

THE COMMUNIST

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

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



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

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MINERS PREPARE STRIKE BATTLE

Negotiations between the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) broke off on Nov. 25. Because the contract expires on Dec. 6th and it takes 10 days to ratify a contract, a nationwide miners strike seems certain. The contract covers 150,000 UMW members and 4,000 coal companies. Another 30,000 UMW members are also affected because they work for operators not represented by the BCOA but who follow the pattern contract. The current negotiations began on Oct. 6th taking up the major issues of refinancing the failing UMW Health and Pension Funds and how to deal with wildcat strikes.

HEALTH CARE CUTBACKS

The latest wildcats responded to the announcement on June 20th of cutbacks in health care for miners and their families. Beginning on July 1, instead of total coverage, miners had to pay for 40% of doctors bills and the first \$250 of hospital bills. When Miller and the International Executive Board (IEB) refused to call a strike, 80,000 miners went out in a 10 week wildcat. They demanded that the coal companies reallocate funds to restore full medical coverage.

This coverage was part of the improved benefits miners won in the 1974 contract. There are now 1974 funds which cover health, death, and pension benefits for active miners and their dependents and an older 1950 plan to cover workers who retired before 1976. These funds, unlike those of other major industrial unions, are still financed through assessments on production. The coal companies

AN OPPORTUNIST POLICY

CPUSA'S "LEFT-CENTER" COALITION

Recently the revisionist Communist Party USA (CPUSA) unfolded its master tactic for developing work in the spontaneous movement--the "left-center coalition". It is through rebuilding this coalition, which has its roots in the '30's and '40's, that the revisionists plan to divert the deepening resistance of the masses to the crisis of US imperialism into channels of bourgeois reformism. On the shop floor, in the trade unions, in the mass movements and in the communist movement, the struggle against opportunism demands that we expose the slick treachery of this revisionist policy.

According to Henry Winston, National Secretary of the CPUSA, "Left-Center unity" is a form of the united front... which unites Communists, socialists, independent minded workers and progressives in solidarity...based on a program of defending the fundamental rights of the working class at

pay into the funds 82¢ for each ton of coal mined by UMW miners and \$1.54 for each hour a member works. The funds are administered jointly by the union and industries. The trustees said in June that the funds didn't have enough money to continue to provide full coverage and the cutbacks were the only way to save the funds at all.

In response to the miners righteous anger about this attack on their ability to get health care, the union and companies put out the same line--that it was the workers' own fault the cutbacks happened. They claim that the funds are short of money primarily because wildcats caused losses in production. (For example, the trustees say that wildcats cost the funds almost \$65 million since December 1974.) But the miners have pointed out many other reasons to explain the shortages in the Health and Pension Funds including production cutbacks from last winter's cold weather and last spring's flooding, underestimating the influx of new beneficiaries, the rise in medical costs, overestimating the number of new mines that would open, ineligible persons using the funds (supervisors have been found still using their old union membership cards) and the up and down cycles of the coal industry. (The coal industry is now experiencing a decline in demand for coal which reflects the general crisis of imperialism and declines in production in U.S. industry.)

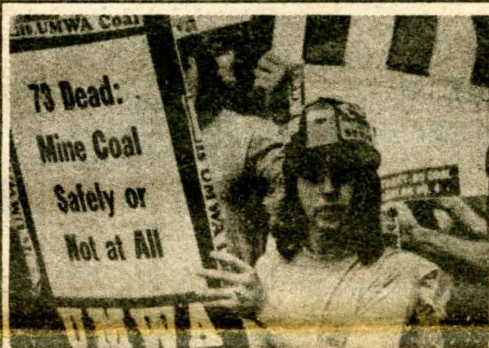
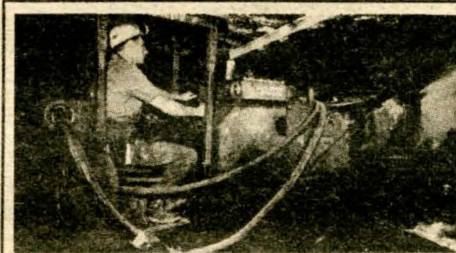
MILLER BLAMES WORKERS

Last summer, Miller told the wildcat strikers to go back to work saying "If you continue the actions you've taken, you'll get

nothing but further misery. We got ourselves into this position for a number of reasons. We've got to get the mines back to work and get enough input to restore full benefits." In trying to put the blame on the workers, he echoed the words of the BCOA. The coal operators refused to reallocate funds from the pension to the health fund claiming it might be illegal under new federal pension funds. But more importantly, they emphasized that "...No cuts in benefits would be required today were it not for wildcat strikes... To reallocate now would be to ask the industry to subsidize economic wildcat strikes." Instead of leading the miners in the fight

to pressure the coal companies for the additional money needed to restore full medical care, the union leaders pretended the solution was in getting the miners to go back to work. (Miller even sent in armed "organizers" who exchanged gunfire with some wildcat strikers.) Miller puts out the class collaborationist line that workers and coal operators have a common interest in promoting production. With union leaders like Miller heading the UMW, increased production has only meant more profits for the coal operators, not more wages and benefits for the miners. Although the coal industry won't reach

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MINEWORKERS...PROLETARIAN FIGHTERS

HOUSTON NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

REFORMISM BLUNTS WOMEN'S STRUGGLE

Spontaneous enthusiasm for the democratic aspirations of women coupled with frustration at the impotence of bourgeois reformism to make any significant advance on the path of women's emancipation characterized the National Women's Conference held in Houston, Texas, November 18.

Thousands of women attended this conference--over 10,000--from every state to "assess the progress in assuring women full equality and to set goals for the elimination of all barriers that block that equality." But with Congressional sanction and \$5 million in federal funding, the Conference was dominated from beginning to end by bourgeois reformists. Its goals were reduced to demagogic rhetoric, and real answers to the questions raised were neither sought nor given.

The Conference, originally conceived and adopted by Congress in 1975 as part of International Women's Year, invites comparison with the International Women's Year Conference held in that year in Mexico City. Third World countries prevailed at that gathering in connecting the struggle for the emancipation of women to the struggle against imperialism and colonialism, and particularly against the hegemonism of the two superpowers. The US delegation, however, carried on a bitter and reactionary fight against this line, claiming that the struggle for women's rights was not a "political question" and that women should not concern themselves with the oppression and exploitation of the world's people by a few wealthy nations. Unfortunately for the thousands of women who attended the Houston gathering, it was precisely this opportunist line of "feminist neutrality" that dominated the conference. The struggle for the full equality of women, according to the opportunists who controlled the proceedings, had nothing to do with the resistance of the masses of laboring people and minority nationalities to exploitation and oppression.

The fight for women's equality in the US exposes all the world-wide posturing of the Carter administration about "human rights" as open hypocrisy. In the US over 50% of the population does not even have the benefit of formal legal equality. Houston was a showpiece effort by the government to demonstrate that such a glaring contradiction could be resolved "within the system".

THE STATE CONFERENCE

Over 130,000 women attended the 54 different state and territorial conferences, leading up to the Houston Conference. Many who attended these conferences did so with the hope of bringing a qualitative change in the conditions which women confronted in their day to day lives. But instead they were met with the empty rhetoric of bourgeois reformism and told to rely, not on their own strength and militancy, but on the very system which is intensifying its attack on women--denying money for abortions to women on welfare and, in the courts, defending the terrorist violence

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KKK POSSE CONDEMNED IN BORDER DEMONSTRATION

David Duke, the national leader of the Ku Klux Klan, traveled to San Diego in October. He visited the US/Mexican border and, accompanied by Klansmen wearing "White Power" t-shirts, announced the beginning of the "Klan Border Watch". The KKK claims they will have 5000-1,000 Klansmen patrolling the border in marked cars equipped with CB radios and infrared telescopes. Eventually, they want to extend this vigilante plan of action by Klan thugs to cover the border from Texas to the Pacific Ocean.

Duke said that he is "very much concerned with the illegal alien problem" which is "changing the racial fabric of American life." The plan for Klan "spotters" is intended to "stem the rising tide of color washing over our border." To the press, Duke said that the Klansmen will inform the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of any illegal border crossings and that they will not be armed or apprehend anyone themselves--unless they are on private property owned by Klan members or friends.

He also explained that the Klan doesn't plan to limit their "patrols" to the border area. The KKK already has announced plans to watch the San Diego airport for illegal immigrants and to check on companies to make sure they're not employing undocumented workers. During October, they revealed they want to "patrol" National Steel and Shipbuilding Co. (NASSCO) in San Diego to "verify" green cards because they claim that 63% of the workers at NASSCO are "aliens" and that many of these are undocumented.

IMMIGRANTS BLAMED FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

The Klan tries to justify its action with the demagogic and widespread lie that illegal immigrants are the cause of unemployment.

The fact is the capitalist system feeds on unemployment and must always have readily available a pool of reserve labor which can be thrown into work in this or that sector of production on demand. With the imperialist stage of capitalism unemployment is particularly severe in oppressed nations. Massive unemployment in the Third World is one of the factors that keep wages abnormally low and make imperialist super-profits possible. In Mexico, for

example, 53% of the workforce is either unemployed or underemployed. This also leads to the search for work in the heartlands of imperialism. In times of need such immigrant laborers are welcomed with open arms. In times of crisis the bourgeoisie steps up its chauvinist attacks to drive these workers from the labor force.

Recent attacks by the KKK reflect the deepening crisis of US imperialism and are part of this over-all chauvinist assault. While the KKK plans to patrol the US/Mexican border, the Carter administration's immigration plan projects doubling the Border Patrol to 4,000 people. The significance of the Klan's role is as a private extra-legal terrorist arm of the bourgeoisie willing to perform repressive acts that go beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy. It means the drift toward fascism which historically has always relied on private terrorist armies beyond legal control.

RESISTANCE TO THE KLAN

Working and oppressed people of this country have learned to hate the Klan and their threats of border terrorism met strong resistance. An angry demonstration confronted Duke during his visit to the border south of San Diego on Sunday, October 16. Then over 35 local organizations quickly mobilized a coalition to plan another demonstration on October 29 and over 1,000 people turned out--all demonstrating their contempt for the Klan and their determination to resist the Klan's attacks.

REFORMISTS LEAD MASS STRUGGLE

While spontaneous resistance to the Klan is growing it is weakened by reformist leadership. The October 29 march, organized by the Coalition for Human Rights at San Ysidro, was a response to the great mass concern and outrage in the San Diego area triggered by recent Klan activities. But that outrage was channeled into reformism by the leadership of the coalition, especially the Center for Chicano Rights. This reformist leadership was primarily characterized by its reliance on the oppressor nation bourgeoisie and by its extreme narrowness overall. What it called for was a congress-

sional investigation, some reshuffling of the INS and vague government action, such as a meeting between the Carter administration and Chicano community leaders and "others affected by the immigration issue." They also demanded that the administration "disavow" the implied INS support of the Klan and dismiss some of the local INS administrators. They wanted to fire an agent in charge of the San Ysidro border crossing who gave Duke a tour of the border and also demanded the firing of the district head of the INS, who said he would prefer for the KKK to leave the patrol to professionals, but "we welcome information from any citizen".



David Duke, leader of KKK thugs on border patrol near San Diego

The limited, narrow and impotent character of these demands is obvious. For example, neither the KKK, its relation to the bourgeoisie nor the role of extra legal terror and the common threat posed to all working and oppressed people was ever raised. Instead the coalition leaders reduced the Klan's border patrols to strictly an immigration issue.

In addition, the coalition leadership narrowed the struggle by viewing it as purely a temporary coalition. No attempt was made to develop continuous on-going work around either the Klan's border patrol or Klan activity in general even though it is absolutely clear that the Klan's stepped up activity is widespread. Coalition leaders made militant sounding statements to the press saying any action taken by the Klan "against

our people will call forth an immediate response in kind" and that "We are going to defend ourselves by any means possible". But when some people raised the question of what people were supposed to do if the coalition appeals failed to stop the Klan, the coalition lawyer said that this was a "political question" and the head of the Center for Chicano Rights intervened to say that if they wanted to fight they should do this on their own! This was to be expected. He had no better reaction to peoples' outrage over four Klan attacks including a cross burning in a black neighborhood and the painting of KKK symbols and racist slogans on the driveway and sidewalk of his home. He responded by telling people not to do anything irresponsible and then organizing no action.

REFORMISM NO SOLUTION

With their line of reliance on the bourgeois state to solve the problems confronting the masses of people, reformists will never be able to lead the struggle against the Klan. Vigilante groups like the Klan are the tools of the most reactionary sectors of finance capital. Their attacks are clearly designed to spread reactionary chauvinist, racist ideology among the masses of people and to terrorize and intimidate the oppressed nationalities. They serve to divide the multinational working class by whipping up national chauvinism. Therefore these attacks also represent an attempt to divide the working class movement from its basic allies, the movements for liberation and equal rights of the national minorities and oppressed nationalities. In order to defeat the opportunists and their bourgeois reformist line, to oppose the forces of reaction like the Klan, and to mount an effective struggle for democratic rights and proletarian revolution, the leadership must come from the proletariat and its Marxist-Leninist communist party.

FIGHT THE KLAN AND ALL ATTACKS ON OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES!
FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS FOR ALL IMMIGRANT WORKERS!
EXPOSE THE REFORMISTS IN THE MASS MOVEMENTS!
BUILD A M-L COMMUNIST PARTY TO LEAD THE STRUGGLE!

REVISIONIST DEMAGOGY IN STEEL CRISIS

In the last issue of THE COMMUNIST, we explained how the bureaucratic leadership of the steelworkers union collaborated with the steel companies and the government to cover up the crisis in steel by raising a false hue and cry about foreign imports. The following contribution from a steelworker shows how the revisionist Communist Party USA (CPUSA) works hand in hand with the Sadlowski wing of the Steelworkers Union to turn militant rank and file resistance to the crisis into channels that serve and fortify the rule of capital.

In response to the growing crisis for U.S. steelworkers, District 31 of the United Steelworkers of America, which is controlled by Sadlowski forces, passed a resolution on Steel Prices and the Economy. The District 31 resolution basically calls upon the International Union to withdraw its support from the import restriction campaign. Instead they call for pressure on the federal government to roll back steel prices and to rebuild our decaying cities. According to the logic of the resolution this will increase sales and provide more jobs.

The revisionist CPUSA unites with this District 31 resolution and applauds it as an example of trade union class consciousness. But while the resolution responds to a desire to combat the foreign imports issue being used to increase attacks on steelworkers, the District 31 Resolution is not a fighting program for the working class. It directs our energy to "call" upon the International Union and Federal Government to solve our problems, instead of

organizing the thousands of rank and file steelworkers to demand solutions. Likewise the resolution implies that the monopoly capitalists don't want to expand their steel production. This reflects a totally inaccurate picture of the way capitalism works. As the recent article in THE COMMUNIST points out, it is the crisis of overproduction that is behind production cutbacks. That crisis is inherent in the capitalist system and won't be cured by a resolution.

Whether liberal trade union bureaucrats and revisionists support this or that reform is not the question. What is vital is their unity with imperialism and their class collaboration designed to win support for the bourgeoisie within the workers movement.

The social basis for trade union opportunism and revisionism is the labor aristocracy. As Stalin says, social-democrats and revisionists come from and try to appeal to "the upper stratum of the working class, the best provided sections of the proletariat, inclined to make compromise with the bourgeoisie and to make peace with and submit to the stronger force, with a view to joining their ranks." Sadlowski has "joined" to the tune of a \$52,325 1976 income -- \$6,000 higher than Abel.

The bourgeoisie is waging this highly publicized campaign against steel imports not only to step up the exploitation of steelworkers and increase their profits, but also to whip up national chauvinism in order to prepare the ground for war. Sadlowski and his allies

promote US imperialism (among other things by his buying Israeli war bonds) and the CPUSA promotes Soviet social imperialism. Both unite in an effort to deceive steelworkers and the US people into thinking that "détente" is the main trend and neither has struggled against great nation chauvinism in a serious way. This is a most important point that the Sadlowski people and the CPUSA do not speak to. As Marxist-Leninists and class conscious workers we must actively oppose the campaign to whip up chauvinism, oppression and exploitation. And we must prepare the conditions for a struggle against the bourgeoisie in the event of war.

The CPUSA also exposes itself as class collaborationist in promoting nationalization as a solution to the crisis in the US steel industry. They say, "if private industry can't keep the mills open, maybe the government can." This support for nationalization ignores the class character of the government controlling the mills and spreads the illusion that the government is above classes. But it is the class which holds state power which is decisive. Nationalization without proletarian state power is nothing but state monopoly capitalism. When a capitalist government nationalizes an industry they use it as a weapon against worker militancy, demagogically claiming that the workers in that industry are now struggling against the public interest. "Public" employees in nationalized industries face no-strike laws and similar restri-

ctions on their struggle for better working conditions. This last point is tremendously important for U.S. monopoly capital which faces the threat of war with a steel industry in crisis. Nationalization of the steel industry is a solution which would provide US imperialism with tighter control over the workforce and assured steel production. This appeals to certain sectors of the bourgeoisie, but it is no solution for rank and file steelworkers. In fact, nationalization of basic industry under bourgeois dictatorship is one basis for fascism. Thus this nationalization that the revisionists promote must be exposed as a plan that will place the working class under fuller control of monopoly capital. As a solution to the crisis in steel it is a plan for social fascism.

The social democratic Sadlowski style trade union bureaucrats and the revisionist CPUSA correctly state that the imports campaign is designed to get the eyes of workers off the real issue, but then they don't tell us what the real issue is! They imply that the problem is unemployment. This is something that every worker knows and merely by saying this they are saying nothing profound. But unemployment is a manifestation of the problem not the cause. The crisis in steel has its roots in the crisis of the monopoly capitalist system. Communists must transform resistance to job cutbacks into class conscious struggle against capitalism and for the seizure of political power by the working class.

SADAT CONCESSIONS THREATEN ARAB CAUSE

President Anwar el Sadat of Egypt addressed the Israeli parliament and met with political representatives of the various Israeli parties during his 36 hour visit to Israel, November 19-21. This visit was the first time that a prominent Arab leader set foot on the land of occupied Palestine since 1948, when the Zionists first declared the "state of Israel". Sadat's trip, made in the face of strong protest by fellow Arab states and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), was done in the name of a "call for peace" and "legal and just Arab rights". However, it has served to reinforce the negotiating position of the Zionists, undercut the just demands of the Palestinian and Arab peoples, weakened Arab unity and created further room for superpower maneuvering. This visit has been followed by Sadat's unilateral call for a pre-Geneva peace conference in Cairo which has moved Egypt in the direction of a separate peace agreement with Israel.

SADAT'S VISIT

Corresponding to the rise in the prestige and strength of the countries of the third world, and due to the persistent and courageous struggle of the Palestinian and Arab peoples, the Israeli Zionists have faced increasing political isolation. More and more world opinion has righteously condemned Israeli aggression against Arab states, Israel's occupation of Arab territories, the illegal Zionist occupation of Palestine and the refusal of the Zionists to recognize the PLO. Sadat's visit seriously damaged this wall of isolation which had been built on years of blood and struggle

While the visit was unilateral in relation to the other Arab states, it was clearly made on the basis of consultation with and blessing of the US government. The official Egyptian statement said that the trip was "in response to a letter from President Carter that was accompanied by an invitation from the Israeli government". Moreover, the individual action taken by Sadat undercut the legitimate concerns which have been raised by the Arab states and the PLO in regards to a US-USSR initiated Geneva peace conference. Sadat reduced principled objections to the basis

of such a conference--which include recognition of the state of Israel and denial of the right of the PLO to represent the Palestinian people--to "fruitless discussions on procedure". In doing so he made unprincipled concessions to the Zionists.

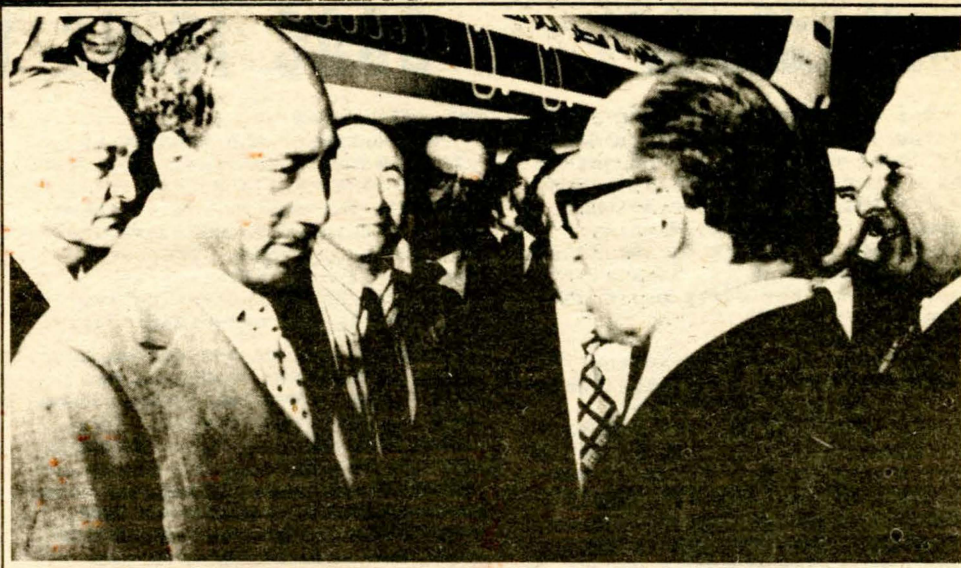
SADAT'S SPEECH

The concessions made by Sadat in his speech to the Israel Knesset set back the Arab and Palestinian cause.

First, was the recognition of the state of Israel. This legitimized the continuing Zionist occupation of Palestine. Sadat stated, "In all sincerity I tell you we welcome you among us with full security and safety." "...Israel has become a fait accompli, recognized by the world, and...the two superpowers have undertaken the responsibility for its security and the defense of its existence."

Secondly, no direct mention was made of the PLO. Recognition of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people is one of the cornerstones of Arab unity. It is also the only basis on which any real principled peace can be built, for the Palestinian people will continue to wage their just war of national liberation until Zionist rule over occupied Palestine is overthrown. Any call for peace not made on this basis is but empty rhetoric. Yet Sadat, while calling for "achievement of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination, including their right to establish their own state", reduced that right to a state on the West Bank, which would co-exist with an Israeli state on the rest of occupied Palestine. He implied that the establishment of such a state would mean an end to the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people--by force if necessary. "When the bells of peace ring (in this separate Palestinian state) there will be no hands to beat the drums of war. Even if they existed, they would be stilled."

Sadat's strongest statement was on the question of occupied Arab land. He stated, "To speak frankly our land does not yield itself to bargaining, it is not even open to



argument..." He put forward as a basis for peace agreement, "Ending the occupation of Arab territories occupied in 1967". While this demand is certainly just, it was undermined by the fact that it was being presented unilaterally to the Israelis. This leaves open the possibility of a separate negotiation between Egypt and Israel which could lead to Israeli concessions in the Sinai at the expense of a stiffened resolve to continue their criminal occupation of the West-Bank and Golan Heights.

Overall, Sadat's speech gave credence to the lie that the source of the conflict in the Middle East is not continuing Zionist occupation of Palestine and Arab lands, but "suspicion" and "lack of confidence" between the countries. No difference was made between a just war of liberation against aggression and an unjust war for hegemony and colonization. From war, Sadat stated, "there emerges neither victor nor vanquished". From this standpoint, the question of "peace" is separated from the political realities of Zionist aggression and forcible denial of Palestinian rights that has given rise to the just armed struggle of the Palestinian people. This orientation can only lead to capitulation and unprincipled concession, to the betrayal of the Palestinian revolution and of the Arab people's struggle as a whole.

BEGIN'S CHAUVINISM

Begin's speech, which followed Sadat's, demonstrated the continuing chauvinist and militarist stand of Israeli Zionism. It was a straight-up attack on the rights of the Palestinian and Arab people. Begin, throughout his presentation, put forward lie after lie, justi-

fication after justification for the illegal occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands.

He stated, "It is my obligation today to tell...of our ties between our Jewish nation and the land...We did not take strange land, we returned to our homeland. The tie between our nation and this land is eternal."

In opposition to the just demand for complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, the Zionist leader declared, "I propose according to the majority of this Parliament, that everything is open to negotiation." According to this colonialist logic, principles of respect for state sovereignty, for historical boundaries or even international law are disregarded and the fact of illegal occupation becomes its own justification. On this basis the Zionists intend to hang onto Arab land under the guise of the need for "security".

Begin's speech showed no weakening of the Zionist resolve to ignore the just demands of the Arab and Palestinian people. It brought out the futility and danger of Sadat's visit--while the Egyptian leader recognized Israel and made concessions, the Zionists did not retreat one inch.

ARAB RESPONSE

Denunciation of Sadat's trip was widespread. The central committee of Al Fatah, headed by Yasser Arafat, called the visit "a dangerous turning point and a gain for the plots of international Zionism and its imperialist allies, with the USA at their heads." Al Fatah charged that Sadat's maneuver put the Palestinian people "in a critical position before the Zionist enemy who deny Palestinian rights and are preparing for a new

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PHILIPPINE PARTY CHAIRMAN CAPTURED

Jose Maria Sison, chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), was arrested by troops of the Marcos regime on November 10. Popularly known as Amado Guerrero, the leader of the Party was seized in San Fernando City, La Union province, located some 200 miles north of Manila. Sison, who had been underground for the past 10 years, was viewed as such a threat to the regime that his capture or death carried a 45,000 dollar reward. Reports on Sison's arrest stated that the CPP Chairman had suffered torture at the hands of the military.

Sison earned the fear and hatred of the US imperialist and domestic reactionaries and the love and respect of the oppressed Filipino masses on the basis of long and persistent dedication to the Filipino people's democratic revolution. He brought clarity to and forged into action the Filipino people's desire for national independence and social revolution. In particular his foremost contribution was the application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to the concrete conditions of the Philippine revolution.

Prior to his going underground in 1967, Sison was in the forefront of the progressive nationalist movement, instrumental in building patriotic organizations like MAN (Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism). He became a leading proponent of the anti-imperialist analysis and strategy for Philippine society which later came to be known as the National Democratic Program.

He founded the militant youth mass organization, Kabataang Makabayan (MK) or Nationalist Youth, which took on the task of exposing the role of US imperialism as the main obstacle to the development of the Philippines and showing the deep-rooted ties between imperialism and the feudal landlords and Filipino capitalists. The MK mobilized thousands in protests and demonstrations around issues like the US military bases in the Philippines and the US domination of the Philippine economy.

However, his most serious crime, from the perspective of US imperialism and its Filipino allies, was his role in the rectification and re-establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1968. Sison rose to the task of re-forming the vanguard organization of the Philippine revolution after it had been destroyed by the corrupt and revisionist Lava-Taruc clique.

As chairman, Sison set the outlook and stance of the re-established party firmly on the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and undertook a comprehensive class analysis and strategy for the Philippine revolution which took particular guidance from Chairman Mao's writings on the New Democratic Revolution. This analysis and strategy is contained in the historic document, "Philippine Society and Revolution" which, before the Marcos coup in 1972, became the most carefully read and discussed book in the Philippines.

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IRANIANS CONFRONT SHAH AND CARTER

Tuesday, November 15, marked a day of massive protest by the democratic and patriotic Iranian movement in the US. In one of the largest anti-imperialist demonstrations since the end of the Indochina War, over 5 thousand demonstrators gathered at the White House to protest superpower hegemonism in Iran and the reactionary policies of the Shah's regime.

Wearing masks to protect themselves from police agents of the CIA and SAVAK, the secret police force of Iran charged with systematic murder, torture and imprisonment of dissidents, the demonstrators fought militantly with both pro-Shah forces and the police in one of the most violent clashes in recent history. Police were forced to retreat at one point and finally had to resort to tear gas to break up the demonstration. Twenty-five police and many demonstrators were injured and twelve demonstrators were arrested.

It is fitting that the struggle against the fascist Shah was brought to the heart of US imperialism, the dominant imperialism in Iran. The violent suppression by US police of the Iranian demonstrators in front of the White House mirrors the violent suppression of the democratic and revolutionary movement in Iran under the auspices of US military personnel.

The US uses the sale of military weapons, totalling \$15 billion in recent years to tighten its economic and political stranglehold over Iran. On this basis it maintains a government supportive of US policies and suppresses the struggle for national sovereignty and democracy waged by the Iranian masses. We support the sovereign right of Iran to protect itself from attack, but stand firmly opposed to the use of the military apparatus to sup-

press the Iranian movement for national liberation, independence and revolution.

Recently we have seen intensified attacks on the Iranian movement in the US. This onslaught, reflected in police attacks in cities such as Houston, Chicago and now Washington, reflects the US bourgeoisie's fear of the growing strength and influence of the patriotic and democratic Iranian movement. It is in the interests of US imperialism to maintain Iran as a base for US military operations in the Gulf area, for Iran borders the Soviet Union.

One manifestation of the increased attack on the Iranian movement is the attempt by the US government to deport members of the Iranian Student Association back to Iran, where they face certain torture and imprisonment, and even death. These present attempts must be met with widespread and popular resistance.

The movement of the revolutionary proletariat here in the US can learn much from the courage and militancy displayed by the Iranian movement both here and in Iran, just as it can learn much from the struggles of the Third World as a whole, which spearheads the world-wide struggle against superpower hegemonism. We must learn from the Iranian movement and give it our utmost support--our struggles are directed against a common enemy, the hegemonism of the two superpowers, in particular the ruthless and reactionary rule of the US bourgeoisie. The struggle for proletarian revolution here in the US and the struggle for new democratic revolution in Iran are intertwined and provide each other with mutual aid and support.

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ISKRA PLAN KEY TO PRINCIPLED UNITY

The San Diego Organizing Committee (SDOC) recently liquidated its local organization and joined the Workers Congress (M-L). This is the result of a protracted struggle for principled unity within the framework of the ISKRA PLAN and we think its lessons are important to the party building movement.

The SDOC originated in the spring of 1975 as a Marxist-Leninist circle born out of local struggles in the San Diego area. We took as the original basis of our line that party building was the central task and that party building required winning the vanguard to communism, that right opportunism was the main danger to the communist movement and that capitalism had been restored in the USSR.

As we investigated the lines of organizations in the communist movement in relation to party building, we recognized that the ISKRA PLAN of the Workers Congress was the only serious effort to propose a method to prepare the conditions for uniting the scattered forces in our movement. It was the only plan that addressed itself to the principal weaknesses of our movement, amateurishness, fragmentation and disunity, and the only plan that proposed concrete steps to overcome these weaknesses. Thus while we did not have 100% unity with the line of the Workers Congress, we enthusiastically took up work within the ISKRA PLAN to build a single, common ISKRA type newspaper as the main link in the struggle to build a new vanguard communist party. As we said in our original article "SDOC Joins the ISKRA Effort," "Lenin makes clear the critical importance of ISKRA in building unity through its role as the first practical common work (writing, polemicizing, distribution, and study) of all revolutionaries in the country."

PLANLESS DEMAGOGY

We also made clear that while we joined the ISKRA effort and defended the ISKRA PLAN, we intended to maintain active contact with other national organizations. As we pursued these contacts, particularly with the August Twenty-Ninth Movement (ATM) and the Marxist-Leninist Organizing Committee (MLOC), we learned by negative example that to proceed without a plan for party building was to proceed without a means to struggle for principled unity or to resolve differences on the basis of the science of Marxism-Leninism. These organizations published newspapers to put out their line, but did not use their newspapers as an essential part of a plan to prepare the conditions for unity. With them our discussions always came down to their saying "here is our line... the best overall line in the communist movement. If you don't agree with it there is nothing left for us to do." But we quickly realized that this kind of demagogy was unjustified in terms of the ideological confusion and instability which characterized their leadership. Furthermore, the fundamental issue was not shallow agreement, but training a core of professional revolutionaries. In sum, contacts with national organizations often encouraged a tendency to sink back into localism and autonomism rather than struggle for unity, and we saw other collectives do that, immersing themselves in the day to day activity of their particular area. This served to perpetuate the weaknesses not only of these groups, but of our movement as a whole.

In the end we realized also that for national organizations to proceed without a plan led necessarily to one of two consequences: (1) organizations could declare themselves a party, reducing party building to circle size; or (2) organizations could retreat from the tasks of party building and attack the basic principles we had consolidated around such as propaganda as the chief form of activity and winning the vanguard to communism. We saw RCP, WVO and the CPML make the first mistake and ATM, MLOC and IWK make the second.

SDOC JOINS WORKERS CONGRESS

THE ISKRA PLAN

By contrast the ISKRA PLAN of the Workers Congress proposed common tasks and a method to struggle for unity. These tasks, which unfolded around a national political newspaper, proposed a means to train ourselves as revolutionaries theoretically, politically and organizationally.

The struggle over our differences, which were sharp on one or two points, was taken up in the framework of this common work. The ISKRA PLAN did not make its emphasis instant unity. It did not demand that we sacrifice our independence without preparing the conditions for unity. It did insist that we take up from the start an unrelenting struggle against any manifestation of circle narrowness. It did insist that we sum up and generalize our local work for the movement as a whole, that we report regularly on our evaluation of the newspaper and of our use of it, that we contribute in a regular way topical political exposures and polemics on questions in the national and international communist movement. On this basis we were encouraged to raise the level and broaden the scope of our activity.

As a result, in learning to use and rely on the paper we moved forward in our struggle to resolve our differences with the Workers Congress. As those differences were overcome and we achieved fundamental ideological unity, it became our duty as Marxist-Leninists to transform ideological unity into the material unity of organization. We wholeheartedly took that step, seeing it as a means to intensify our struggle to gather and centralize the resources of the revolutionary trend of our movement.

REVOLUTIONARY TRAINING

When we first took up study of the ISKRA PLAN, we had plans to put out a local monthly newspaper and in fact had copy ready for press when we made the decision to contribute to the ISKRA effort instead. We were persuaded by Lenin's arguments in WHAT IS TO BE DONE that a local newspaper would not advance the struggle for a party. Because of the local character of our circle, such a newspaper would necessarily have been characterized by its narrowness. It would have been all-consuming in its expenditure of time and energy and sharply limited other work. We saw the ISKRA PLAN as a means to centralize and gather our resources in a more efficient way. It was also a means for us to train ourselves as professional revolutionaries more effectively. Rather than the narrow scope of a local paper, we could contribute broader exposures to a national newspaper.

Overall the ISKRA PLAN for us was a means to rely on our strengths to overcome the weaknesses that characterized our circle. Concretely this can be seen in the increased regularity and frequency with which we have taken up exposures for THE COMMUNIST in the recent period as compared with our initial efforts.

We cannot too strongly urge other local collectives to take up the task of regular and frequent political exposures. As Lenin says, it is only through the systematic appraisal of day to day political events that we can train revolutionary leaders. Failure to take on this responsibility is a weakness that undermines every local collective and is an obstacle to moving forward. It is one factor that explains how activity can go on year after year without its level being raised or its scope broadened.

Local circles and collectives which concentrate on practical work, study, the publication of an occasional pamphlet on line or a local newsletter simply do not get the same political training as collectives which allocate a definite number of their cadres to newspaper work--Lenin suggests one-fourth in WHAT IS TO BE DONE--and which undertake the regular task required by frequent topical exposures of systematically appraising day to day political events for a national newspaper.

THE USE OF THE COMMUNIST

The regular use of the newspaper in our ranks and, as we gained experience, in our plant work was the main thing that moved our organization forward. Late in 1975 we were deeply involved in a local IAM strike and a struggle emerged between our organization and other communist forces over the question of the role of trade union leadership. We held that local district as well as international leadership had collaborated with the company against the rank and file and were bought off. We could see this clearly in the practical work we were involved in. However, our theoretical understanding of this question needed to be developed. We were limited by the narrow scope of our theoretical development.

It was exposures in THE COMMUNIST on opportunist leadership of the trade unions that pushed forward our understanding of this question. Through study and consolidation we became more aggressive in our struggle to expose these traitors and played a more effective strike role.

This experience also prompted us to review other sum-ups of factory work which had appeared in THE COMMUNIST and to review our factory work generally, especially in terms of the line put forward by the Workers Congress in 1975 on creating plant cores as a step towards establishing factory nuclei and developing a nucleus style of factory work. We began to grasp the importance of relying on the advanced, and in our work with advanced workers, THE COMMUNIST proved to be a decisive tool in winning the best representatives of the class to Marxism-Leninism. In addition, THE COMMUNIST, was virtually alone among Marxist-Leninist newspapers in providing guidance on organizational problems we confronted in our collective life.

From all this we learned that the scope of a national political newspaper could push forward local activity more effectively than we could have done relying solely on our own resources.

We were also trained by THE COMMUNIST on the democratic struggle, including the Black National Question, and the ERA and the question of reforms generally. At first we had a tendency to want to study each of these questions on our own from scratch. We learned to rely on the line of the paper as the starting point, testing it and using it as a foundation for further advance.

Our position on party building tactics is a good example of the success of this method. By relying on the Workers Congress criticism of the so-called "revolutionary wing" and connecting that with our own study of strategy and tactics, we saw that the ISKRA PLAN was a tactic for party building -- a form of organization and a form of struggle. This formulation had not been put forward by the Workers Congress and was an advance in our common understanding of the ISKRA PLAN and in our grasp of the plan as the main link in this period.

We should point out that the struggle for unity between our organizations was not achieved without the resolution of strong differences. What is important is the way in which the ISKRA PLAN contributed to resolve those differences.

Two things were decisive. In the first place, from the Workers Congress we learned respect for orthodoxy. In sharp contrast to other organizations, with the WC we were always encouraged to test line against our study of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, never to "accept and adopt." In fact, this respect for orthodox Marxism-Leninism seems to us chiefly responsible for the stability of the line of THE COMMUNIST and its ability to clarify the confusion generated by the polemics of other organizations in the communist movement. For party building, orthodoxy is a question of whether or not to establish unity on the basis of the science of Marxism-Leninism.

Second, we had developed mutual confidence through our common work

around a common plan. Tasks such as exposures and regular reporting on the newspaper and its use gave our organizations confidence in the serious character of our relationship. Thus in spite of differences this fostered a disciplined approach to struggle -- something that was a far cry from our relationships with other forces on these issues. As a result of the exchange of views on the question and based on the common study of Engels, THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE and of the socialist experience on the question of women and the family under the dictatorship of the proletariat, we came to recognize the incorrectness of our stand on homosexuality. We saw how the influence of the radical intelligentsia was the basis of our incorrect line of support for this type of social practice and saw the need for a thorough break with this trend.

RELY ON STRENGTHS TO OVERCOME WEAKNESSES

We are all familiar with the weaknesses that we have addressed in terms of the scattered and numerous circles which exist throughout the country. All the national organizations bemoan the existence of such circles and yet other than the WC none of them take up the task of organizing the initiative and commitment that such circles possess. The ISKRA PLAN alone uses those strengths to overcome the weaknesses of narrowness and localism. The ISKRA plan recognizes that fragmentation and independence exists and has a material base. It recognizes that this condition cannot be overcome either by demagogy or intimidation or pious good wishes. It must be overcome by common work in a step by step way, taking up tasks and testing results.

That is the significance of the ISKRA PLAN as a tactic. It is a form of struggle and a form of organization that relies on the strengths of local collectives to overcome their weaknesses and that relies on their initiative and commitment and practical work in the class to overcome circle narrowness. Unity is not a matter of intentions but of method and plan. The lesson we learned in taking up the struggle against our own tendency to elevate the importance of local work above national responsibilities and to perpetuate an independent status almost as a matter of principle was that if you are not struggling to unite, you are promoting local autonomy. The point that must be grasped is that in the struggle to unite there is an orthodox method and a practical plan does exist.

We firmly reject the line of the opportunists who oppose the ISKRA PLAN as just so much paper work or the dogmatists who claim that the ISKRA PLAN does not apply to the conditions of our movement. In our experience we have seen the active way in which the paper has become a material force in our work, has trained us as revolutionaries and has promoted our struggle for unity with other Marxist Leninists.

At this time when our movement remains plagued by instability of principle, amateurishness and narrowness on the one hand, and when on the other Marxist Leninist collectives and advanced workers are coming forward from every side, we call on every comrade to join us in supporting a party building plan that does take up the tasks of preparing the conditions for our unity in a step by step way.

What we need is the common effort to contribute to a national political newspaper in order to create a lively forum for national debate on the burning questions of our movement. THE COMMUNIST has laid the foundations for that struggle and we encourage every local collective to take up the task. At this time the publication of a single, common newspaper for the Leninist trend must be the main line around which we develop our work to build a new communist party.

Develops a plan for struggle to overcome weaknesses to spontaneity

THE REAL BASIS OF WOMEN'S INEQUALITY

The inequality of women under imperialism is a product of the monogamous family based upon private property, as an economic unit of society. It is not due to some ignorance or prejudice that exists inherently in men. Engels in *Origin of The Family, Private Property and The State* states that the monogamous family based upon private property, is the basic economic unit under the capitalist system. It forces women into the role of domestic slavery and isolates them from social production. While capitalism tears asunder the traditional relationships that bound women previously, it still rests on private property and can never lead to the full participation of women in social production nor can it abolish domestic slavery in the home. Just as capitalism introduces the "free contract" of wage slavery, it also introduces the "free contract" of marriage. But this freedom is deformed, restricted and incomplete, as are all the democratic institutions under capitalism, because it is dominated by the economic inequality founded on private property and class oppression. In the particular case of marriage and the family, women do not even share formal legal equality with men under the law.

The bourgeoisie attempts to paint itself as a "defender" of democracy. The hypocrisy of that claim was exposed at Houston. That the struggle for democracy today can only be led by the proletariat is clear. The life of women under the Dictatorship of The Proletariat is qualitatively different than under bourgeois dictatorship. This is a product of the fact that it is an absolute necessity under the system of imperialism for women to function as second class citizens. Under Socialism, on the other hand, the second class status of women holds back the social development of all.

It is domestic slavery in the monogamous family based upon private property that ultimately restricts the freedom of women and blocks their full participation in social production. When women enter the labor force they do so under a second class status. They are forced into "women's jobs" and at "women's wages." They constitute a large part of the reserve army of labor and are pulled into and pushed out of the labor force according to the needs of monopoly capital. It is only with the abolition of private property that the family ceases to be the basic economic unit of society, and as Engels points out, that private housekeeping can be transformed into public industry. This means that the contradic-

tion between a woman's private responsibility to her family and her full participation in public industry can be resolved. It is on that premise that a world historic achievement of the full emancipation of women is possible.

The working class can never overthrow social relations based upon private property without overcoming the oppression of women. As Lenin pointed out, the proletariat cannot achieve complete liberty until it has won complete liberty for women. Thus the struggle for the emancipation of women and the struggle for proletarian revolution are inseparably linked.

Reformists refuse to deal with this fundamental principal and do not take up the economic aspect of the family, which cripples and thwarts the development of women. As at the recent conference at Houston, they limit the struggle to one of formal legal equality. As Engels' states: "This typical lawyers reasoning is exactly the same as that with which the radical republican bourgeoisie dismisses the proletariat. The labor contract is supposed to be voluntarily entered into by both parties. But it is voluntarily entered into as soon as the law has put both parties on an equal footing on paper. The power given one party by its different class position, the pressure it exercises on the other--the relative economic position of both--all this is no concern to the law."

The struggle for legal equality is not enough for the complete emancipation of women but it is an important part of the struggle. In fact it is in the struggle to achieve legal equality that the true nature of women's oppression becomes absolutely clear. The error that can be made in the democratic struggle for women's rights lies in not tying that struggle to the revolutionary struggle to abolish the system of private property that is the basis of the degrading status of women in society. Engels writes: "The democratic republic does not abolish the antagonism between the two classes; on the contrary it provides the field upon which it is fought out. And, similarly, the peculiar character of man's domination over women in the modern family, and the necessity, as well as manner, of establishing real social equality between the two will be brought into full relief only when both are completely equal before the law. It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society must be abolished."

Of course this does not mean that we want to abolish the family. On the contrary, we want to establish it as a genuine social unit, based upon true equality between the sexes and proletarian love, not one based on the inequality and domestic slavery that is enforced by class society.

HOUSTON CONFERENCE from p. 1

of rape.

But reformism was not the only weapon the bourgeoisie pulled out from its arsenal to attack the struggle for women's rights. Several state conferences were jammed with women fundamentally opposed to the emancipation of women, whose reactionary view made no pretense in glorifying the domestic slavery of women and seeking to overturn even the limited gains won by women over the years. It was estimated that over 20% of the delegates to Houston represented these conservative forces.

The most glaring example of a delegation consciously working to defeat the stated goals of the conference was the delegation from Mississippi. Twenty of its delegates were white and five of these were men who openly stated their membership in the Ku Klux Klan. For a state with a 38.6% Black population, there was only one Black woman chosen. Even she quickly resigned on the basis of ill health. Sharing a women's conference delegation with members of the Ku Klux Klan would sicken anyone.

Opposed to the women's movement and all democratic movements against oppression, reactionary groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Christian Defense League, the John Birch Society and Phyllis Schlafly's STOP ERA group demonstrated throughout the weekend at the coliseum. On Saturday afternoon the Klan attempted to break up a support rally across the street from the convention. Not only did they fail to break up the rally, but were completely encircled by a crowd of women and pushed, shoved and kicked back across the street from the rally.

REFORMISTS WELCOME REACTIONARIES

Reformist opposition to the influence of reactionary women's groups in the conference was hypocritical. Actually, the reactionaries' presence, defended by conference organizers on the basis of bourgeois "right", was welcomed for it gave the reformists some legitimacy, the appearance of being real fighters for the rights of women. The reformists' actual opposition to an effective militant struggle for the emancipation of women was cloaked under their opposition to the feudal demands of the reactionaries. On this basis they made stirring appeals for "unity" in the face of opposition threats. Under the carefully controlled conference conditions, this was an important basis for strengthening their grip on conference delegates and giving platitudinous, weak resolutions the aura of hard won victories.

Among the reformist elements at Houston was the "Communist" Party USA ("C" PUSA). While overall the "C" PUSA was compromised by its

opposition to the ERA, its influence was felt in the workshop on "peace and disarmament". This workshop promoted illusions concerning "detente" and advocated building a peace movement on a pacifist platform. According to the dominant views of the workshop, women were the "civilizers" of the world and war was a product of the innate character of men. By diverting the attention of women from the imperialist contention which inevitably leads to imperialist war, it papered over superpower preparations for war and immobilized any effective struggle against these preparations.

"PLAN OF ACTION"--BUT NO ACTION

The Conference adopted a National Plan of Action, made up of 26 resolutions based on recommendations from state conferences and presented by the delegates from Houston. In all there were resolutions covering employment, credit, the ERA, abortion, sexual preference and a wide variety of other matters. What were the tactics developed to insure implementation of this plan? Why, its presentation to Carter and the Congress! The reformists assured everyone that perhaps by 1985 it would be enacted into law. Their claim flew in the face of the historical lesson that whatever gains women have made, were fought for! No concession will be made to improve the quality of life for the masses of women unless it is wrenched from the bourgeoisie.

One of the resolutions adopted was on the ERA. While the overwhelming support given the ERA resolution was good testimony to the limited influence of the straight-up reactionaries like the Schlafly group, the conference made no significant contribution to the struggle to move the ERA closer to ratification. Presenting no plan for mass action, but only the poverty of weak parliamentary appeal, the Houston conference was not a means to retake the initiative in the struggle for passage of the ERA. The perspective for the ERA depends on militant leadership willing and capable of exposing the reformists who now control the movement and driving them from leadership. Only on this basis can women be mobilized to take to the streets in direct political action in defense of their rights.

PROLETARIAN LEADERSHIP NECESSARY

The repression of women and their degraded position in society is conducted by material deprivation, corruption, brutality, murder and terror. Anger, not genteel reformism, must be mobilized to root these conditions out of women's lives. Consciousness concerning the material basis of women's inequality and the fact that imperialism necessarily means second-class status for wo-

men, not illusions of true equality under bourgeois rule, must guide the struggle for women's emancipation.

The period during which bourgeois reformism could lead the women's movement in any direction other than retreat and capitulation is long over. The hollowness of the conference still-born in Houston is evidence of that. The women's movement today is an inseparable part of world socialist revolution and demands proletarian leadership.

We can sum up our concrete experience on that score.

The spontaneous resistance and militancy which marked the rising women's movement of the 1970's in some part shook at the foundations of the imperialist system. Its birth took place during the struggle for national liberation in the ghettos of the US and in the fields of Indochina; in turn it gave support to these struggles. Unity was built between a number of US women's groups and the Vietnamese Women's Union. Massive anti-imperialist demonstrations led by women and people of oppressed nationalities rang throughout this country, which was marked as early as the late 1960's when thousands of women marched in the Jeanette Rankin Brigade in Washington, DC in protest to the Indochina war. Women were increasingly taking up their

own emancipation as one which was intractably tied to the elimination of the imperialist system.

While conducted on the basis of anti-imperialism the women's movement was vigorous and on the offensive; as Houston demonstrated, under the influence and control of the bourgeoisie, it is powerless and in retreat.

A women's movement taking as its source the class and national oppression of women as well as their sex oppression, a women's movement closely connected with the struggle of the oppressed nationalities and of the working class, a women's movement mobilizing righteous anger against the conditions imposed on women by capitalism, a woman's movement linked to the struggle of the oppressed nations and people of the world against imperialist hegemony, only such a movement will take the women of America to the streets in the thousands and tens and hundreds of thousands to change the face of US society.

This demands the militant initiative of communists and working women. Only the perspective of proletarian, not bourgeois, leadership can release the tremendous revolutionary potential of the women's movement and create the basis for the masses of women to take the initiative in their struggle for equal rights.

SENECA FALLS CONFERENCE

The Houston conference officially opened with a torch lighting ceremony on November 18th following a marathon run of two thousand miles from Seneca Falls New York to the Houston Coliseum. Two thousand women carried a lighted torch approximately one mile each in an effort to connect the Houston Conference with the historic Seneca Falls Conference held over 125 years ago. But there are important differences between these two conferences.

While the Seneca Falls Declaration was couched in terms of "inalienable human rights" and patterned after the Declaration of Independence, the sentiment at the conference was that the government did not serve the interests of women. It was a protest conference and a militant declaration for change. Unlike Houston, the Seneca Falls Convention was not even acknowledged by the bourgeoisie and received no support from the federal government. It took place under conditions of strict repression of women's struggle for basic legal equality. In its staunch demand for an equal place for women in public life the conference earned the respect of militant and progressive women who have struggled since that time for women's rights.

In short, the Seneca Falls conference was, in spite of its limitations, a militant, vanguard protest against the degraded position of women in U.S. society. By contrast, the Houston Conference was a strictly orchestrated, bourgeois reformist event patterned after a Democratic Party convention.

It is clear that the upsurge of the women's movement which has taken place in the US over the last decade is directly connected to the development of the anti-imperialist struggle of the US people. In the same way the Seneca Convention was directly connected to the involvement of women in the abolitionist movement to bring an end to slavery in the South. The Convention was a protest against the restrictions women confronted in taking up a militant and progressive role in social development.

This points to an important lesson. The struggle for women's emancipation cannot be isolated from the resistance of oppressed classes and people to oppression. There is no such thing as "feminist neutrality" in the struggle to realize the democratic aspirations of women. Today women's struggle for emancipation is a component part of the world proletarian socialist revolution.

tending all other forms of struggle."

Who makes up the "left" and who makes up the "center"? According to the revisionist party, all those who want to bring about basic reform make up the "left". These are the socialists and "communists" like the CPUSA. The "Center" is made up of "independent minded workers and progressives" who constitute an opposition, but who still work within the framework of capitalism and do not yet see the need for socialism. In an article in the October issue of POLITICAL AFFAIRS, George Meyers described the new emerging center as those in the top level of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy who are developing "effective opposition to the Meany leadership's reactionary policies..." It includes those who "have spoken out in favor of detente and trade with the Soviet Union", and is all encompassing enough to include the UE, Winpisinger of the IAM, the leadership of the Meat Packers and Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers unions, Balanoff and Sadlowski in steel, etc. The Center, we are told, "rejects the close ties with the anti-labor military industrial complex and the CIA. It sees the need for alliances with other sections of the population...movements for Black liberation, women's equality, protection of ecology, a greater degree of political independence," and so forth.

In other words, the real purpose and content of the left-center coalition is to subordinate the working class to a reformist trend in the trade union movement. This is what the central task of the revisionist party amounts to.

HISTORY OF LEFT-CENTER UNITY

The historical roots of the left-center coalition can be found in the period of the world wide struggle against fascism. During this period, marked by Dimitrov's report to the VII Congress of the Comintern and the anti-fascist Second World War, the united front against fascism gave correct orientation to revolutionaries the world over. Communists struggled for unity with all segments of the working class, including the various social democratic parties who had been bitterly and correctly opposed in an earlier period. In his report to the VII Congress, Dimitrov said:

"The Communist International attaches no conditions to unity of action except one, and that an elementary condition acceptable for all workers, viz that the unity of action be directed against fascism, against the offensive of capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy."

Thus the struggle for left-center unity under the direction of the CI during the anti-fascist struggle was a basic element of revolutionary strategy.

On the other hand, with the defeat of the fascist powers in the Second World War, a new period with new tasks confronted Communist parties around the world, including the CPUSA. Alliances correct for the anti-fascist struggle could not be dogmatically applied in new conditions. A revolutionary strategy following the war required preparation for the overthrow of US imperialism. The focus of the US party's main blow in this period, therefore, had to be directed against the parties of compromise and conciliation with imperialism. Left-center unity could no longer provide basic orientation to a revolutionary party. In a new situation it meant instead liquidation of the party's vanguard role.

But in summing up this period, the revisionists do not understand that the collapse of the unity of the left and the center was an inevitable product of a decisive historic turn.

"...Left Center unity was one of the first victims of the Cold War...Widespread circulation was given to the false charge that the 'Communists control the unions'... Trade union leaders from the local union level to the very top were forced to demean themselves by signing affidavits denying Communist Party membership or adherence, under threat of

five year prison sentences. At first the Left and Center remained firm in the face of this vicious anti-labor onslaught. Then the Center began wavering. It finally collapsed with CIO President Phillip Murray leading an ignominious retreat. With the left temporarily prostrate, the Center turned to Right-wing elements in the trade union movement. Instead of an ally of the Left, the Center became a captive of the Right."

The isolation of the party during the post war and McCarthy period was not an inevitable result however. Instead it was, among other things, a necessary product of the party's pathetic effort to perpetuate a policy of unity with the center which now meant reliance on a policy of compromise with imperialism.

The same is true today. Reviving the left-center coalition shows the full consolidation of the CPUSA on the basis of revisionism and exposes its role as one of the main social props of imperialism. The left-center coalition is a means to strengthen the influence of monopoly capitalism on the workers movement and to liquidate the leading role of a vanguard party. The degree to which this formulation still influences our movement shows our failure to achieve a complete ideological victory over opportunism.

AN ATTACK ON COMMUNIST WORK IN THE TRADE UNIONS

It is important to speak specifically to the open attack on Marxist-Leninist trade union work reflected in the policies of the CPUSA's left-center coalition.

First of all, the left-center coalition is a policy of reformism rather than a revolutionary policy to guide the proletariat in the seizure of state power. It attempts to confine our struggle to one for trade union demands, such as greater union democracy, and pretends that the battle for such demands will lead automatically to higher stages of struggle. As Winston puts it:

"The fact is that the wider democratic struggle will correspondingly increase mass anti-monopoly consciousness to the point of realizing the necessity for socialism in our country."

There couldn't be a better example of the rotten theory of stages criticized by Lenin in WHAT IS TO BE DONE: political tasks are restricted to what is immediately palatable to the broad masses involved, in struggle with the expectation that this will spontaneously raise their level of class consciousness.

The most blatant example of the reformist character of the left-center coalition is its open renunciation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Winston describes this in a pitiful manner.

"If you refer to our 21st Convention documents you will note that we do not use the words 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. The truth is that some 59 Communist Parties in the world do not use the language, but they maintain the concept of working class leadership of the anti-monopoly movement and also in the fight for socialism."

What is "working class leadership" or "the fight for socialism" without the dictatorship of the proletariat?! Contrary to revisionism, orthodox Marxism-Leninism knows there is no such thing.

Overall the policies of the left-center coalition are an effort to reduce our tasks to fighting for shallow reforms and detente.

Second, the left-center coalition seeks to strengthen the leadership of the reformists and revisionists over the unions. Marxism-Leninism considers the trade union bureaucracy agents of the capitalist class in the workers movement and seeks to drive them from the unions. The left-center coalition, on the other hand, does not expose, but strengthens the role of the reformist trade union leaders and petty bourgeois liberals who, according to the CPUSA, make up the Center. The left-center coalition ties the future of the working class to

corrupt leaders who use rank and file rebellion and discontent in their own self serving struggles for power. Miller's Miners for Democracy and the Sadlowski campaign in steel, for example, are successes for the left-center coalition according to the revisionists.

Third, the left-center coalition attacks the vanguard role of a communist party. The role of a political party propagated by the revisionists is that of an organization bargaining for influence rather than fighting for leadership of all aspects of trade union and popular struggles. This tailist conception of the relationship of party to trade union leadership is reflected in how the CPUSA sums up the '30's. In the article mentioned above, Meyers comments:

"When the history of the 1930s is properly written, it will show that the anti-fascist movements of the working class, under the leadership of the CIO, and under the influence of the CPUSA brought our country into World War II on the side of anti-fascism." (emphasis ours)

Marxist-Leninists want to lead the trade unions, not just influence them, and the same applies to all mass organizations of the people. Instead of the bankrupt "move the trade unions to the left" through our "influence", we insist on fighting to subordinate the trade unions to party control!

There is the same attack on leadership in the revisionist view of organizational tasks in the class. The left-center coalition wants to narrow the scope of this work and, in particular, to ignore its illegal aspect. Instead of Bolshevik organization, there is capitulation to petty bourgeois democracy.

For example, Winston discusses the importance of building "shop clubs". The word "club" is a carryover from the days in the middle forties when the party was liquidated into a political association. At that time factory nuclei were liquidated as the basic units of party organization and the style of work based on the factory cell, including preparation for both legal and illegal struggle, was abandoned. In explaining the left-center coalition work today, Winston attacks those who would try to "quarterback" the work of club members within "mass organizations in general, and trade unions in particular." Probably Winston means the CPUSA's "fight for socialism" is easier than a football game and there is no need for a proletarian party to lead. But every class conscious worker will recognize in this attack on "quarterbacking" a revisionist attack on the forms of proletarian organization and leadership on the shop floor which panders to every kind of petty bourgeois prejudice about participatory democracy.

Fourth, the left-center coalition belittles the tremendous reserve of advanced workers in this country and justifies the revisionist refusal to take up the task of winning them to the path of revolution. Instead of winning the vanguard to communism and relying on the class conscious vanguard to win over the masses, the CPUSA unites with the trade union secretary and relies on these forces to mobilize the class for mediocre reforms and mild bourgeois schemes. Some of these "advanced elements", Winston brags will "fight for the nationalization of industries, with boards composed of labor and other social strata. And, there are some who even go beyond this." Imagine! Even beyond this!! How bold and daring!! These workers, he assures us, will make the factories a base for "democracy and peace". How petty and puny!! The Leninist party we need to lead the US proletariat will make factories our fortresses for working class dictatorship and class war!!!

The fact is that anyone who has worked in a factory for a month knows that there are numerous kinds of "socialists, independent minded workers and progressives" with all kinds of theories who misrepresent the objectives of class struggle and whose opportunism is an important influence keeping advanced workers from Marxism-Leninism. These are the "advanced elements" the

CPUSA wants to win to its coalition. Unfortunately, our own movement has too frequently tailed or linked up with these same elements and become sidetracked from the task of winning genuine vanguard elements who can be won to taking full responsibility for the program of orthodox Marxism-Leninism.

Finally, the propagation of the left-center coalition by the CPUSA represents an effort by the revisionist party to lay a foundation in the trade unions for the formation of a reformist labor party. Another article from the October issue of POLITICAL AFFAIRS quotes Gus Hall, Chairman of the CPUSA:

"The idea of a new, mass people's party received a positive response whenever it was discussed...The time has come to stop just talking about it, and to begin to bring together those forces which are ready to take some initiative in this direction."

The effort to form such a party at this time will be an effort to imbue the working class with the reformism of electoral politics in a period of revolutionary upsurge and preparation for inter-imperialist war.

In preparing the conditions for the revolutionary overthrow of our bourgeoisie, a vanguard US Marxist-Leninist party must focus its main blow at the parties of compromise and conciliation with imperialism. Winning an ideological victory over opportunism means unmasking worthless distortions of orthodox Marxism-Leninism, like the CPUSA's left-center coalition.

PHILIPPINE LEADER from p.3

In this book Sison clearly identified the central task of the Philippine revolution which was "the overthrow of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism, the seizure of political power and its consolidation. Our purpose is to liberate the Filipino nation from foreign oppression and also the great masses of the Filipino people, especially the peasantry, from feudal oppression". Under Sison's leadership the Party not only exposed the dangers presented by US imperialism to the Filipino nation, but also the dangers of Soviet social-imperialism.

More recently Sison made another theoretical contribution to the Philippine revolution with his brilliant analysis of Philippine economic, political, cultural and geographical conditions in his "Specific Characteristics of Our People's War". This work, which summed up the accumulated experience of the NPA in the five years following martial law, is of special significance for providing revolutionary theory for movements fighting imperialism in small, island countries with no friendly borders.

Because of his great theoretical contributions, together with his practical leadership of the armed struggle, Jose Maria Sison stands as the foremost revolutionary leader in the Philippine revolution. Because of his great contributions, his arrest, while a setback, will not in any way destroy the revolution. Based on the correct orientation and collective leadership of the Party, the revolutionary movement will continue to make great strides forward against US imperialist domination, social imperialist intrigue, and against the feudal and bureaucrat capitalist class forces that stand as a barrier to the social emancipation of the Filipino masses.

As a Filipino revolutionary wrote in a poem in 1950:

"Our leaders are the fruit of a plant,
Whose seed was among the people.
The people are a rich soil.
What does not grow among the people?"

And in this climate of heat,
That is a revolutionary period,
Will not the fruits be in profusion?"

It is the proletarian internationalist duty of all members of the US revolutionary movement to take up the struggle for the release of Jose Maria Sison and other political prisoners in the Philippines. Recently the Marcos government condemned to death the head of the NPA, Bernabe Buscayno (known as Commander Dante), Lt. Victor Corpus, a military officer in the Marcos army who led a rebellion and joined the NPA and Senator Benigno Aquino, a leader of the parliamentary opposition to the Marcos regime. We must vigorously protest the torture and abuse afflicted upon these and other prisoners. The debt of blood created by the torture and murder of revolutionaries in the Philippines will certainly be repaid in full. With every arrest, the CPP, the NPA and the resistance movement in general replenishes its ranks; for every people's soldier it murders, ten more arise; for every activist captured, twenty more take their place.

MINERS STRIKE from p.1

their projected goals this year, the Bureau of Mines reported in August that coal production was 3.6% higher this year than last-- this while miners have lost their health care coverage.

MINERS NEED WILDCATS

Both the UMW leaders and the BCOA are portraying wildcats as irrational acts of a younger generation of miners. During the last wildcats, they continually said that the miners were hurting themselves by staying out. But wildcats are in fact the only weapon the miners have to fight for their interests when the union itself refused to fight for them. The wildcats the past few years have been over basic and important issues--health and safety issues, the right to strike over those issues, and the cutbacks in health care. If wildcats harm production, it is the responsibility of the coal operators, not the miners who fought back against their exploitation.

The militancy of the rank and file has become a major issue in the coal industry. The coal operators want to see the wildcats end and want the UMW leaders to guarantee that they can control their members. Joseph P. Brennan, president of the BCOA, said recently that "The single most significant issue is that of labor stability... It is the basic premise of a national agreement that once a contract is signed and ratified there will neither be stoppages called at any level of the union, local, district or international--nor will there be any wildcat strikes." He has also emphasized that the "BCOA will demand the right to operate our mines during a contract term without the constant debilitating imprint of the wildcat. This is our due. It is something given by a labor union in every other industry and it must be forthcoming to us."

Miller agrees with the BCOA that wildcats should be stopped, but he is having difficulty controlling his membership for the coal operators. In fact, he is having trouble even holding onto his office. In June he barely won re-election in a close three way race--he only got 39% of the vote. If the announcement of the cutbacks in the Health and Pension Funds hadn't been held off until after the election, he probably would have lost. Lee Roy Patterson, who opposed Miller in the election, is one of the old Boyle administration and he has support of 3/4 of the International Executive Board. But more important than the factional in-fighting among the bureau-



crats, none of whom really represents the interests of the workers, is the lack of support Miller now has among the rank and file. He came into office with a militant image in 1972 as part of the Miners For Democracy movement. That movement was able to win some major gains in union democracy including the ratification of contracts by the rank and file and the election of district officers by the membership. The 1974 contract negotiated by Miller also won some significant gains for miners in wages and benefits including, for the first time, sick leave and a cost of living allowance. But with industry profits soaring in 1974 Miller could have gotten more for the miners. And since 1974 Miller has again and again proven to the miners that he will not fight for them. The cuts in the Health and Pension Funds were only the latest example. Miller has never

taken up the demand to end the connection between benefits and production that fundamentally undermines the right to strike.

Because of the pressure of the rank and file, Miller can't come out completely against wildcats. So he's proposing to add to the no-strike clause of the 1974 contract a provision that union locals could strike over local issues with the approval of the majority of their membership. But the coal operators have refused this proposal calling it just a "gimmick" and saying that even the majority vote provision wouldn't stop wildcats. The BCOA instead wants the union officers to get tougher with their members suspending or fining individual miners and suspending local autonomy if necessary to force miners to use arbitration instead of strikes over grievances.

IS UNION BUSTING THE ISSUE?

In a desperate attempt to control the militancy of the rank and file, Miller is now raising that the crucial issue is to save the union itself - a typical ploy of trade union bureaucrats to try to rally workers to their sold-out leadership. The mine workers have been able to win a national contract which could be a powerful weapon. Miller is calling on UMW members to "stand united and strong" to defend that national agreement and to prevent the mine owners from using their "combined economic and political strength to bear against local units of miners" to cut wage rates, reduce benefits and impose different contract expiration dates. He points to statements by Brennan that the union is "weak and divided" and that the operators and unions have "one more real shot" at a national contract. "If it doesn't work, then you have a vacuum and vacuums tend to get filled." But the coal operators don't really want to break the union. In fact, they have said that they want to emphasize the "importance of a strong union." What they prefer is a strong union leadership, like the old days of John L. Lewis, that could control the members. The crucial issue in the UMW today is not whether miners will be represented by a union but whether they will be represented by a union that collaborates with the coal companies or fights for the interests of the mine workers.

Brennan himself is an example of the close working relationship between the UMW bureaucrats and the coal operators. Son of a UMW district president, he formerly worked for the UMW. He was director of the UMW research department and was involved in the 1971 contract negotiations. Then in 1973 he formally went to work for the coal operators joining the National Coal Association and in 1975 going to work for the BCOA--where he is now president.

Even before the strike began, Miller revealed the treachery of his class collaboration "leadership". During contract negotiations he announced publicly that during a strike all the medical and death benefits would be cut off and the pensions of retired miners would also be reduced. This is an especially hard blow to the miners who have had their savings drained in the recent wildcats. Meanwhile, Miller has hired a public relations firm, the same one that does work for the AFL-CIO and the steelworkers union, to try to bolster the union's public image--as if that would win a good contract!

The coal industry is saying that they are prepared for this strike with high reserves, a weak market and the expectations that non-UMW miners can supply the coal to replenish their reserves. (50% of the coal today compared with 70% a decade ago, is produced by non-UMW miners.) Electric power stations and steel plants, the 2 largest coal consumers, have unusually high coal stockpiles--enough they say to last 3 months.

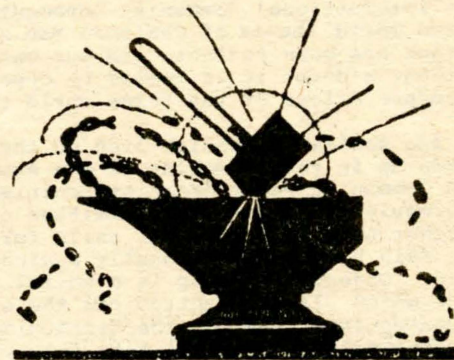
However, neither the coal industry nor the federal government want to see a long coal strike even if there are reserves enough to supply current coal

needs. This is because an important part of Carter's energy plan is to increase production and use coal as part of reducing US dependence on foreign oil. He is responding to the growing economic power forged from the unity of Third World countries and to the necessity to prepare for war with the Soviet Union. His plan calls for increasing coal production from 665 million tons this year to 1 billion tons by 1985 and for switching industry to coal as a source of 32% of its energy needs. The Government Accounting Office estimates that to meet these increased demands it will be necessary to open between 438 and 825 new mines, recruit and train 531,600 new miners (currently there are 208,000 miners) and invest \$26.7 to 45.5 billion in new capital. The bourgeoisie intends to make the working class pay for increased coal production and use with tax breaks for industry to finance the expensive conversion to coal, loan guarantees for coal companies to finance increased production, higher prices on manufactured goods, and overlooked environmental standards for coal-burning plants. Moreover, it intends to increase production with intensification of labor. The coal operators say that to meet the increased demands and to attract capital to open new mines, they must have a "stable" work force and increase the productivity of their workers which they say is limited by absenteeism, wildcats, the Coal Mine and Safety Act of 1969 and wage agreements with the UMW.

Until negotiations broke off, the federal government said it wouldn't get involved in the coming miners strike. The Secretary of Labor Marshall admitted that he had been watching the situation very closely but that "the Labor Department has no intention of intervening in collective bargaining which is the way to solve the problems in the coal industry." But we know that this claim of neutrality is empty for the government always acts to protect the interests of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, the importance of coal to Carter's Energy plans make it unlikely the government would not intervene. After contract talks were called off, the federal government did step in as a "mediator" and is trying to get negotiations going again. Moreover, a task force of several federal agencies has already been planning for a protracted UMW strike. One option they are considering is a strike stopping Taft Hartley injunction. Another would be to use a 1950 defense act which gives the President the power to seize surplus coal and ship it to areas where it was needed. An official of the Federal Preparedness Administration said in defense of this possible government action, "It's not strike breaking; it's action taken in the national interest." Of course, the "national interest" in this case coincides with that of the coal companies and not with the interests of the working class.

MINERS' STRIKE TO BE "A SCHOOL OF WAR"

We know for certain that the miners' strike will be a significant class battle with important lessons to be learned by the miners and the working class as a whole. The contradiction between the economic and political interests of the miners on the one hand, and the interests of the capitalists and their political representatives in the government and the working class movement on the other hand, has become acute. On the one hand there is the recent sharp attack on the livelihood of the miners and their need to regain and improve upon what was lost. On the other hand there is the mine-owners' need for an increased rate of profit in the present economic crisis and the intolerance the government will take toward disrupted coal production while coal is so vital as an energy source in this time of superpower war preparations. The bourgeois state, the capitalists and the trade union bureaucrats will line up on one side, and the miners in their thousands on the other.



Strikes are "a school of war" as Lenin explained in "On Strikes". In the upcoming strike the miners will face a stubborn--and powerful--enemy in the mine-owning monopoly capitalists which will test the mettle of their endurance and fighting capacity and the ability of their trade union to serve as an effective fighting organization in a sharp economic struggle. The majority of miners will be further convinced of the complete hostility and antagonism that exists between their class interests and the class interests of the capitalists and the state that defends the capitalists' interests, and the complete bankruptcy of the class collaborationist leadership of the trade union bureaucrats. Their consciousness of the need to bring genuine working class leadership to their union will be strengthened.

The mineworkers know that coal production is increasingly tied to the political interests of the capitalist class as a whole and that the state will intervene with ferocity to defend these political interests. At the present time even the defense of the miners' economic interests requires a political struggle. It is the job of communists to bring to the fertile ground created by this class battle the lesson that the working class can wage political struggle only under the leadership of an independent vanguard political party of the proletariat, a new communist party.

The Workers Congress (ML) is a multi-national communist organization which takes Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as the theoretical basis guiding its thinking. While we intend to discuss questions from our own definite point of view, in striving to build THE COMMUNIST as an instrument for the Leninist trend, we call on all Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary workers to join with us and contribute correspondence of factory and political exposures, the trade union struggle, the democratic struggles for national liberation and for the emancipation of women, etc.



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The following article introduces the Workers Congress' pamphlet: "THE MAIN BLOW IN THE PRESENT HISTORIC PERIOD".

The pamphlet is available from the Workers Congress (ML), PO Box 1297, Chicago, Illinois 60690, for 50¢ a copy.

The articles on the "main blow" reprinted in this pamphlet have a particular importance for movement at this time. As Huang Hua, the Chairman of the Chinese delegation to the UN, pointed out in a speech to the General Assembly on September 29, we are in a new historic period -- the period of struggle against superpower hegemonism. For Marxist-Leninists, it is impossible to get a grasp of any historic period without understanding the focus of revolutionary strategy at that time--that is, without understanding the direction of the main blow. This is generally true.

More particularly, errors on the main blow reflect an underlying failure to grasp the specific features of a historic period. As Stalin writes in a passage reprinted here at p.22, "a strategic plan suitable for one period of history, which has its own features, cannot be suitable for another period of history, which has entirely different specific features." At this time, errors on the main blow reflect a fundamental failure to grasp firmly Chairman Mao Tsetung's great strategic concept of the three worlds.

The importance of this point cannot be overestimated. A sharp attack has come forward in the international communist movement against the three world thesis of Chairman Mao and this attack has been reflected in our own movement. Without a doubt it is fueled by opportunist interpretations of the three world thesis.

The social chauvinist line on the main blow taken up in this pamphlet is one example of that. The Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (CPML) (formerly the Organizing Committee of the October League, the OL/OC) calls for us to direct our main blow internationally against the USSR only. Objectively this is a social chauvinist line which plainly contradicts the strategy of a united front against the hegemonism of both superpowers. It is consistent only with a strategic plan which takes the USSR as the principal enemy, calls for a united front against Soviet social imperialism and in the end reduces the first world to the USSR alone.

THE ATTACK ON ONE ERROR COVERS ANOTHER

Attacking the social chauvinist character of this line has provided excellent cover for opportunist forces in our movement to conceal their own errors.

For example, a number of US Marxist-Leninist organizations have taken up the line that both superpowers represent the same danger to the same extent in order to polemicize against the CP(ML)'s opportunist stand on the main blow. Instead of preserving what is correct and exposing what is incorrect, they use the cover of what is incorrect to attack what is correct.

Specifically, these forces fail to point out--as we have done in this pamphlet--why it is

THE MAIN BLOW IN THE PRESENT HISTORIC PERIOD



TWO ARTICLES FROM THE COMMUNIST

including selections from Stalin:
CONCERNING THE QUESTION OF STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST and OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND TACTICS

correct to call the Soviet Union the more dangerous of the two superpowers. As a result they are unable to expose in a theoretically convincing way the chauvinism of the CP(ML)'s position on the focus of revolutionary strategy in the present historic period. Their attempt to show that the two superpowers are equally dangerous falls short of its mark.

To call both superpowers the same danger to the same degree and to the same extent is wrong from the point of view of dialectical method and shows a failure to make a concrete analysis of changes which have taken place in world affairs. The history of two imperialist wars teaches us to pay close attention to the uneven development of the relationship of force between the imperialist great powers. These differences can only be resolved by force. To abandon the law of uneven development makes it impossible to trace concretely the development of these factors which must sooner or later give rise to imperialist war.

The debate, therefore, conducted within such narrow limits, has led only to confusion. One strategic plan leads to social chauvinism; the other belittles the danger of imperialist war. Neither is capable of mobilizing US working and oppressed people in a complex international situation.

STALIN'S TEXTS ON THE MAIN BLOW

The texts from Stalin discussed here provide important background to the concept of "historic

period" raised by Huang Hua in his ON speech. In the excerpts reprinted, Stalin clearly explains the relationship between a historic turn, a historic period, the main enemy and the main blow. These passages also make clear the distinction between the main blow of the party of the proletariat and the main blow of the working class and its allies. Failure to make this distinction has added mud to waters already clouded by theoretical confusion.

Notice that a historic period is not equivalent to the Marxist-Leninist concept of an epoch or an era. We are still in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. But as Chairman Mao points out in ON CONTRADICTION, the process of the development of a thing goes through a number of stages, each of which is marked by its particular features. Decisive developments in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution reflect historic turns which demarcate historic periods. The present stage (historic period) in the development of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution is characterized by three factors which in their development constitute a fundamental historic turn. These factors are: (1) the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and the disintegration of the socialist camp; (2) the decline of US imperialism and the disintegration of the Western imperialist camp; (3) the rise of the Third World. It is these changes, summed by Chairman Mao in his theory of the three worlds and which reflect the development of all the basic contradictions of the contemporary era, that are the basis for understanding the international situation today.

On this foundation, a revolutionary proletarian party in the US, genuinely built according to the revolutionary theory and style of Marxism-Leninism, must call for the broadest united front internationally against the hegemonism of the two superpowers based on the unity of the revolutionary movement in this country with the socialist countries and with the proletariat and oppressed people and nations throughout the world and with the third world countries and all countries subjected to aggression, interference or threats of superpower hegemonism, as a component part and the main content of the united front against imperialism in this period.

As we said in our article "Stalin on the Main Blow", "The relatively greater danger to imperialist war posed by the USSR has not brought an end to this historic period and does not make a new historic turn where the USSR is alone the principal enemy of world revolution."

DIRECT THE MAIN BLOW AGAINST BOTH SUPERPOWERS

The main blow is the main direction a proletarian movement must take in a given historic period. It is the main focus of a strategic plan suitable to the specific features of a particular historic period.

Huang Hua said: "We are now in a new period--the period of struggle against superpower hegemonism."

There can be no doubt. In the present historic period we must direct our main blow against the hegemonism of both superpowers.

SADAT CONCESSIONS from p.3

war of annihilation against our Arab people and nation." The PLO held large demonstrations in protest. At a rally held on November 20 in the Martyr's Cemetery in Bierut's Shatila refugee camp, Arafat declared, "From this sacred place which embraces the best sons of the Arab nation, I say to the masses in occupied Jerusalem that occupied Jerusalem will only be regained through blood and struggle and not through capitulation and kneeling".

Syria criticized the visit in the UN and Libya, which had just recently established full diplomatic relations with Egypt, broke off all relations and called for a boycott of Egypt. Sadat's foreign minister, Ismail Fahmy, resigned in protest of the trip, and the man appointed to fill his position also resigned hours later. The Cairo-based "Voice of Palestine" radio station was ordered closed by the Egyptian government after it aired criticisms of Sadat's trip, and leading Palestinian representatives were ordered to leave Egypt.

The isolation of Egypt in the Arab community has been furthered by Sadat's call for a pre-Geneva peace conference in Cairo to which Israel was invited with no pre-conditions for negotiations. It appears that apart from Egypt there will be a complete Arab boycott of this meeting.

Egypt's invitation to Israel was made despite Begin's recent statement that "No Israeli delegation will negotiate in any way and any place with the so-called PLO, whether it is in Cairo or Geneva or the moon". Egypt's apparent willingness to disregard the concerns of its neighbors and continue with the conference is a sign that it is moving ahead on its perilous isolationist course.

SUPERPOWERS SEEK ADVANTAGE

The Arab and Palestinian peoples struggle against the Israel Zionists and their superpower supporters had progressed only on the basis of joint political and military activity. Sadat's trip and subsequent actions have jeopardized that unity and aided the two superpowers, the US and USSR, in their attempts to meddle in the affairs of the Middle East.

The problems in the Middle East can only be resolved by the people of that region and not through outside interference by the world's largest imperialist powers. Necessarily, by failing to rely on the unified strength of the Arab peoples, Sadat must turn to reliance on the superpowers, and, at this point, especially the US. This, however, only contributes to the superpowers' efforts to impose a "settlement" which would be in direct contradiction to the aspirations and rights of the oppressed masses of the region.

In his speech before the Knesset Sadat declared to Israel that, in regards to a peace settlement, "we accept all the guarantees you want from the two superpowers or from either of them...because in return we shall receive the same guarantees." The guarantees he spoke to are some form of mutual defence pacts which would enable one or both of the superpowers to militarily intervene in the Middle East in the event of war. Imperialist contention for hegemony is provided the convenient cover of "settling disputes" or "guaranteeing peace".

This possibility represents a great danger to the people of the Middle East and of the world. In Vol. II, no.7 of THE COMMUNIST, in an article entitled "EGYPT BREAKS TIES WITH THE USSR--Step Against Superpower Intervention", we stated, "It will be no solution for Egypt's government to go from the arms of one superpower into the arms of another". However, the positive step forward taken in E-

gypt's break with the USSR has been followed by a step backward in increased collaboration with US imperialism. The danger of superpower intervention is strengthened

Both superpowers, though taking different routes, are seeking to take advantage of the situation as much as possible. The US imperialists are glad to see the divisions created in the Arab ranks and the strengthened position of Israel. Carter has stated that he saw the visit as advancing the likelihood of a Geneva conference, and hypocritically stated that "we do have this common religious bond that at least provides a possible avenue for peace if we can remove the obstacles that men create." Carter would like to pretend that metaphysics can overcome inequality among nations or settle accounts with imperialist domination. Meanwhile the US remains the chief arms-peddler in the Middle East, thriving off the no war-no peace climate that promises to remain if Egypt does negotiate independently with Israel. The US will be attending the Cairo conference along with Israel and is busy promoting Sadat by claiming that he "is speaking for the Arab world", even though it adds that the other Arab countries and the PLO "have not recognized that Egypt is speaking for them". It is superpower arrogance to "appoint" a spokesman in this fashion.

The USSR is taking a different tack from the US. It is adopting the role of wolf in sheep's clothing by pretending to uphold "Arab unity" and demanding PLO representation. But its stand is sheer hypocrisy. By collaborating with the US in the call for a Geneva conference on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338 (a call Israel also has made) it has already recognized the state of Israel and effectively denied the rights of the Palestinian people. Actually the USSR is promoting the disunity of Arab countries in the hopes that the potential loss of Egypt to the Arab bloc (Egypt had contribu-

ted significantly to the military strength of the Arab countries), will force the other Arab countries to turn to the USSR for "assistance", thus enabling it to further its influence and domination over them.

ARAB UNITY STILL KEY

In face of the present developments, the Arab countries are solidifying their unity, seeking to gather enough pressure to prevent the Egyptian government from taking unilateral action with Israel. They are remaining firm to a principled stand against Zionist occupation of Palestine and Arab lands and in support of the PLO. They are putting aside differences, such as the longstanding conflict between Iraq and Syria, in order to reinforce their unity and their strength.

The present vacillation and retreat of the Egyptian government is a set-back to the united Arab struggle against Zionist and superpower aggression in the Middle East. It is also a setback to the entire struggle of the world's people against superpower hegemonism and the danger of world war. But a setback does not mean a defeat. The present consolidation of Arab unity must and will be strengthened. As the Minister of Information of Syria, Ahmed Iskander Ahmed recently stated, "Syria is keen on creating favorable conditions to realize any form of Arab unity, for Syria always believes that the Arabs' own potential forms the basis for any Arab action, be it political or military, to liberate the occupied territories and restore the usurped rights."

Not any superpower interference or meddling, nor capitulation to the Zionist aggressors, but only the unified strength of the Arab and Palestinian people will guarantee a principled and lasting peace in the Middle East.