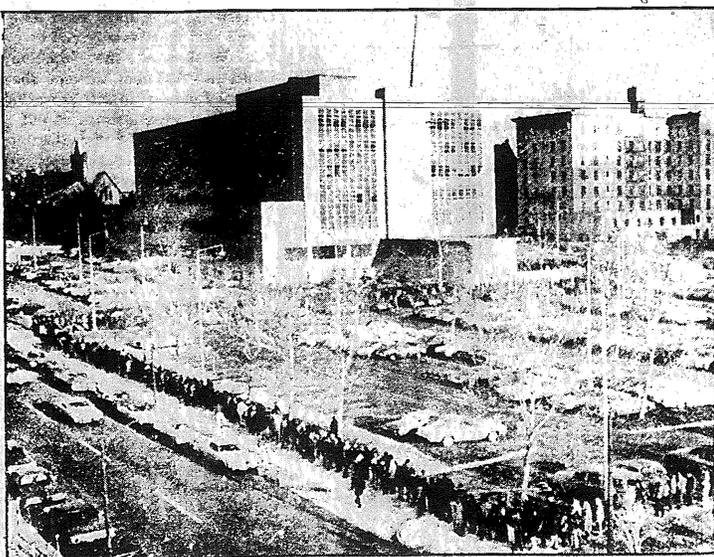
The real needs of American workers will not and cannot be met by the Democrats. These needs begin with guaranteed jobs. While factories stand idle, millions of workers are thrown onto the streets. Shortening the work week with no loss in pay would guarantee employment for all. Instead, the Democrats content themselves with token proposals for a few more public service jobs, and restore some of Ford's most outrageous welfare cuts rather than giving the unemployed productive jobs at decent pay.

Next, let us look at inflation. The Democrats have no intention of safeguarding wages against rising prices. Quite the opposite. They counter Ford with a proposed \$70 billion budget deficit. This is sure to send inflation soaring, but the Democrats oppose even the mention of guaranteed cost-of-living escalator

lic works to rebuild the cities with pay at union wages, jobs for all. These are the real needs of American workers. And this is precisely what neither Republican nor Democrats want. Capitalism could not provide them.

But they can be achieved. Revolutionary workers must counterpose these demands to the programs of Ford and the Democrats. The fact that the bourgeoisie will not meet them underlines the need to take production out of their hands—nationalization of industry under workers' control. The capitalist parties' complicity in the bourgeois attack underlines the need for an independent labor party.

Decaying capitalism cannot provide for the needs of the world's masses. The ravages of unemployment and inflation in the industrial states is accompanied by mass famine in Asia and Africa. These are the surest signs that the rule of the bourgeoisie has long outlived its day. It must be replaced by the rule of the proletariat, with a workers' government to construct socialist society.



As economy collapses, unemployment skyrockets. Above, Baltimore workers form line these blocks long to pick up meagre unemployment checks. Right, open

CLUW: Class Struggle Or Class Collaboration

by Janet Carver and Chris Hudson.

Since its founding last March, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) has traveled steadily down a class-collaborationist course. Meanwhile, supporters of pseudo-revolutionary organizations, so enthusiastic about CLUW at its founding, have no answer to the bureaucrats' extreme conservatism except small liberal projects and capitulation.

Recent developments in CLUW's Chicago chapter make this clear. Here, supporters of the Revolutionary Socialist League have waged a principled fight for a fighting response by CLUW to the economic crisis—only to meet with rebuff from CLUW's bureaucratic leaders. For example, the RSL proposed that CLUW join the United Front to defend the United Mine Workers (which we initiated in October). In response, CLUW leaders tried to keep our leaflets from being handed out. They whined: "We can't meddle in the unions. . . . It's not in the guidelines. . . . But CLUW is an 'establishment' organization and what you were talking about would wreck it." (Perfectly true—from their point of view!)

It took RSL supporters seven months to pressure the CLUW bureaucrats to hold a discussion on a

President Clara Day opposed granting a charter to the Chicago chapter because of the presence of radicals. Two of Madar's supporters were able to delay the granting of the charter by walking out and destroying a quorum just as the vote on Chicago's application was to be taken.

Locally, the CLUW leaders are just as fearful of radicals. Last fall, some Maoist-leaning women called a demonstration around local issues at a Chicago factory, Stewart Warner's, and wrote a leaflet under the name of CLUW. Although they first called a "sympathetic" CLUW bureaucrat to clear the action, the majority of the local CLUW steering committee, led by Florence Criley of the United Electrical Workers (UE), met after the demonstration and voted to censure the women involved.

RSL supporters, although not part of the original demonstration, came to the December 14 CLUW meeting determined to get a report on the incident and to defend the women against the censures. We found that the "sympathetic" members of the steering committee had abstained on the censure vote and were not planning to raise the issue before the local body.

Worse, the organizers of the demonstration themselves did not

defeat the letter of repudiation and apology.

In our fight we stressed that the CLUW body was not merely arguing over formal procedures—as both the bureaucrats and the "lefts" wanted to pose the issue—but over the politics of CLUW. At issue was the struggle between the class collaborationism of the CLUW leaders (like their slavish crawling before the do-nothing local leadership at Stewart Warner's) and the need for united working-class action against the economic crisis which was posed, however inadequately, by the local demonstration.

Further, what was at stake was the need to defeat the CLUW bureaucrats' plan to purge CLUW of its left wing. In short, the December 14 voting—in which the pro-Maoist women capitulated totally to the bureaucrats—was over the question of What is CLUW?

WHAT IS CLUW?

CLUW is the latest of a number of women's organizations in the history of the U.S. labor movement (for example the National Women's Trade Union League, which attempted before World War I to counter the appeal of the IWW among desperately poor working women) whose real

women's liberation ideas—they have also been hit especially hard by the economic crisis. It is, in fact, because their condition has worsened rapidly that they have become more aware of their special oppression as women.

WOMEN WORKERS

Trying to make up for deteriorating family incomes, women have been increasingly thrust into the work force. Wives account for the greatest single increase in the work force since World War II. The proportion of poverty-level families headed by women has grown from 23 per cent in 1959 to 37 per cent in 1970, and to 40 per cent in 1971. Three to one, these families are black.

Women's median earnings, a miserable 64 per cent of men's earnings in 1960, had fallen even further behind, to 59 per cent of men's earnings, in 1970. With lower incomes, women are hit even harder by inflation than men. In August, 1973, the unemployment rate for women workers was 48 per cent higher than for men.

Impoverishment increases the inequalities in the working class, the special oppression of women and minorities. On the one hand this tends to speed up radicalization and the consciousness among the oppressed that capitalism must be overthrown. On the other hand, it allows the ruling class and its agents in the labor movement to play off each section in the working class against the others, to keep the class divided and weak.

WORDS AND DEEDS

This is where CLUW comes in. In words, it appeals to working class women around their special oppression and poverty—which is essential to building the revolutionary movement. But in deeds, it combines the attempt of female bureaucrats to rise in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy with the attempt of that bureaucracy—the "labor lieutenants of capital"—to push a "divide and rule" strategy on the working class as a whole.

The growing consciousness of working class women can go in two directions. It can lead toward a class-wide, revolutionary response to the capitalist crisis, with the demand for equality for women as part of this response. The great mass of working class women want such a response, a program and strategy to defeat inflation and unemployment for all workers. Alternately, the anger of working class women can be channeled by cynical bureaucrats into a pallid reform program to achieve a few gains for an upper crust of unionized women—ignoring the great mass of working and non-working women and even opposing women workers' interests to the interests of other workers. Such an approach cynically uses the rhetoric of women's rights to do the capitalists' dirty work for them.

This cynical course, the CLUW leaders' course, is directly reflected in CLUW's membership rules: only union members can join CLUW or even attend a CLUW meeting. Thus wives of striking miners were forbidden to address CLUW's founding conference because they themselves were not union members! CLUW,



Josephine Flores of the Farmworkers and Clara Day of the Teamsters embrace at CLUW founding convention in March, 1974. This gesture was meant to hide the fact that the farmworkers are fighting a Teamster and grower alliance for their right to organize.

subject of interest to every working woman—the economic crisis, inflation and unemployment. Even then, the bureaucrats managed to limit the panel (held January 25) to "experts" talking about benefits, and the vital question of a program to meet the crisis could only be raised from the floor.

POLITICAL COWARDS

The presence of the RSL and "radical" women in the Chicago chapter is too much for the political cowards who lead CLUW. At the September meeting of CLUW's National Coordinating Committee, President Olga Madar and Midwest Vice

defend their own actions! Not only had they not fought before the demonstration for endorsement by the local CLUW as a whole; not only did they fail to bring their leaflet to the December 14 meeting to defend—but they voted in favor of a motion that CLUW send a letter of repudiation and apology to the local union bureaucrats at Stewart Warner!

In contrast to these "radicals" who caved in slavishly to the very people who wanted to drive them out of CLUW (and out of the entire labor movement), the RSL successfully managed to remove the censures from these women who would not put up a fight themselves. We could not, however,

purpose is to keep women workers under the thumb of reformist leaders. CLUW is led by a layer of female labor bureaucrats who are seeking to increase their influence in the labor movement. Their strategy was suggested to them by the middle-class women's liberation movement which popularized consciousness of the oppression and inequality of women in "democratic" America. Through CLUW, these bureaucrats seek to build a layer of union women who can act as a transmission belt carrying the labor bureaucrats' bourgeois program to the masses of working class women.

The masses of working class women have not only been touched by

despite its paper pledge to organize the unorganized, is an organization of the "cream" of women workers, who are by no means labor aristocrats, but are encouraged by CLUW bureaucrats to chart a course upwards into the AFL-CIO structure rather than fight for the needs of all working class women.

REFORMIST PROGRAM

CLUW's program is reformist, concentrating on "affirmative action" programs and court suits to open up hiring of women workers and on passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

The real effect of affirmative action programs and court suits is to materially attack the unions and chain them to the bourgeois state. CLUW bureaucrats have rejoiced at the "pressure" exerted by corporations and the NLRB freely refusing to bargain with a labor union which discriminates. Whether through the courts or affirmative action agreements, the bourgeois state's real aim is to cut the power of the unions.

For example, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Justice Department have already held the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) partially liable in the U.S. Steel Consent Decree. This ruling, which gained very little for the black workers it supposedly benefited, did absolve the steel companies from any further legal action, and opened up the entire seniority system to company-government interference. It has also proven to be a gross swindle for the women complainants. In Bell Telephone and elsewhere, affirmative action rulings have been used to institute the exclusion of the union (CWA) from hiring and upgrading decisions, and open merit systems.

In any case, "opening up" some jobs to women means nothing when jobs are closing down. Thus CLUW and the National Organization of Women (NOW) are championing preferential layoffs, which directly fight for women's jobs at the expense of other workers' jobs. CLUW argues that since women (like blacks) tend to be "last hired, first fired," the solution is to lay off in reverse order of seniority, keeping the sexual and racial quotas of the newly hired—by firing those who have worked longest!

In court suits in New Jersey and Louisville, CLUW, by demanding "preferential layoffs" is paving the way for the destruction of seniority systems which prevent arbitrary victimization by management, and is doing the capitalists' dirty work of throwing women and men at each other's throats—instead of demanding no layoffs and full employment.

THE ERA

Similarly, the Equal Rights Amendment will encourage a new wave of court suits and affirmative action programs actually aimed at undercutting rights gained by workers and unions. It will, in one stroke, liquidate all protective legislation applying specifically to women, which often benefit men in the same jobs. As even Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union bureaucrat Myra Wolfgang has reported: "As long as we had a 54-hour limitation for women, men at the Dodge plant in Detroit worked three (eight-hour) shifts. When the

law was repealed the company immediately instituted two 12-hour shifts."

When ERA-type legislation invalidated protective laws for women in California, The Fiberboard Corp. instituted double shifts (16 hours) without time-and-a-half overtime pay, demanded that women workers lift 150 pounds per minute in three lifts of 50 pounds each off a moveable belt, and in one paper mill eliminated lunch hours.

However "democratic" the ERA looks on paper, its real class meaning is to undercut the conditions of men and women workers. The entire reformist middle-class women's movement and a good chunk of the bourgeoisie is working overtime to pass the ERA.

The Spartacist League bows before the ERA's formal democratic wording and ignores the ERA's real class content, revealing their capitulation to the labor aristocracy. Supporting the ERA but attaching a "Women's Bill of Rights" (as the Communist Party does) or adding a request that protective legislation be extended to men merely gives the green light to the bourgeoisie; politicians will use the additional support for the ERA while ignoring the "amendments."

Working women's response to the ERA must be to expose and fight the class the ERA represents and the effect it will have. The working class must defeat the ERA!

CLASS COLLABORATION

The reformism of CLUW fits into a larger context: the bankruptcy of traditional liberal politics and the attempt to construct a new reformist coalition. As capitalism enters into crisis, a section of the bourgeoisie realizes that to keep the lid on the class struggle, it must make a pretense of reform and must seem to include the workers' leaders in decision-making.

This is the reason for CLUW's wide support in the bourgeoisie and among reformist labor-fakers. New York Area CLUW meetings were sponsored by the Ford Foundation's Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations, in conjunction with the U.S. Labor Department. Bella Abzug of the Democratic Party is an honorary CLUW member.

George Meany praised CLUW at its founding, and Leonard Woodcock of the UAW telegraphed: "It is my belief that the CLUW will strengthen the labor movement, not harm it. We share your goals." Woodcock hoped CLUW would shackle women unionists, just as he betrays auto workers.

Revolutionaries oppose this cowardly labor bureaucracy at every turn. RSL supporters in CLUW have

emphasized that women's rights, and all other democratic rights promised but never delivered by capitalism, can only be won through socialist revolution. For example, only by taking the means of production from the capitalists and providing jobs for all—and not by fighting to lay off high-senior-



Women demonstrate for ERA at St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York. Ruling class seeks to turn struggle for women's liberation against the working class.

ity instead of low-seniority workers—can women gain full job equality.

RSL supporters have been fighting in CLUW to defeat the bureaucrats' class-collaborationism with a class-wide, class struggle approach. CLUW must organize all working women, including non-union women, unemployed, and wives of working men, in alliance with the rest of the working class for an offensive against inflation and unemployment.

The RSL proposes that CLUW demand a sliding scale of wages and hours (dividing the available work among all who can work, with no loss in pay and full cost of living protection); massive public works at capitalist expense; the nationalization of industry under workers' control; and a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed which would launch a labor party to fight for a workers' government on the basis of this program. In this context, we call for equal work, equal pay, and all other democratic needs of women workers.

The RSL has advanced the concrete demand that CLUW call city-wide demonstrations at AFL-CIO headquarters demanding a class-wide offensive against inflation and unemployment, based on the above program; we have further called on CLUW to organize city-wide conferences of labor and the oppressed, open to all points of view in the labor movement, with no repression of the left, to discuss the crisis and how to meet it.

Only the supporters of the Revolutionary Socialist League have fought

for such a program in CLUW. For example, the Spartacist League, for all its criticisms of CLUW leaders, put forward at the CLUW founding conference a program of trade union and democratic demands (coupled with a call for a workers' party and a workers' government—i.e., a workers'

government based on a reform and democratic program) without the demands for a sliding scale of wages and hours, public works, or nationalization under workers' control—key transitional demands to mobilize the working class against capitalist collapse. The SL put forward a left-bourgeois program which would be as much of an obstacle to a united class

struggle as the open reformism of the CLUW tops.

OPPOSE CLUW'S MISLEADERS

Only if the CLUW bureaucrats are overthrown—and this can only be done by patiently winning working class women to a revolutionary program—will CLUW be able to champion the real needs of those it claims to speak for. This seems unlikely, with the "left" forces in CLUW weak and capitulating, and the bureaucrats moving to consolidate their control. In December, for example, the Chicago chapter adopted a rule that "new business" could only be brought on the floor by a two-thirds vote—a rule obviously aimed at the RSL and other radicals.

Working women desperately need an organization to cohere their struggles, to extend their leadership to the masses of women—unionized, unorganized, unemployed and housewives—and to engage in common struggle with the entire working class. The CLUW leadership, dedicated to class collaboration and opposed to the needs of the masses of women, must be politically smashed.

Working women must take a leading role in offering a united front of the working class and a revolutionary program as the solution to the poverty and oppression of the masses of women. This cannot be done without taking on and politically destroying the present labor bureaucracy.

Portugal

Cont'd. from p. 3

Down With the Military Junta! Communist Party and Socialist Party Break with the Armed Forces Movement and Take Power! The key to the PCP and SP betrayals is their ability to present the Armed Forces Movement as "necessary to democracy." In its name, they can justify any anti-strike policy, any restriction on democracy. Without its cover, they must justify themselves. Revolutionaries must call on the workers, who still have not lost confidence in these

traitors, to force them to form a government of the workers' parties, while predicting that the CP and SP will continue to hide behind the captains' epauletts.

Nationalize the Banks and Industry Under Workers' Control, Without Compensation! A Sliding Scale of Wages and Hours!—to combat the downhill slide of the economy.

Arms to the Workers! For Workers' and Soldiers' Defense Guards Against the Junta!

A National Council of Workers' Committees (Soviets)!

At present the bourgeoisie does not feel strong enough to launch a

counterattack. This gives time to prepare—but not much time. Before the bourgeoisie, backed by the upper officer corps, the right wing of the junta and the SP feel strong enough to launch a bloody war against the Salinists, the military left and the working class, there must already be a leadership commanding the advance guard of the proletariat with a program and strategy which can mobilize the entire people to defeat the reactionaries and establish a workers' state. The transitional program, and especially the key slogans outlined above, are the necessary weapons with which to build this leadership.

Political Cowards

R.U. ESCALATES THUGGERY

An RSL Central Committee member was brutally beaten by two men who broke into her Los Angeles apartment on January 11, after following her and her nine-year old child home. She was smashed across the face with a bottle and knocked unconscious, then kicked repeatedly.

She escaped with three cracked ribs, minus two teeth, and badly bruised and cut across her face and most of her body. The attack could have taken her life.

The two thugs left a note: "Leader of the Trotskyite scum. Don't think you can intimidate (sic) us."

This is not the first time that Stalinists, right-wingers or agents of the state have used hooligan tactics against the RSL. We have often faced harassment, threats and public goon squads. But this attack was the most craven of all—premeditated, vicious and cowardly. Two men, armed with a bottle, against one unarmed woman.

RU THUGS

What cowards were responsible for this? All evidence points to the Revolutionary Union (RU). The beating took place a few days after the RSL sent a letter to The Long March, LA domicile of the RU, announcing our call for united front action against The Long March's policy of physically preventing Trotskyists from distributing literature on public sidewalks. This is part and parcel of the RU's national policy of excluding RSL members from public forums and preventing literature sales at these events. In Chicago, two RSL members were beaten up at an RU forum. We were thrown out of the forum and prevented from selling literature. The attackers in LA match perfectly the description of two men who slashed the tires of a Los Angeles leftist following an RU forum. Finally, The Torch has been exposing the RU's whitewash of Stalin in Red Papers No. 7.

It is possible that the LA attack was carried out by police agents who have infiltrated the RU. But the responsibility still rests with the RU. Their national policy of exclusion, harassment and attempts at intimidation make the work of provocateurs

child's play. We hold the RU leadership responsible for the cowardly holliganism in LA.

Why is the RU afraid of political combat with the Revolutionary Socialist League? Why will they stoop to the most cowardly means to keep us away from their supporters and periphery?

COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES

The answer lies in the counter-revolutionary politics and heritage of the RU itself. The RU leadership cannot face up to the revolutionary program, to the politics of the RSL. Subjectively revolutionary supporters of the RU are now exerting pressure on the leadership: Why the whitewash of Stalin in Red Papers No. 7? What does the power struggle in China mean? Can the peasantry make a socialist revolution without the proletariat? Wasn't Mao's Popular Front strategy in Indonesia responsible for the slaughter of millions of workers; wasn't it the same sell-out policy that led to the military coup in Chile? Why is the RU for a one-stage theory in the West and "two-stage revolution" elsewhere?

The RU leadership runs from such challenges. Stalin's Popular Front and Mao's "New Democracy" are identical two-stage theories. Stalin cannot be repudiated without breaking from Maoism. The betrayal of the Spanish and German revolutions rested on the same class collaborationism as led to the Indonesian tragedy. The Hitler-Stalin Pact, the prelude to World War II, was cut from the same cloth as Mao's support to the Pakistani bourgeoisie against Bangla Desh three years ago (in fact, RU national chief Bob Avakian at that time called Mao's bloc with Pakistan "the shrewdest diplomatic maneuver since the Hitler-Stalin Pact").

The RU ranks and periphery must be shielded from the merciless criticism of revolutionary Trotskyism, from the program of the Revolutionary Socialist League. Just as Stalin did everything in his power to make the Russian proletariat passive and ignorant, murdering millions, so the RU leadership must spew forth lies, distortions, slanders and concealments. The RU's goon tactics are a

penny-ante version of Stalin's annihilation of the Bolsheviks. Its politics are the continuation of Stalin's repudiation of Bolshevism.

STALINISM

Likewise, the cowardice of the RU continues Stalinism's historic response to the threat of Leninism-Trotskyism. For decades, the Communist Parties internationally resorted to the same policies of physical attacks, exclusion, intimidation, slander and lies against Trotskyism. Stalin's purges were carried out under the banner of "liquidating the Trotskyists." Until the very day of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, Trotsky was denounced as an agent of German fascism. Then the Stalinist press transformed him into an agent of U.S. imperialism.

The ringing message of revolutionary Trotskyism, the message of international proletarian revolution, cannot be stamped out. Iron bars and stone walls cannot keep it from the working class. Trotskyism is revolutionary Marxism. It is the science of the proletariat, and it is around Trotskyism that the proletariat will liberate itself once and for all time.

The RU leadership's fear of the Revolutionary Socialist League is the most telling vindication of our revolutionary perspectives. These self-proclaimed "revolutionaries" claim to be the true leadership of the proletariat, yet avoid every means of testing this assertion in practice. Their thuggery underlines their fear a thousandfold.

DEBATE CHALLENGE

The Revolutionary Socialist League openly challenges the Revolutionary Union to debate. We propose either the class nature of Russian and China, black liberation or strategy for world liberation. Instead of hiding behind Ku Klux Klan night-riding, come out in the open where your counter-revolutionary politics can be exposed. Instead of political cowardice, stand up for your perspectives and put them to the test of the uncompromising attack of Marxism.

We have little illusion that the RU leadership will accept our challenge.

We fully expect them to continue their evasion. We know that they cannot reply to our refutation of Red Papers No. 7. And they know it as well, just as they know that we will ruthlessly expose every aspect of their class-collaborationist theory and practice. That is why they will continue to hide by day and ride by night.

UNITED DEFENSE

The RSL calls upon all tendencies in the working-class movement to defend the workers' movement. We call for the repudiation of the thuggery of the RU. We call upon the groups in the working-class movement to demand and fight for the right of all tendencies to attend public meetings and distribute their literature. We call for the establishment of united front defense committees to repel hooligan tactics.

We will not stand idly by and allow the RU to continue these attacks. We intend to defend our duty to fight for the revolutionary program, for the embodiment of the needs and aspirations of the proletariat. We will not tolerate the attempt of the counter-revolutionary RU leadership to preserve its tenuous hold on its ranks at our expense.

We especially warn Maoist groups other than the RU not to succumb to a "solidarity of Maoism" and support or close their eyes to the RU's revolting tactics. Such a stand will openly brand these groups with the same cowardice that the RU has labelled itself with. And even out of narrow self-interest, these groups should understand that the hysterically frightened RU leadership is certain to resort to the same methods against its Maoist rivals.

For fleeting periods, groups like the RU can convince subjective revolutionaries to follow their leadership. But the RU cannot stand up to the test of history. They stand as a roadblock to the socialist revolution. Their attempts at physical intimidation, their slander and lies, are the same tactics that the international bourgeoisie uses in its frantic effort to discredit revolutionary Marxism. The source is the same: bourgeois ideology.

Neither can succeed.

LEADER OF THE TROTSKYITE SCUM
DONT THINK YOU CAN
INTIMADATE US

Unsigned note scrawled by "courageous" RU goons when they assaulted and beat League leader in Los Angeles.