

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

# The Workers' Advocate

## Supplement



50¢

Vol. 3 #2

VOICE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA

Feb. 15, 1987

## Black man jailed for defending himself against a racist attack

# The defense of Noah Roisten

**Speech at the Third National Conference  
of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA  
Fall 1986**

In this issue of the **Supplement** we continue our coverage of the Third National Conference, which was held under the slogans **Rank-and-file action against the Reaganite offensive!** and **Build the workers' movement as a revolutionary movement!** We print two speeches, which have both been edited for publication.

Many comrades have probably followed reports in the **Workers' Advocate** of the work with the Noah Roisten Defense Committee. The agitation in defense of Noah has been an important part of our

### WHO IS NOAH ROISTEN?

Noah Roisten is a young black man who has been held in jail for 19 months on one quarter million dollars bail for the simple act of having defended himself from an extremely violent armed attack of a racist gang. Despite the fact that there are numerous unbaised witnesses to the fact that Noah was the victim of a racist attack and was acting in self-defense, and despite the fact that Noah suffered severe internal injuries from the racist attack, the police and government prosecutor have charged Noah with first degree murder. The persecution of Noah Roisten is yet another example of how the government of the rich promotes, protects and supports racism. <>

anti-racist agitation among the workers in Boston. The fact that over 200 workers participated in the May fundraiser is an indication that this agitation has struck a responsive chord among the workers. While hundreds of workers participated in May, it should be remembered that a fund-raising dance is a very low form of struggle. Nevertheless, given the generally low level of the movement and the weak sense of organization among the workers at this time, it is an important development.

### Ten Years of Racist Attacks in Boston

The successes in the Noah Roisten campaign are not the result of some magical non-party form of organization. Rather, they are the fruit of years of agitation and of concentration of the Party's work in the work places. As well, the successes arise because, at this moment, there is a political vacuum in the leadership of the anti-racist movement in Boston due to the bankruptcy of the black bourgeoisie in the face of the longstanding ferment among the masses against racist attacks.

There has been a long history of racist attacks by fascist gangs on black masses in Boston. This has especially been the case since the days of the fascist anti-busing movement. The bourgeoisie

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**Our Differences with the Ninth Congress  
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## NINTH CONGRESS OF THE PARTY OF LABOR OF ALBANIA — A DISAPPOINTMENT FOR MARXIST-LENINISTS AROUND THE WORLD

A summary of this article appeared in the Feb. 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**.

The 9th Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania was held at the beginning of November in 1986. Such congresses are major events in the life of the PLA. They are held every five years; they set the major policies and stands of the PLA.

### Only Socialist Country in the World

Albania has attracted international interest because it is the only country in the world today which is socialist. It also has refused to bow down to the Soviet and Chinese revisionists. At a certain point in the anti-revisionist movement, attention focused on the Party of Labor of Albania as it put forward revolutionary stands that inspired activists who were fighting hard to remain loyal to the historic mission of the working class.

Since the 8th Congress, the PLA no longer plays this role in the anti-revisionist movement.

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# The Workers' Advocate




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

Rates: 75¢ for single copy; \$4.50 for 6 issues; \$9 for  
12 issues by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).  
From distributor: 25¢ ISSN 0276-363X

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# The Workers' Advocate Supplement



Rates: \$1 for single copy; \$12 for one year by 1st class  
mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).  
From distributor: 50¢ ISSN 0882-6366

#### Letters:

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But it still has certain socialist achievements to its credit. It is still a country where the workers and peasants live without capitalist overseers, and it is the toilers' party which governs the country. And this had notable results.

During these years, in the capitalist world, the conditions of the workers and peasants have worsened. But in Albania, despite three years of bad weather and despite difficulties caused by fluctuations in the export market, there were no emergency measures against the masses. The growth rate was less than planned, but the conditions of the toilers continued to improve.

As well, Albania continued to stay outside the game of imperialist alliances. The Albanian people remained free of the threat of being cannon fodder for aggressive war.

### Obtained by Revolution

These things were not just handed to the Albanian working people as a gift from a benevolent ruler. To achieve them, the Albanian working class had to found its own party, the Communist Party of Albania (now called the Party of Labor of Albania). This party led the working people to win liberation by a revolution, won in armed struggle against German and Italian fascist occupiers in World War II and against local, Albanian exploiters.

Furthermore, the need for revolutionary vigilance continued after the war. The Albanian people had to face both the hostility of the capitalist countries and the treachery of the various brands of revisionism that emerged over the years--Yugoslav, Soviet, and Chinese.

The working class movement is a world movement. The workers all over the world must learn from the accomplishments of the workers of other lands. The history of the PLA shows the need of the workers to build a revolutionary party if they are to lead all the toilers in overthrowing their exploiters and oppressors. It shows the need to fight revisionism if the revolution is to be safeguarded. And it shows that the power of workers and peasants who rise in struggle, as the Albanian people, small in number, defeated the fascist hordes in World War II.

### New Times, New Tasks

But socialism is not something immobile and lifeless, established as something perfect on the day of revolution and unchanging thereafter. The

socialist system and communist parties must always move forward. They must correct weaknesses and the errors of the past. And they must face the new tasks of the class struggle that emerge over the course of time.

**The Struggle Against "Three Worldism" and Chinese Revisionist Betrayal**

In the middle 1970s the PLA was faced with a heavy task. At this time, revisionism resulted in the final degeneration of any communist or revolutionary character in the CP of China. The PLA was the only party with the prestige and the possibilities to rally the Marxist-Leninist movement on a world scale.

For a time, the PLA attempted to rise to this task. The 7th Congress of the PLA in November 1976 ushered in a period where the PLA sought to carry the banner against the "three worlds" theory, and a few years later the PLA openly denounced Mao Zedong Thought. Yes, there were serious and profound weaknesses in the PLA's stands. Nevertheless, it sought to put forward the path of revolution. For a time, the views of the PLA had a liberating effect for our Party and many other revolutionary communists and parties around the world. And, had the PLA continued on this path, and had it displayed the loyalty to Marxism-Leninism and to the revolutionary interest that is required to do serious self-examination of its own views, it could have continued to march forward.

But the struggle with Chinese revisionism did not bring immediate dramatic revolutionary victories around the world. The Marxist-Leninist parties faced a difficult process of reconstruction of their methods and theoretical basis. Moreover the objective situation facing the working class became even more difficult around the world. Yes, revolutionary outbreaks continue in various places. And yes, the world crisis is eating away at the foundations of capitalism and creating further conditions for revolutionary developments. But there is not the big turmoil of, say, the 1960's. Instead there is a world capitalist offensive.

**The PLA Falters**

In these conditions, the PLA faltered. It did not carry through the struggle against Chinese and Soviet revisionism. It refused to examine various wrong traditions that had exercised bad influence in the world communist movement from the late 1930's on. It continued to refuse to take a self-critical attitude to its own views; as a result, its views have degenerated and even resemble various of the "three worldist" views that it itself repudiated earlier. And it grew discouraged with the

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--A Disappointment for Marxist-Leninists  
Around the World**

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prospects of the Marxist-Leninist parties and disoriented in face of the difficult world conditions of the capitalist offensive. Today it fails to see the revolutionary factors in the world; and it has given up on any serious attempt to rally the revolutionary forces in the world.

Already at the 8th Congress of the PLA in November 1981 the PLA, and comrade Enver Hoxha's Report, had failed to deal with the needs of the time. We discussed the weaknesses which it showed at and following the 8th Congress in "Our Differences with the Party of Labor of Albania" and other articles in the March 20, 1984 issue of the Workers' Advocate. The influence of the errors of the PLA, the influence of the line from the 8th Congress, has been a contributing factor to the disasters that overtook a number of Marxist-Leninist parties in the last few years.

It is therefore unfortunate that, with respect to its views on the world situation, the 9th Congress of the PLA again failed to live up to the challenge of the time. It has continued the errors of the 8th Congress. In the past, the 7th Congress has inspired revolutionary deeds around the world. The 8th and 9th Congresses have had no fire. On the contrary, the revolutionaries around the world will have to give the PLA a transfusion of their own fiery spirit.

#### What is True Solidarity?

If the world Marxist-Leninist movement is to survive and thrive, it must repudiate the mistaken views expressed by the 9th Congress on the international situation and the orientation for the world's Marxist-Leninists.

And this is also the only stand possible for a true friend of Albania. The errors of the 9th Congress are a danger for the PLA as well as the rest of the world movement. The genuine comrades of the Albanian communists will not praise these errors. They will strive to help the Albanian communists and working class. No matter how vengeful the PLA leadership is against those who criticize its errors, this cannot justify servile yes-men. **Yes-men and sycophants are precisely examples of that bureaucratic rust that is the worst enemy of socialism.**

Only those are true friends of the Albanian workers and peasants and their Party who tell the truth fearlessly. Only those are true friends who both study the successes of the Albanian comrades and criticize the weaknesses.

Furthermore, the workers in each country must support each other by building the revolutionary movement in their own country. This is the only way to give powerful support to socialism and revolution in all countries. And it is impossible to

build a revolutionary movement according to the views put forward by the 9th Congress.

#### Abandoning the Revolutionary Standpoint on World Events

Let us examine comrade Ramiz Alia's Report to the 9th Congress. (Since the death of Enver Hoxha, Ramiz Alia has been the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the PLA. There does not appear to have been any change in the PLA's stands after Hoxha died. The PLA was already faltering at the 8th Congress, which comrade Hoxha presided over.)

Comrade Alia's Report is the most important single document of the Congress. It gives the general line of Albanian policy. (Page references to this Report will be to the official English edition published in Albania by the "8 Nentori" Publishing House.)

The most noticeable feature of the 9th Congress on the international situation is that the PLA has abandoned the task of rallying the world's revolutionary forces in general and the proletarian struggle for socialism in particular.

Oh yes, comrade Alia can give any number of general platitudes about **"The contradictions of capitalist society lead towards the revolution and socialism"**. He is full of official optimism and stereotyped expressions when talking about things in general. But these words turn to ashes in his mouth when it comes to analyzing the particular revolutionary events of the world and giving encouragement to the fighting forces. When it gets down to the actual tasks of the day, revolution flies out the window.

Comrade Alia is full of talk about diplomatic relations with this or that capitalist country or group of countries. But he mentions only a handful of struggles against existing governments and barely lists them. Here is his full description of three events agitating the world: **"The mounting discontent and protest of the masses in countries such as Haiti, the Philippines, Salvador and elsewhere led to popular revolts against reactionary regimes."** (p. 163) He praises the struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in one sentence (pp. 163-4); his official optimism misses the problem of the bulk of the resistance being utterly reactionary, medievalist, pro-Western imperialist bands. He mentions in individual sentences the struggle in West Sahara, the struggle of the Palestinians, the situation in Nicaragua, and the struggle against the South Africa racists. And that's it.

And comrade Alia's Report accurately reflects the preoccupation of the PLA. The Albanian Telegraphic Agency denounces the superpowers but rarely mentions any other world event. It is en-

thusiastic about Kings and Presidents, professors, rectors of universities, and bigshots, film exhibitions, trade agreements, ambassadors coming and going, ambassadors being appointed or replaced, ambassadors giving receptions, etc.

In the old days, that now seem so long ago, the PLA breathed fire about the world revolution. In 1978 the late comrade Hoxha wrote that **"Socialism is in struggle with capitalism, the world proletariat is locked in a merciless and continuous struggle with the capitalist bourgeoisie, the peoples of the world are in struggle with their external and internal oppressors."** (Imperialism and the Revolution, Part One, I, P.I. edition, p. 5) And he tried to analyze the tasks facing the revolution both in general and in particular areas.

But the PLA leadership has become disappointed. It has decided to play the game of "realistic" politics. It seems to be repeating over and over: we are not isolated! We praise the National Day of most every country in the world and send messages to the Kings of Spain, Norway and Sweden, and to Presidents by the score! We have trade agreements, attend diplomatic receptions, and professors around the world love to look at Albanian folk art! But as to the fierce clashes around the world, we no longer expect much from them.

#### **Diplomatic Relations Are One Thing, What One Expects of the Capitalist World Is Another**

We stress that we do not oppose or disapprove of the development of diplomatic relations between Albania and the rest of the world. On the contrary, we believe that this is a fierce front of struggle that a socialist country must engage in. But diplomatic relations are one thing; illusions about the capitalist countries are another.

For example, we see nothing wrong with Albania having diplomatic relations with Iran. But we believe that is shameful for the PLA to praise the bloodstained regime of Khomeini and to denounce the heroic workers and peasants who have stood up to the murderous repression of this regime. It was shameful for ATA to glorify this regime in such articles as "In the land of Iran" (ATA, March 4-6, 1984, reprinted as reference material on the PLA's stand in the Workers' Advocate of March 20, 1984.)

There was a time when the PLA, while actively pursuing diplomatic relations with other countries, talked of the dangers of the "imperialist-revisionist encirclement" of Albania. Comrade Hoxha wrote that **"...socialist Albania is a thorn in the side of the imperialists, revisionists and all the capitalists of the world, and not one of them, at any time, has wished her well. As regards their activity against us, it can and does differ in intensity,**

**kind, method and circumstances."** (How we should understand and fight the imperialist-revisionist encirclement of our country and the effect of its pressure on us in Speeches (1971-1973))

But now the impression is created of the sincere (from both sides) and equal relations that can be established with the capitalist world. All it takes is to remove the "thorns" that come from each side being concerned with the social system of the other. And then the era of struggle will be over; the era of peace and harmony with the capitalist world is almost upon us! This is why ATA pays such absurd attention to the most trivial details of diplomacy while ignoring most major world events.

#### **No Condemnation of European Imperialism**

Comrade Alia's discussion of the imperialist powers is typical. He condemns both superpowers, but he has toned down the opposition to the imperialism of the other European powers and Japan to a whisper. He talks of the superpowers and "other imperialist states", but he generally avoids mentioning these other imperialist powers by name. (The only exception is when he points to the contradictions between these imperialisms and the U.S., stating that "The economic crisis has greatly aggravated the contradictions between the big imperialist powers and groupings, the United States of America, Japan, the European Common Market and Comecon." (p. 145))

There was a time when the PLA had no such inhibitions about naming these other imperialisms. It bitterly denounced the French, British, West German, Italian, Canadian and other imperialisms. And it castigated the Chinese revisionists **"who consider Europe a continent of second world countries, which they put in alliance with the third world'... This grouping of capitalist states can never be for the general weakening of world capitalism. To say that such a thing can be achieved with the assistance and collaboration of the aristocratic bourgeoisie of Britain, the revanchist bourgeoisie of Western Germany, the cunning French bourgeoisie and the other big capitalist groups, is deplorable naivety."** (Imperialism and the Revolution, Part Two, I, "The Chinese View about the Unity of the Third World" is Reactionary", P.I. edition, p. 87)

But now these imperialisms have become nameless. And comrade Alia's Report is no fluke. It reflects the day-to-day stand of the PLA.

#### **European Capitalism Is Supposed To Have Become Civilized**

- Thus the A.T.A. reports from Albania also re-

frain from denouncing by name any imperialist country other than the U.S. and USSR. It prefers to talk of "other imperialist powers". Mainly, there is only general denunciation of capitalism, but no denunciation of the particular crimes of capitalist countries other than the superpowers.

#### Switzerland

Take Switzerland, a land of powerful companies, whose tentacles stretch around the world. Last year ATA reported on an article in the Albanian journal Bashkimi that noted with enthusiasm the 695th anniversary of the Swiss state and stated that **"The Swiss stand in the international arena has been appreciated by the Albanian people."** (ATA, July 30-Aug. 2, 1986)

But ATA has not yet reported on the poisoning of the Rhine River by Swiss chemical companies, although this is a major scandal in Europe. Nor has it reported on other crimes of the Swiss exploiters.

#### Austria

Take Austria. A few months ago ATA cited an article by Bashkimi on the occasion of Austria's National Day. It claimed that **"The stands of Austria in the international relations are appreciated by the Albanian people and government. The Austrian people and distinguished state and social personalities have expressed their respect for the principled policy of the PSR of Albania."** (ATA, October 26-28, 1986) Are we really to believe that Austrian and Albanian foreign policy support each other?

Meanwhile ATA has carried nothing about the world exposure of Austrian President Kurt Waldheim as a Nazi officer who committed atrocities in World War II in the Balkans. Nor is there other criticism of Austrian capitalism. Instead, they sent a National Day message to Austrian head of state Waldheim at a time when even some capitalist countries refrained from sending their diplomats to attend Waldheim's inauguration. (Same issue of ATA.)

#### West Germany

Take West Germany. At one time comrade Hoxha condemned the Chinese revisionists for their dealings with German reactionaries. He wrote: **"Now we may say that the policy of West Germany is assuming the features of totalitarian fascist revanchism, seeking to create its own spheres of**

**influence."** And he singled out Franz Josef Strauss, stating: **"The fascist group around Strauss, the Hitlerite generals, the powerful real revanchists of Bonn, are openly advertising themselves as China's closest allies."** (Imperialism and the Revolution, Part One, I, "The Strategy of World Imperialism", P.I. edition, p. 11) But last year ATA informed the world that **"The prime minister of Bavaria of the German Federal Republic, Franz Josef Strauss, arrived in Tirana on a private visit"** and he **"had a meeting with the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania"**. (ATA, May 21-24, 1986) Yes, this is the same Strauss. Strauss hadn't changed -- the Albanian stand on foreign relations had.

#### France

Take the French imperialists. ATA is full of talk of relations with France, of French visitors (but not of French Marxist-Leninists), of French culture, etc. But it does not denounce by name the crimes of the "cunning French bourgeoisie".

For example, ATA recently carried an article, "Who benefits from the conflict in Chad?", in which it appeals for driving "all foreign military forces out of Chad." (ATA, Dec. 28-30) Chad is a former French colony; it is still dominated by France; and France and Libya are the two countries with troops in Chad. But ATA speaks of the **"involvement of American imperialism and other imperialist powers"** and of weapons that **"may be of American production or of other countries"**. It even denounces the Soviet social-imperialists in the article, but France remains unnamed. And, for that matter, it is not that common for ATA to write about such current events at all.

#### Ideological Struggle with the Capitalist Countries?

Of all the countries with which Albania has relations, comrade Alia mentions the ideological struggle only with respect to Yugoslavia. He does state that **"The Yugoslavs do not like our social system and oppose it, indeed, with great heat. We say to them openly: we are for peaceful coexistence, but not for ideological coexistence."** (p. 199) At the Seventh Congress the PLA had not restricted this to Yugoslavia. It had opposed the view that **"to trade with a given country means to cease polemics, to refrain from expressing one's opinions on the policy pursued and ideology upheld by that country."** But now the ideological struggle with most capitalist countries has been allowed to grow so cold and stale that there is no need to say anything about it.

## Turkey

For example, with respect to the brutal Turkish regime, all comrade Alia says is **"Our differing political systems have not become obstacles to the harmonious development of relations."** (p. 197) Yes, indeed, ATA is full of stories about good relations with Turkey but has nothing about the struggle of the Turkish workers and peasants against barbarous oppression.

### European Capitalism Would Be Fine -- If It Only Were Independent

In fact, comrade Alia sets forth a whole plan to justify this hushing up of the crimes of European imperialism. What is necessary for progress in Europe? Is it the class struggle, the overthrow of the regimes of exploiters, and the carrying out of the socialist revolution? No, it is simply breaking links with the superpowers.

Comrade Alia pontificates that **"The disbanding of these alliances [both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty] is the fundamental condition for the elimination of divisions and splits in Europe and for the reduction of tensions not only on our continent, but throughout the world. The liquidation of them will create precisely that spirit of trust and understanding which is lacking in order to establish a fruitful and equal collaboration between the peoples of Europe."** (p. 188)

There was a time when the PLA spoke differently. It used to state, with respect to **"such imperialisms as the West German, Japanese, British, French, Canadian ones, etc."** that **"the countries of the so-called second world are the main economic and military support of the aggressive and expansionist alliances of the two superpowers."** (The Theory and Practice of the Revolution, Section II, Zeri i Popullit, July 1977, COUSML pamphlet edition, pp. 23-24)

But now the PLA has different tactics. It presents the plan that the existing regimes, the "main economic and military support" of the war blocs, can simply throw off the superpowers and then collaborate equally and fruitfully with each other. The "fundamental condition" is not revolution, but a diplomatic realignment of these powers.

And why should these powers do this?

Comrade Alia preaches to the existing regimes that **"Practice proves that the blocs [NATO and the Warsaw Treaty] lead to ever greater subordination of the partners to their leaders. The illusion that by entering into blocs their defence can be strengthened and their independence ensured has cost them [the existing European states] dear. For the sake of the co-ordination of policies and strategies, many countries have accepted major re-**

**strictions which have greatly limited their sovereignty on many capital questions, have hindered their independent activity in the international arena, and have put them in a position that they cannot freely decide their future themselves."** (p. 188)

Why, it was all a mistake. All you have to do is correct it.

Revolution has vanished. Class struggle has vanished. The talk of struggle against the superpowers is no longer put in the context of an appeal for revolution to overthrow the local ruling classes which have many crimes, including joining the big imperialist war blocs. Instead comrade Alia is appealing to these countries as they exist today, with the same social system, with the same ruling class. He all but says this in so many words.

He fails to distinguish between the ruling class and the working class in this passage; he just talks of the "partners" of the superpowers, and of the level of their "independent activity in the international arena", etc. Is it, for example, the French working class or the French ruling class which is the "partner" of the Pentagon and which direct French government "activity in the international arena"? And isn't French "independent activity in the international arena" such things as the French military intervention in the former French colony of Chad?

### Switzerland Again

In this regard, it can be noted that ATA carried an article entitled **"Switzerland condemns the domination of the two superpowers at the Stockholm Conference"** (ATA, Sept. 24-27, 1986) This presumably is an example of how to fight the superpowers.

### But European Capitalism is Vicious in Its Own Right

But even without the superpowers, European capitalism would remain a man-eating system of exploitation and oppression. It can be recalled that the French, German, Austrian, Italian and other lesser imperialists are quite capable of mass slaughter and atrocities on their own. Europe wasn't dominated by the superpowers in World War I and II, and yet the world was plunged into devastating wars:

Nor is it true that, for example, the NATO powers entered into alliance with U.S. imperialism out of some mistake. On the contrary, these alliances have served the interests of the lesser imperialists, and helped them maintain exploitation and oppression. Naturally, the local exploiters paid

a price for the domination of U.S. imperialism, and the time may come when they no longer will accept this domination. But a re-division of the imperialist spoils will not bring an end to "tension" nor bring an era of "fruitful and equal collaboration between the peoples of Europe."

### **The Dream of "Complete Democratization" of Relations**

What is left when one removes the revolutionary struggle for socialism? There is the dream of "complete democratization" of relations between states, which presumably could be created if only the domination of the superpowers was broken.

Comrade Alia states that the PLA and Albania **"are opposed to all practices of inequality, discrimination and great-state dictate in international relations. They are for the complete democratization of these relations. The states are not equal in regard to the extent of their territory, the number of population, their economic potential and so on. But this does not give the big and powerful states the right to special privileges in international relations, to positions of domination over the others."** (p. 190)

Naturally Albania must fight tooth-and-nail against attempts to impose on it. But look how comrade Alia discusses the issue. There are big and small countries, countries with a lot of people and countries with a few people, maybe even countries with mountains and countries with valleys, but there is no mention of the ruling classes of these countries. There is no struggle between socialism and a capitalist-revisionist encirclement, but only the struggle of the small innocents versus the big bullies.

There is not a class struggle, but simply abstract "rights" that spring from some unnamed source. So being big and powerful "does not give" a state the right to "special privileges". What is comrade Alia talking about? The big and powerful take their privileges by force; they are not deterred by sermons on ethics.

In the real dog-eat-dog world of capitalist international relations, force (military and otherwise) and constant struggle decides the status of countries. The capitalist diplomats talk morality to throw dust in the eyes of the working class that is to serve as cannon fodder. But comrade Alia puts forward a utopia in which the relations between different capitalist countries and between capitalist countries and socialist Albania can be "equal, sincere and fruitful".

He writes that: **"In our relations with other countries we do not lay down discriminatory or denigrating conditions. We do not seek to impose our way of life or our way of thinking on others."**

**But neither can we allow others to impose theirs on us. This, we think, is a universal principle for equal, sincere and fruitful relations between free and independent states."** (p. 189)

Incredible! The issue of different social systems can be thrown aside by the two sides simply deciding to follow the principle of not imposing on each other. Neither will the capitalists agree to give up attempts at imposing their system, nor can a socialist country agree to give up giving support to the international proletarian movement. But comrade Alia is drawing pretty pictures of what international relations can be, if only they were between truly independent regimes.

Is there a struggle between capitalism and socialism? Why, gentlemen don't discuss such things. As comrade Alia says: **"Respect for the internal social order and the international status freely chosen by different states and nations is an issue which cannot be a matter for discussion."** (p. 189) Well, it certainly isn't a matter of discussion in ATA, which stays as far away as possible from commenting on the crimes of various individual capitalist countries, except for the superpowers. But does this self-restraint really mean that the capitalists have given up their attempts to impose on Albania?

And what is this utter nonsense about an "internal social order and international status freely chosen by different states and nations." (emphasis added) Ruthless exploitation and oppression isn't freely chosen by the wage-slaves but are imposed on them with deception, with force, with brutality. The European and American capitalists "freely choose" to impose austerity on the workers, but this is imposed on the working class with all the weight of capitalist "law and order". The U.S. bourgeoisie "freely chose" to have slavery prior to the Civil War and to have a racist, Reaganite administration today, but this was hardly freely chosen by the slaves yesterday or the oppressed nationalities today. Comrade Alia's talk of a "freely chosen" social order presents international relations from the point of view of the freedom and independence of the state apparatus of each country, not the freedom of the toilers.

And comrade Alia goes on to paint one pretty picture after another of what relations between "free and independent states" will be, independent of their social system which is not "a matter for discussion".

Take trade relations. The PLA is for **"the development of trade and economic cooperation ... not only as a means for reciprocal economic benefit, but also as a valuable contribution to the normal development of international relations."**

Leaving aside the fact that the "normal development" of international relations under the pres-



ent system is precisely not the pretty picture comrade Alia is painting, but inequality, domination, exploitation, etc., the issue arises of how comrade Alia thinks this trade and economic cooperation will be achieved? Why, it's simple. It doesn't involve capitalism or socialism. Instead, **"...it is necessary that all countries should make trade exchange solely on the basis of reciprocal benefit and should struggle to ensure that they are not used as a means of pressure to impose political concepts and stands unacceptable to the partner."** (p. 190)

It is absurd to think that the monopolies, the multinational corporations, the imperialist governments will give up their striving to dominate. As long as capitalism exists, it will exploit. And, in exploiting, it will seek advantages, privileges, super-profits, domination. A socialist country can and must fight to have trade based on "reciprocal benefit" (i.e. so that it benefits from the trade and not just the capitalists). But there should be no illusion that the imperialist world market will become civilized and based on reciprocal benefit, the economic progress of everyone, and high standards of morality. It is always a dog-eat-dog struggle in the capitalist jungle.

#### **On the Nature of Alliances in Europe**

More generally, comrade Alia sets down a general principle that will ensure the achievement of proper relations among the European states and peoples. All that is necessary is that the various alliances should not be directed against third parties. He states: **"The alliances and friendships between states, naturally, are matters which are up to each of them to decide, just as collective security cannot be denied to those who want it. But what is unacceptable is when these alliances and friendships are directed against others, when the commitments made within them threaten the interests and security of other countries."** (p. 187)

Some of this is really bizarre. Comrade Alia claims that "collective security" is one of the acceptable forms of alliance between the present-day regimes of Europe. But, he says, this "collective security" should not be directed against some threat by a third party. Then what is being secured against? Invaders from Mars?

In fact, the key issue is how one determines the nature of alliances. Should one be concerned with the class nature of the states involved, with which class is the ruling class? Or should one restrict oneself to the fine words of some diplomats? Is it possible that the "cunning French bourgeoisie", the "revanchist German bourgeoisie", etc. will conclude beautiful alliances and friend-

ships which are not directed against third parties?

Can the capitalist regimes change their spots?

In another passage, talking about the superpowers, comrade Alia denounces illusions in the possibility of the imperialists changing their policy. He states that **"Historical experience has shown and the practice of our time confirms that both retreating in the face of the pressures of imperialists and illusions about the possibility of correcting their policy have caused great damage to the peoples' freedom, sovereignty and international security."** (pp. 151-2) Yet we are to believe that all the bourgeois states but the superpowers can simply change their policies, have alliances and friendships which are not directed against others, have good trade policies, respect the social systems of other countries, etc.

#### **A Non-revolutionary Stand**

Indeed, comrade Alia tells us that **"In any country security is a task which cannot be neglected."** (p. 187)

If the proletariat of an imperialist country is to admit the legitimacy of the security forces, the armies and police forces, of the ruling class, then how is it going to make a revolution? Such a proletariat will become simply a social-chauvinist pawn of the ruling class. To admit the "security" of the capitalist powers is to admit that one's perspective is confined to maneuvering within the confines of the presently existing system.

Perhaps someone will be found who says that comrade Alia believes that "security" can only be obtained by revolution. But if he believes this, he certainly doesn't say so. His passage on security occurs in the middle of the discussion of the current talks and meetings and alliances between the present-day regimes. It is part of his discussion on how to handle the present-day capitalist regimes.

Besides, "security" would hardly be the correct slogan for the class-conscious working class of Europe. For the Marxist-Leninists of Europe to take this as their battle cry, presumably along with normal trade and respect for all social orders, would be ludicrous.

Lenin dealt with variants of such slogans with respect to capitalist powers divided into two world groups of imperialist, plundering bourgeoisies. Then, as now, the European ruling classes were divided between various war blocs. He stated that "The Frenchman, German or Italian who says: Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded, betrays Socialism and internationalism, because such a man sees only his own country, he puts his own... bourgeoisie' above everything

else and does not give a thought to the international connections which make the war an imperialist war and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder." (The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, Ch. 7 - "What Is Internationalism?", Foreign Languages Press, Peking, p. 79)

Lenin pointed to the need to judge what class is waging the war and what was the politics behind the war. Can it be said that the slogan of "security" would help the European workers understand the class nature of the war threat hanging over the world? Or would it simply reinforce the "petty-bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness" of "my country is being wronged, that is all I care about"? (Ibid.)

### Asia, Africa, and Latin America

Although in this article we have dwelt on Europe, the PLA has always paid much attention to Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well as to Europe. And comrade Alia's view on the situation in these countries is also wrong. Much of this is developed in the section of comrade Alia's Report entitled "The Right of the Peoples to Be Free and Independent Is an Inalienable Right".

### Avoiding Class Characterizations

The first thing that strikes the eye is that he avoids class characterizations of the states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. He talks of countries and nations and "**undeveloped nations**" and "**developing nations**" (just as, in talking about Europe, he often talks about "developed" countries, etc.)

There was a time when the PLA denounced the preoccupation with such terms. At the Seventh Congress in 1976 comrade Hoxha had mentioned "**what is called the second world, the third world, the non-aligned world or the developing countries**" and went on to say that "**All these terms, which refer to the various political forces acting in the world today, cover up and do not bring out the class character of these political forces, the fundamental contradictions of our epoch, the key problem which is predominant today on a national and international scale, the ruthless struggle between the bourgeois-imperialist world, on the one hand, and socialism, the world proletariat, and its natural allies, on the other.**"

### Casting Aside the Class Struggle

Instead comrade Alia claims that the struggle for independence, in various forms, is the key issue in this whole, vast region. He does not talk at all of the struggle of the workers and peasants

against exploitation by the local ruling class. And there is no struggle for socialism at all. There is only struggle for independence and struggle for democratic rights against a few particularly barbaric regimes.

So comrade Alia talks of "**the great efforts of various peoples and nations to defend their freedom and independence and national wealth, to be sovereign in their own countries, to rid themselves of the foreign yoke and decide their own course of development.**" (p. 163)

There was a time when the PLA talked, to some extent at least, about the relation of the socialist revolution to these countries. It stated that "**In the countries which have won full or partial political independence, the revolution is at various stages of development... Among them, there are countries which are directly faced with the proletarian revolution, while in many other countries, the tasks of the anti-imperialist national democratic revolution are on the order of the day. ...**

**"But does this mean that such countries must remain at the national democratic stage and the revolutionaries should not speak about and prepare for the socialist revolution, for fear that stages may be skipped or cut out and someone may call them Blanquists?"** (The Theory and Practice of the Revolution, Section III, COUSML pamphlet edition, p. 35)

Now, however, all comrade Alia sees in the world are struggles for independence, for purer independence, or on democratic issues. Comrade Alia continues the passage cited above by stating that: "The wide extension and growth of peoples' liberation and democratic movements ... are now evidence of this." (p. 163)

As a matter of fact, all the revolutionary movements that comrade Alia endorses by name in his Report are classified by him as democratic or people's liberation movements.

But comrade Alia is not referring simply to the popular movement. His talk about the fight to defend "freedom and independence and national wealth, etc." is the ordinary "third worldist" rhetoric that leads to support of various of the bourgeois regimes that sit on the backs of the workers and peasants. It is hidden praise for various stands of the very regimes which must be the target of the revolution and which are also the local base of imperialist domination of the country. And this hidden praise comes out in various articles in ATA.

### Argentina

Consider Argentina. Last year ATA praised the Argentine government for allegedly pursuing "**a foreign independent policy**". (ATA, May 25-27,

citing a Bashkimi article on the occasion of Argentina's National Day)

In this way ATA endorsed the regime of President Alfonsín, who is involved in oppressing the workers for the benefit of the Argentine exploiters and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It goes without saying that ATA has not carried any news of the recent workers' struggles in Argentina.

For that matter, the PLA had a wrong assessment of Argentine policy even in the days of the war over the Malvinas or Falkland Islands (summer 1982) when there was a brutal military regime. The PLA supported the military adventure of the Argentine generals; it took the nationalist stand that the only issue that mattered was who owned these tiny islands. It did not consider or support the mass struggle against the generals, or notice that the generals launched the war in an effort to drown the mass struggle in nationalist fervor. The PLA did not say anything about the atrocities of the regime, such as the "disappearances" of over 30,000 people.

#### Mexico

And then there's Mexico. The Mexican government has been enforcing austerity against the working masses. It is sitting on a powder keg, and even the American bourgeoisie is worrying out loud about the mass anger that is building in Mexico and the prospects of a new revolution. But all that ATA could think of doing was to present the Mexican government as truly concerned for the masses. It recently carried an article entitled "Successes of Mexico in the Struggle Against Illiteracy" (ATA, Dec. 7-9, 1986). The Mexican students are protesting and striking against education cutbacks, while the PLA is praising the Mexican government for teaching the people to read and write.

The PLA has praised the stand of the Mexican government for some time. For example, Bashkimi took Mexico as one of the models of a country undergoing "independent development". It declared that the Mexican government opposes "the policy pursued by the two superpowers" and has "support for the liberation struggles of the peoples of the nearby regions against the dictatorial regimes and against American imperialism". (ATA, Sept. 14-17, 1983.) Among other things, this amounts to support for the bourgeois Contadora group, of which Mexico is one of the prime movers, although the PLA doesn't openly comment on Contadora one way or the other. (The Contadora group is comprised of the bourgeois governments of Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia. Posing as being somewhat critical of U.S. military intervention, it proposes its own method of putting out the revolu-

tionary fire in Central America.)

The PLA also promotes the internal stands of the Mexican government. The Bashkimi article praised "the measures for the progress and development of the country in various fields". And now the PLA has come out to support the Mexican government's education policies at a time when the students are rising against it. As well, the PLA has not carried news of or given support to any of the mass struggles breaking out against hunger and repression in Mexico.

#### A General Theory of History: Replacing Class Struggle with Petty-Bourgeois Nationalism

Thus the 9th Congress ruled out socialist tasks almost anywhere in the world. In Europe the basic task is supposed to be independence from the superpowers. In Asia, Africa, and the Latin America the basic task is supposed to be independence from foreign domination, mostly the superpowers and also some unnamed other powers. In the superpowers, the PLA can't really see what movement is going on anyway. And in the international arena in general, the task is supposed to be ensuring the "complete democratization" of relations between states.

Comrade Alia replaces the class struggle with the struggle for independence. He goes so far as to elaborate a petty-bourgeois nationalist theory of history. He has made a marvelous new discovery -- that the struggle for independence is the motive force of history. According to him, **"The right of peoples to be free and independent cannot be denied. It was born together with man and human society and has been an unvarying constant through all the epochs of history. The reactionary powers of all times have tried to deny the people this right, have tried to subjugate and rule them. Mighty empires were created, whole continents were transformed into colonies, various peoples remained enslaved for centuries on end, but the spirit of freedom and independence has never died."** (p. 166)

Thus the struggle for independence has supposedly been an "unvarying constant through all epochs of history." Is that so?

Marxist-Leninists have a different view of history. The first programmatic declaration to the world of communism began as follows:

**"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.**

**"Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time**

**ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes."** (Manifesto of the Communist Party by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels).

It is the class struggle, not the struggle for independence, that provides the key to all history since the beginning of the exploitation of person by person.

At one time the PLA also talked of this. It declared that **"In defining the present epoch, Lenin proceeded from the class criterion. He said that it is important to keep well in mind which class stands at the hub of one epoch or another, determining its main content, the main direction of its development, the main characteristics of the historical situation in that epoch, etc.'"** (The Theory and Practice of the Revolution, Section I, COUSML pamphlet edition, p. 8)

But Comrade Alia's new view on the historical role of the struggle for independence replaces Marxism by petty-bourgeois nationalism. It looks at history from the viewpoint of the building of nation-states, not from the viewpoint of the workers and peasants. It idealizes the present international situation and dreams of it being purified into a system of absolutely "free and independent" nation-states. (Here, of course, this "freedom and independence" refers mainly to the rights of the national government in relation to other countries, not to the rights of the working people, which is a matter of the internal "social order" and "course of development".)

Comrade Alia's new theory is also absolute nonsense. First of all, not even the class struggle is an "unvarying constant", but instead constantly changes in form and content from one epoch to another. And the same goes for the struggle for independence. The present type of nation-state only came into existence in the last few centuries. History has seen the struggle for independence of various entities (clans, tribes, kingdoms, nation-states, etc.)

Furthermore, history has also seen both the amalgamation of various entities and the struggle for independence. Amalgamation is just as important a concept as independence. Indeed, even a small people such as the Albanians could only be formed through the amalgamation of a truly huge number of smaller entities. Without such amalgamation, the struggle for the national independence of Albania would have been utterly impossible.

#### **The Communist Proletariat Supports the National Liberation Movement**

The class-conscious workers and communists understand the revolutionary significance of progressive national liberation struggles. They not

only oppose national oppression in general, but they make a special point of opposing the chauvinism, racism, and imperialism of their "own" bourgeoisie. It is their task to be the foremost champions of the liberation movements of the peoples oppressed by that bourgeoisie.

#### **The Movement Is Based on Internationalism, Not Petty-bourgeois Nationalism**

But the revolutionary proletarians also understand the importance of the amalgamation of peoples -- but not by force. One of the main reasons the communist proletariat supports the national liberation movement and the struggle against all national oppression is precisely to encourage the voluntary amalgamation of peoples. Furthermore, the revolutionary proletariat fights national egoism, the view that all that matters is what happens to the country in which one lives. This struggle against national egoism is one of the reasons why it is able to champion the national liberation movement.

The working class movement is a world movement, an internationalist movement. Proletarian internationalism, the world character of the working class struggle, is one of the greatest driving forces of the struggle for the new, communist society.

#### **The Balkans**

This replacement of the class struggle with something else shows up in one aspect after another of the views of the 9th Congress. Take comrade Alia's remarks on relations in the Balkans. What has created the problems in the Balkans? Does it have any relation to exploitation and the exploitative character of all the Balkan states except Albania?

Apparently not. Comrade Alia suggests that everything would be solved if the various regimes just adopted better policies towards the various minorities.

Undoubtedly the end of national oppression would be very useful for the proletariat. The class-conscious proletariat must champion the struggle against this oppression. But comrade Alia has nothing to say as to why this national oppression exists, and hence he has nothing serious to say as to how to fight it. He simply says that all that is needed is **"the political will and sincere desire for collaboration"** (p. 194). As he says:

**"History has mixed up the peoples of the Balkans a great deal, ... Ethnic minorities of each people are found within the state borders of other states. ... Good or bad relations between the states of our peninsula have been largely depend-**

ent on this treatment.' The big powers have played on these feelings in order to stir up quarrels...

"The situation in the Balkans would be greatly improved if the minorities were regarded not as a source of feuds and divisions, but as a bridge for unity and friendship between the peoples of this peninsula. Recognition and acceptance of their identity, respect for their language, culture and national traditions, and their spiritual links with their own nation would create precisely that atmosphere which the peoples of the Balkans need, the atmosphere of friendship and sincere collaboration, the strengthening of their freedom and independence, peace and their common security." (p.194)

Thus all that is necessary is to change how the ruling regimes "regard" the national minorities. The way to catch a bird is simply to convince it that it wants to be caught. That's the type of profound wisdom one can expect when someone gives up class analysis and the revolutionary standpoint.

#### Abandoning the International Marxist-Leninist Movement

One of the most disgusting features of the stand of the 9th Congress is its lack of concern for the international Marxist-Leninist movement. The PLA has lost its interest in these parties. It is more interested in parliamentary deputies, mayors, and rectors of universities. Where are big trade unions, big parliamentary groups, led by the parties? Instead of helping the parties at this difficult juncture, all the PLA can say to them is grow rapidly, become a major factor that even the bourgeoisie recognizes, and then we may pay some attention to you.

Comrade Alia devotes just three paragraphs to the other Marxist-Leninist parties. One of these paragraphs consists simply of lying boasts about how well the PLA treats these parties. Comrade Alia, leader of the same PLA which now rarely even mentions the other Marxist-Leninist parties in ATA, which pays far more attention in ATA to film exhibitions than to the building of the parties, boasts that the PLA "has given and gives the greatest attention to relations with the sister parties." (p. 178)

He boasts of adhering "to the principles of complete independence and equality, solidarity, mutual aid and support and internationalist collaboration." But in fact the PLA leadership now brutally attacks those parties which dare to criticize its stands. It has thrown its influence against the development of various forms of contact between the parties. And it displays only minimum solidarity even with those parties which it favors.

#### Platitudes

The other two paragraphs comrade Alia devotes to the world Marxist-Leninist movement also say little.

The first one simply says that the parties "are subjected to all-round, continuous, ideological and political pressure from the bourgeoisie and the revisionists, as well as from the pseudo-revolutionary and petty-bourgeois leftism'..." On the surface, this appears to be just a platitude -- the parties face pressure from the bourgeois and revisionist right and from petty-bourgeois "leftism".

And the next paragraph expresses official optimism that "...the sister Marxist-Leninist parties have achieved notable successes in their efforts to extend and deepen their links with the masses, ... to affirm themselves in political life and to extend the horizon of their revolutionary work." In fact, there has been a series of crises and fiascos among various parties since the 8th Congress of the PLA. The line of the 8th Congress, which has a good deal of the responsibility for this, has received a stunning rebuff in practice. But comrade Alia just shrugs and says everything is fine.

#### Behind the Platitudes

However, it should be noted that various parties that are close to the PLA, or influenced by the line of the PLA, are giving the view of going to the right in the hope of gaining mass influence rapidly. This is their conception of "becoming an alternative to power", "taking part in political life", etc. This is supposed to be the way to grow rapidly.

In this atmosphere, the statements by comrade Alia are like wishing mourners at a funeral many happy returns of the day. He is claiming that, aside from the bourgeoisie and open revisionists, the problem in the international communist movement is petty-bourgeois leftism (so move further to the right) and that this is the way to gain mass influence. These statements, and his Report generally, encourage liquidationist pressures on the parties and petty-bourgeois nationalist conceptions.

The PLA has also, for some time, given a particular meaning to its talk about the "complete independence" of the parties. It has opposed various forms of contact between the Marxist-Leninist parties as a violation of their "complete independence". Any criticism of the PLA's policies, or of the stands of those party leaderships that follow the policies of the 8th and 9th Congresses, is called a violation of the "independence" of the parties. It is not supposed to be necessary to deal with the content of the criticism; simply the fact that it was made is enough to condemn it. Public

discussion of the controversial issues in the international Marxist-Leninism movement is denounced as an attack on the world movement. Meanwhile the PLA places brutal behind-the-scenes pressure on the parties.

#### **Developments in the World Anti-Revisionist Movement**

You wouldn't know it from the Report, but there are important developments going on in the world anti-revisionist movement.

There is a struggle against liquidationist and petty-bourgeois nationalist influences, but the PLA actively opposes it.

And there are important struggles in various countries. For example, the Communist Party of Iran is organizing against the Khomeini regime, and it has armed forces in Kurdistan.

But the PLA has supported the Khomeini regime. Recently it has toned down its statements on Iran. But it has neither renounced its previous views nor expressed support for the heroic struggle of the Iranian workers against the barbaric, clerical regime. For example, ATA reported on Zeri i

Popullit hailing the 7th anniversary of the overthrow of the reactionary Shah of Iran. Zeri i Popullit praised the developments in Iran since then as "safeguard[ing] the victories from the intrigues of superpowers and reaction". (ATA, Feb. 9-11, 1986) (But some sycophants of the PLA pretend that the PLA never supported the Islamic Republic regime, while others are still denouncing those who oppose the Khomeini regime as supposedly 'trotskyites, pro-imperialists, etc.)

The building of the Marxist-Leninist parties is essential if the workers' movement is to surge forward. The PLA leadership's refusal to examine its own inadequacies in giving advice to the parties, and its abandonment of the Marxist-Leninist parties, is a dramatic sign of the nonrevolutionary stand of the 9th Congress.

But the class-conscious workers and revolutionary activists around the world will not abandon the struggle for socialism, for revolution, for organization. They shall not liquidate the movement in the face of the offensive of the bourgeoisie. The struggle continues. But it cannot be waged according to the mistaken views of the 9th Congress. It can only be successfully waged according to the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism. <>

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## DRAWING THE WORKING CLASS INTO THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT

### Speech at the Third National Conference of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA Fall 1986

Comrades,

The factories and other work places are the most important everyday arenas of the struggle between the classes. Here the workers are concentrated, disciplined by the production process, enlightened, and welded into organization by the more or less constant struggle with the employer.

Factory experience and the economic struggle are important for mustering the proletarian army and placing it on the threshold of a struggle for state power. Much can be learned in the industrial struggle: that capitalist society is based on exploitation; that underneath the fine words, there is a thinly concealed war between the classes; that the workers have the power to at least partially impose their will on the employers if they are united and organized; and a thousand and one other things.

#### **Taken by Itself, Economic Struggle Is Inherently Narrow**

But, while important, the factory experience is also inherently narrow. The working class will never be able to launch a determined struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, and to establish a new, socialist society, without a prior period of participation in all the important oppositional political movements in society at large, i.e., outside the work places. There are many reasons for this; let's just touch on four of the most important.

First, the economic emancipation of the working class requires a political revolution, the conquering of state power. The workers must intervene on the political questions as well as the economic. They face the task of transforming all aspects of society.

Second, no matter how vigorous, opposition to economic exploitation alone is not sufficient to generate the immense amounts of revolutionary energy that a socialist revolution requires. This energy and initiative can only be released when the workers take up the struggle against all aspects of their oppression. Militarism and war, racism, cultural blight, police tyranny and bureaucratic arrogance, nuclear madness and toxic waste poisoning, etc. all produce huge reservoirs of re-

sentment and bitterness among the working masses. This must be tapped through the political struggle.

#### **Imbue the Working Class with Revolutionary Theory and Communist Convictions**

Third, everyday factory experience alone is not broad enough to show the position of the classes on all issues; to demonstrate the class basis of the different political trends; to show the class struggle in its entirety. It cannot by itself give rise to and substantiate communist convictions and revolutionary theory. The theory of the socialist revolution is based on the scientific understanding of the entirety of world history. This cannot be learned simply from factory experience. This knowledge, the conclusions of Marxism-Leninism, must be brought to the workers by the Party's agitation and propaganda. And the workers can only take this theory up as their own through their direct participation and experience in both economic and political struggle, which confirms the correctness of the Party's line. Only this can bring the masses of workers to revolutionary conclusions.

#### **Leader of All the Oppressed**

Fourth, only the working class can take up the role of leader of all the oppressed people, only the working class can guide all their manifold struggles into a coordinated attack on capital. The socialist revolution itself will be the outcome of the combination of all the important streams of discontent of all the oppressed: their merger into a raging river that overflows all capitalist restraints and inundates all opposition. This merger can only be brought about, when the right conditions present themselves, through the leading, forceful role of the proletariat.

To play this role, the workers must of course be in these movements. Once awakened to class consciousness and determined to mold politics to its will, once participating in the political struggle not just as individuals but as a class fighting in its revolutionary interest, the working class will undoubtedly make sure that the anti-racist fight, the anti-war struggle, the resistance to the oppression of working women, the innumerable other struggles all target the capitalist class and increase the prestige of the revolutionary movement among the widest masses.



**Skeptical But Not Politically Active**

What is the situation today in this respect? In the main, the workers have not awakened to independent political activity. They usually provide numbers when major protest activities have been organized, but they participate under the leadership of the liberals, the trade union bureaucrats, and other pro-capitalist forces. Since few such activities have been organized lately, they have mainly been kept out of the oppositional political movements, except as scattered individuals. And they are not now bringing forward many rank-and-file activists who take responsibility for organizing the movement, and not just filling out the ranks of the half-hearted activities of the official leaders.

At the same time, there is a wide political ferment in the class. It is in the working class that one finds indifference towards and opposition to the various bourgeois hysteria campaigns. There is a generalized hatred for the Reaganites. There is distrust of the Democrats. And alongside this, there is a growing alienation from the trade union officials. This ferment is shown, among other things, by the positive reception we receive for our political leaflets and for the **Workers' Advocate**, and also by the level of political discussion in the work places.

**A Typical Example**

A typical example of this situation was this year's June 14 anti-apartheid demonstration of 60,000 in New York City. Workers from the food industry, hospitals, city government, and the Teamsters Union were there in large numbers.

One reason for this participation was that this was one of those rare occasions when a section of the trade union officialdom consented to call for mass participation in an anti-apartheid action. Yet, although the workers participated under the leadership of the trade union bureaucrats, this did not mean that the stand of the workers and the trade union hacks was the same. The contradiction between the capitulationist hacks and the rank-and-file workers would come out vividly at this action.

What did the union bureaucrats do at the action? Their stand on the anti-apartheid struggle is not sincere, and they oppose the revolutionary movement in South Africa. Their participation in the demonstration was just a posture used to prop up their credibility among the workers. So at the demonstration there was the usual reformist attempt to make the rally a platform for the Democrats and their proposals for pressuring Botha into some minor reforms.

'But the working masses do not have these sentiments. As the **Workers' Advocate** reported:

"...When the rally organizers tried to parade NY Mayor Ed Koch as a supporter of blacks in South Africa they suffered a fiasco. Koch is a notorious racist, well-known for unleashing a reign of police terror on the black people in New York. Thus when Koch tried to speak in Central Park, he was booed off the stage to the chants of Koch Go Home!"

"Various trade union bureaucrats were also booed. As well, the playing of the

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U.S. imperialist national anthem was loudly jeered. At the Harlem rally, sell out black congressman Charles Rangel received similar treatment." ("On the anniversary of the Soweto uprising -- 60,000 march against apartheid in New York", **Workers' Advocate**, July 1)

There was also a favorable reception to our literature, and slogans, as is to be expected.

### **A Contradictory Situation**

This is a contradictory situation. Large-scale workers' contingents generally don't participate in a political demonstration, except in those rare instances when the trade union leaders mobilize for it. This is as if workers will only agree with the politics espoused by the union bureaucracy. Yet when there is mass working class participation, there is a marked tendency for the workers to stomp all over the bourgeois respectability, patriotism, and pro-Democratic Party politics of these same leaders.

### **Mass Working Class Participation Strengthens the Oppositional Character of the Struggle**

This sentiment of the rank-and-file workers provides a hint of how large-scale participation of workers would strengthen the oppositional political movements today, such as the movements against apartheid and against U.S. aggression in Central America.

These two movements are faced with major problems. For the time being, the official leaders are mainly reformists and liberals beholden to the Democratic Party; that is, to imperialism. They do their best to impose a tame and cringing style on the movement, a style that reeks of the liberal bourgeoisie and of a petty bourgeoisie aspiring to respectability and positions from the ruling class. For example, there were the respectable mink coat type protests of apartheid, and the tame, explicitly non-militant "die-ins" and silent vigils of the pacifists against aid to the contras. The petty bourgeois reformists complain about the various crimes of imperialism, but trail behind the pro-imperialist liberals all the same, adamant against doing anything that would cause the Democrats to be upset with them.

Large-scale participation of the workers, not only as marchers but as activists, would strengthen these movements in many ways. In numbers certainly, but also in militancy, and in the moral authority that working class participation gives. It would provide the crucial base for challenging the liberal domination of the movement.

### **What Kind of Participation?**

Clearly, of course, the key question is not simply workers' participation, but precisely what kind of participation.

The workers spontaneously gravitate toward militancy, class consciousness, hostility to the demagogy of opportunists. The example of the N.Y. anti-apartheid demonstration is fairly typical.

But there is a big difference between a class groping around, spontaneously gravitating toward militancy, and a class that is standing up for class struggle, a class whose advanced section is putting forward its own conscious revolutionary goals. The more the workers' participation is based on independent, revolutionary politics, the more the oppositional character and striking force of the political movements are reinforced and sharpened.

### **How Is the Giant To Be Awakened?**

The question is posed: how is this to be accomplished in practice? It requires dedication and determination on the part of the advanced, conscious section of the working class -- and from the activists who have come to understand where the class forces are that can bring down the capitalist hell. What is needed are (1) a more favorable mood toward political action among the workers, so that the workers both demand mass action and bring forward their own rank-and-file activists; and (2) the continued all-round work of the Party to build up the workers' independent political movement.

### **The Objective Situation is Maturing**

A more favorable mood, a deeper felt desire for political protest, the determination to become organizers of the movement despite overtime, overwork, company spies, and a thousand and one obstacles, will certainly emerge in connection with the deeper economic crisis in the country, with the throwing of more people into impoverishment and desperation. As Lenin remarked, the inevitability of revolution stems from the fact that tens of millions of people say that "Rather than live and starve, we prefer to die for the revolution." (Report at the 5th All-Russian Congress of Soviets, Collected Works, vol. 27, p.518)

Here too it would be a simplification to just leave it at the economic factor. The economic decay of capitalism goes hand in hand with political crises. And the spontaneous turn of the working class to struggle is also inseparably connected with political factors: the youth again being shoved into Vietnam-style wars of aggression; the exposure of the government in connection with

racist outrages in Soweto or in Brooklyn; the police shooting down, say, strikers or unemployed demonstrators; and so on. The will to act, to protest, to demonstrate also matures in these life and death political situations. These are also spiritual life and death questions where the individual feels that there is no alternative to struggle, except that of losing all self-respect and dignity.

### **The Spontaneous Factor Can Not Substitute for Organization**

But a more favorable mood for struggle among the masses by itself solves little without organization. There are many examples of mass upsurges that came and went. The struggle to organize, the struggle for consciousness, determines a great deal of the fate of the mass clashes. The prior organization of a workers' political party to provide a core of somewhat experienced leaders is invaluable to provide organizational ability, theory, political understanding and depth, skill at combatting opportunism, tactical knowledge, and so forth. And this party we must build up now, even though the masses have not fully awakened. Furthermore, all the preparatory work of today, the mass struggles and the organizational work, is inseparably connected with helping to create a more favorable mood for struggle.

To the non-political person, it looks like Catch 22: you must not wait for the inevitable mass upsurge to build the party; but prior to the upsurge, few workers and activists come forward to take up consistent revolutionary work. And, on the non-political level, the only way party building is viewed is in terms of constant numerical growth.

But even in this period of ebb in the mass movement, the Party has been able to find ways to maintain contact with the masses. This has required the Party to sharpen its understanding of theory, of tactics, of agitational and organizational methods, and these lessons are precisely the ones that will be invaluable for the future struggle. The Party has gained a multi-faceted experience in the work to build up the workers' independent political movement in this difficult time. And it has also utilized this experience to help sum up the rich experiences of the mass upsurge of the 60's and early 70's so that the hard-won lessons of this period will not be lost.

It is through all this work that we are maintaining a network of ties to the workers, to the masses. And the ties and mass influence built now are important for the fate of the revolutionary trend that will be kicked loose later. When revolutionary sentiment rises among the masses, new advanced elements are buoyed up by the mass

sentiment and come forward to devote themselves to struggle. But everything is not peaches and cream.

There are dead ends, and there is an intense struggle against disorganization, against opportunist adventurers, against the dead hand of bourgeois theories and practices, even against the view that nothing can be done because the masses are too backward. Every new wave of workers and activists has to learn the lessons of struggle in their own way. But the work can go faster or slower. Without the preparatory work of today, the movement of the future will be left to the agony of learning everything from scratch, and it will suffer the pain of having to repeat again and again all sorts of avoidable mistakes. It will inherit nothing from the past but a mass of mistakes and opportunist prejudices to repudiate.

The flip side of this is that with preparatory work today, with the establishment of an unbroken tradition of struggle from the past upsurge to the future, the stage will be set for the fastest development of revolutionary organization, for the maximum extension of the revolutionary organization of the working class.

### **Bring Politics Into the Factories**

Our work to free the working class movement from bourgeois political influence focuses on the factories. This is the center of the work to organize the working class. This must not only be the scene of the economic struggle, but also a base for approaching the workers politically and organizing participation in the political struggle.

We cannot build a pro-party trend in the factories without drawing the advanced workers into the political mass movements. Economic agitation by itself is too narrow. Since the latter 1970's in particular, the Party has acquired much experience in drawing the workers at the plants into the Party's political campaigns, whether they be the anti-imperialist struggle, the anti-racist struggle, or agitation against the electioneering of the bourgeois parties. We also acquired a lot of experience fighting against the reactionary anti-busing movement.

### **The Anti-Racist Movement and the Building of the Pro-Party Trend**

For example, the Party fought hard against the racist anti-busing movement. Our work in this struggle put us in the center of the political motion in the working class in various cities when this issue was hot (Boston, Seattle, Louisville, and others). And there were times when this work was instrumental in gathering together the pro-party

trend.

In general, we have experience in the fight against racist attacks and how this relates to the building of the pro-party trend. The 1984 speech at the Second National Conference on our work at Roswell Hospital in Buffalo discussed the relationship between the city-wide anti-racist movement and the building of the pro-party trend. And the previous speech on the Noah Roisten case has already dealt with some of these issues in depth. [See elsewhere in this issue of the Supplement for the speech on the Noah Roisten case. The speech "On the struggle against national oppression at Roswell Park hospital in Buffalo" was printed in the Supplement of March 15, 1985.]

### In the 1980's

By the early 1980's, we had built up literature distribution networks in quite a few work places. We once again launched various local workers' newspapers and drew around them rank-and-file workers who suggested articles, participated in editing sessions, and so forth. Many pro-party workers showed activity with us in the anti-nuclear and anti-draft movements. In turn, this activity strengthened the work of the party and pro-party trend in the economic struggle at the work place.

This work suffered setbacks in the face of the large-scale layoffs, plant closings, and general dislocation of the economic crisis of the 80's. There is also the ebb in the political mass movement.

It has required the flexibility and steadfastness of the Party to counter these conditions. This Conference has discussed the methods our Party has used to maintain and improve contact with the masses and to stay at the center of the flurries of struggle that continue to break out including the present re-emergence of the strike movement. Nor has the Party accepted the betrayal by the opportunist leaders that has hamstrung the political mass movements in these years of the Reagan administration.

### Unceasing Political Agitation

And what is the situation today with respect to our efforts to draw workers into the city-wide political movements, such as the actions protesting South African apartheid and U.S. aggression in Central America? Just as our Party has refused to fold its hands in front of the dislocation in the factories, it has not backed down from revolutionary agitation in the face of the reformist sabotage of the political movements. All our branches have vigorous work going on the burning political issues.

This work is taken to the factories and work

places. Through leaflets, local newspapers, the distribution of the **Workers' Advocate**, discussions with active workers, and other means, the political issues are constantly brought to the workers. It's true that in the present conditions only a small number of workers in each city take part in open independent political action. But in the deadly political lull of recent years, this too is significant and verifies that contact is being maintained with the masses.

Now, it's understood that this work is difficult. It's not stretching it too much to joke that the first problem in some cities is how to find the political movement. Of course, the situation varies from city to city and in different movements.

But along a broad front, the branches of our Party are defying these and other difficulties. We are persisting in the crucial work of politically mobilizing the working class. A few examples of this follow.

### An Anti-Apartheid Action

For one thing, our Party has called its own actions. It is true that today the workers are quite hesitant to come out to activities in defiance of the official leaders. But the work of a political trend can either reinforce this hesitation or help break through it.

One example was in the anti-apartheid solidarity movement where we organized a march and rally in a working class community and centered work on a factory where the Party had strong influence in the economic struggle. The leaflets of the Party in preparation for this action were well-received, and workers put anti-apartheid stickers up on the production line -- a sort of moving industrial marquee. The community too was quite supportive. Afterwards, when comrades approached contacts in the community about the seventh anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution, some of them suggested another demonstration as part of the campaign against U.S. aid to the contras.

About a dozen youth from the community came out to this march. Some other people from the community came to the rally. Yet the workers from the factory didn't come (except for one who came on the wrong day). On one hand, the workers in the factory and the community were excited about the action. But on the other hand, the factory supporters of the Party's work were not yet willing to come to an independent action, organized outside the channels of the official misleaders and trade union bureaucrats.

What was the balance sheet from this action in terms of drawing the workers from the particular factory into the political action? Vulgarly speaking, it was a shutout. But in fact it helped estab-

lish the idea of political action in the community, and it carried the anti-apartheid movement into the factories where our Party works. It was a link in the chain of consistent agitation in the working class. Meanwhile the reformists and liberals in the anti-apartheid movement were doing nothing in this city but activities aimed at promoting the prestige of the mink coat crowd.

### **In Support of the Nicaraguan People**

Another good example of the Party's independent actions took place this year in Chicago for the July 19 anniversary of Nicaragua's revolution. The comrades organized two simultaneous propaganda marches through working class areas to a park for a rally. These marches created some excitement and had positive effect along their routes. A number of workers from the community attended the rally. One Salvadoran had been at an opportunist-organized picnic earlier that day, and he was incensed at what he described as their "selling out of the revolution and of the FMLN".

One of the significant things was that pro-party Mexican workers participated in the action and were able to directly experience the progressive sentiment of the American masses against Ronbo's imperialism. It is extremely important for the workers of different nationalities to be brought into the general movement as well as taking part in the revolutionary movement of their nationality. There is no other way than through political action for such activists to see the class struggle that exists in this country. And if each nationality is kept in its own shell, there is ultimately no pro-party trend.

### **Independent Contingents in Reformist-Dominated Actions**

The previous two examples concern actions that the Party called. But there are also opportunities to draw the workers into the political movement when the reformist coalitions call demonstrations -- provided these actions have at least something of a mass character. Of course, the point here is not to organize the workers behind the reformist politics, but instead to unfold revolutionary work that appeals to the progressive sentiment of the masses at these actions. Our Party puts together anti-imperialist or other progressive contingents for such demonstrations all the time.

Our Party does not seek to keep the workers ignorant of the existence of the opportunists, but to have the workers understand the struggle of trends and take a conscious role in it. Besides organizing contingents at reformist-called demonstrations, we have also brought active workers to

various opportunist-called meetings of interest so that they can see for themselves what the situation in the left is today.

### **Use Every Occasion to Develop the Political Interest of the Workers**

There are other ways to draw the workers into politics in the prevailing conditions, even if at a low level. In connection with our Party's various delegations to or visits of Nicaragua, good use was made of slide shows in living room presentations suited for workers who would not go so far as to attend a much more formal, public meeting. Less-close contacts were visited and shown photographs of the tour. These seem like only a low level of activity, but carried on unceasingly they help develop the political consciousness of our contacts and develop our political ties during this period. Comrades in one area have been using a VCR to show contacts various videos, such as one from Nicaragua and one on the Spanish Civil War.

### **Bring the Movement to the Workers**

As well as drawing the workers into the movement, we can sometimes succeed in bringing the movement to the workers. In this category are some of our propaganda marches in working class neighborhoods. There are other examples as well.

A particularly interesting demonstration of this type occurred in Berkeley on June 17 this year. (The July **Workers' Advocate** reported on this in the article "Bay Area activists take militant anti-apartheid actions to the masses".) There was a "BART alert" called by activists around Campaign Against Apartheid (CAA). A debate took place inside CAA on what kind of demonstration to have.

It has become somewhat traditional for these "BART alerts" to march around the commercial district of Berkeley and onto campus. Our comrades however argued for a break from this tradition in favor of a march through a poor, working class neighborhood of Berkeley and north Oakland. After much debate the majority of the new wave of activists in the CAA decided to go among the workers. As a result, 150 activists took to the streets with such slogans as "Revolution yes! Apartheid no! Death to apartheid blow by blow!" Slogans like this were shouted non-stop for a number of miles. You can imagine the amount of enthusiasm and excitement this caused in the neighborhood: families on porches with clenched fists, youth stopping a soccer game to line up at the fence and cheer, hundreds of our leaflets passed out along the route.

Perhaps one of the most significant things is the way that this action concretely demonstrated

to the new activists that the path forward for the mass movement is precisely to appeal directly to the working class with revolutionary politics. Such experience of warm response from the working class blows away tons of anti-working class slanders used by social-democrats and others to try to keep the activists' hopes pinned on getting liberal charity from the Democrats in Congress. And it showed how to use militant mass actions as an important means of broadening and deepening the movement.

### **Pressures to Downplay Political Agitation**

These are just a few examples.

This work can only be maintained by remaining vigilant against the pressures to downplay the work of drawing the workers into political struggle. Even the present re-emergence of the strike movement can add to these pressures. The political ferment, the hatred for Reagan's policies, while widespread, is generally not red-hot; that is, it is not at the point where workers are anxious to take militant political action in defiance of the class collaborationism of the trade union bureaucrats and reformists. At the same time, fights against concessions are becoming more numerous.

Adding these two things up, the economic front can tend to look more exciting. This acts as a pressure toward narrowing our work in the factories to only the economic struggle. If we don't stay real conscious of this, then we could be sucked in the direction of narrow trade unionism. All sorts of problems could then arise: from forgetting the role of the Party in the work; and forgetting the role of political agitation; to searching for a magical organizational form that is supposedly all that is needed for big successes in organizing.

### **Conditions Always Exist for Political Agitation**

It is important to remember that the conditions always exist for political agitation of one sort or another. And political agitation is not only an essential part of any serious political struggle, but it is also a form of drawing the workers into the political movement, even if at present the workers often stay at the lower level of activity of not combining the reading and discussion of leaflets with mass political actions and independent organization.

In the last few years, we have become more adept at tapping into the existing political ferment. And even the style of our leaflets has definitely improved. There is, for instance, use of expressions that the workers themselves use, which makes the literature more accessible to them. When the neo-revisionists talked about how they

used "the workers' language", they were using this phrase to forbid revolutionary politics and, in reality, to speak only the language of vulgar trade unionism (not to mention vulgarity itself). They were so consumed with making themselves more acceptable to one and all that they forgot Marxism and the revolution. We refused to do this. We knew that when the political foundations are weak, and you start becoming infatuated with questions of style, you are quickly lost in the wilderness. Our concern was to re-establish a communist, a Marxist-Leninist tradition in the U.S. first and foremost, and, only on this basis could one find a way to make revolutionary politics more accessible to the masses, gradually cut down on the rhetorical buzzwords, utilize more popular expressions, and so on. And so, in a way, the increasingly popular style of our agitation in the last few years is one more vindication of these views and the fight against neo-revisionism.

What political agitation requires is sensitivity to the mass political currents. Then one will always find that there is some current Reaganite campaign to denounce, such as the bombing of Libya or repression in the name of drug testing. But there are other, perhaps less obvious openings as well.

### **Combining Anti-Imperialist Agitation with the Economic Struggle**

Let me provide an example from the large shipyards in Seattle. For a number of years, virtually all of the work has been Navy warships. Here, where the workers' everyday life is connected to imperialist war preparations, there is also consistent interest in anti-imperialist agitation. Whether it was the anti-draft agitation of 1980 or the exposure of Reagan for bombing Libya last Spring, the distribution of leaflets is generally fairly high. And this is in the war industry itself. (To those who equate industrial workers with right-wing red-necks, they'd think the figures were astronomical...).

But there is another angle from which to try to tap into the anti-militarist sentiment. The Navy has been actively and openly pushing for wage concessions so that the shipyard capitalists can retain the same or better profit levels while the Navy gets more warship for the buck. This economic struggle, the exposure of the role of the Navy in the concessions offensive, has been used as a springboard for developing agitation directly against the imperialist political purposes of these Naval warships.

The combination of the economic and political agitation in this war industry is particularly useful for showing to the more politically backward section of workers the anti-working class nature of

U.S. war preparations, using the economic struggle as a starting point. (Of course, whenever possible, we spread the news of upcoming anti-war and anti-intervention demonstrations in the shipyards. The actual turnout has been very low, but important ideas are communicated in the process of calling on the workers to participate.)

### **It Is Communism That Gives the Working Class Its Political Voice**

Comrades,

We are the only organized, nation-wide political force in the U.S. that concentrates on drawing the working class into political activity in its own, revolutionary interests. Only the supporters of class struggle, of whom the revolutionary Marxist-Leninists are the core, want the working class to bring forward its own activists who struggle and organize in defiance of the pro-capitalist forces.

The pro-capitalist forces simply want the workers to be cannon-fodder in wars, voting fodder in elections, and servile camp followers who fill out the numbers of bourgeois rallies. They don't want the working class to have its own voice, for this would spell the beginning of the end for them. They don't want truly mass working class participation in the political movement, because the workers would tend to go out of their control. They organize to keep the militant working class out of the movements; for the time being, they rarely even organize events at which the working class is recruited in any numbers.

The AFL-CIO basically just wants the workers to vote Democratic every two or four years. The black bourgeois politicians try to confine the black workers to being concerned only with getting the privileges, posts, and contracts for the upper strata; nowadays, only rarely do they call for the masses to come to sizeable demonstrations. Meanwhile the social-democrats and reformist liquidators try to eke out an existence by currying favor with the labor bureaucrats, the liberals, and the black reformists.

The coalitions, formed by the reformists and liberals occasionally appeal for worker participation. But when the reformists talk of "labor" they are generally thinking about the labor bureaucrats. They only want the rank-and-file workers for numbers, while they are excited over their contacts with the trade union bureaucrats. They demand that the coalitions and demonstration be acceptable and useful to the corrupt and imperialist labor traitors in the AFL-CIO, to the cynical imperialist politicians, to the church officialdom, to the liberal bourgeoisie of every stripe. And then the reformists (including the would-be Marxist liquidators) congratulate themselves for having the right tac-

tics for organizing the "workers".

Things have gone so far that the reformist-dominated actions usually display a lack of interest in any serious leafleting of factories and working class communities. Sometimes it is not even felt necessary to publicize the actions to the masses at all.

But even when the reformists do organize workers for some actions, they seek to keep the workers politically enslaved. This can be seen in the political content of the actions called by these coalitions, in the speakers on the platform, in the urge for respectability and big-name liberal figures, in the plans to lobby Congress for some Democratic Party plan. No, rather than encourage the working class and activists to rise up in struggle, it is much more to the liking of the reformists to gut demonstrations of all oppositional politics.

### **Utilize All Actions With a Mass Character**

Nevertheless it is possible for us to take part in such demonstrations, that is, those with a mass character, in a way that helps increase the political consciousness of the workers. We unite with the sentiment of the masses to oppose the crimes of the bourgeoisie. And these actions can be important arenas for clarifying the difference between class struggle and reformism to the workers and to thus provide them with important schooling in how to fight for independent politics.

### **Soweto Day 1985 in Seattle**

An interesting example took place on Soweto Day, June 16, 1985, in Seattle. The reformists had called a demonstration to march through the middle of the black community. It sounds rather militant, and it was a high point of their activity, but it was basically the result of a factional fight between different sections of reformists. These groups had been holding typical mink coat protests for half a year by then. But in the struggle between the different reformist liquidators as to who should control the anti-apartheid movement, an attempt had to be made to appear to have something to do with the community. This was particularly because the spring of '85 had seen the outbreak of campus actions across the country, many of which went beyond the tame confines the liberals had in mind.

So the reformists called for a Soweto Day march through the black community. But this did not mean that they wanted to concentrate on organizing the masses for such a demonstration and to give militant appeals? Heavens no! Can you imagine having spirited black workers demanding revolutionary change? Such a thing could get out

of hand! This would throw into jeopardy all the years of reformist "united front" work to become respectable in the eyes of the Democratic Party locally.

The result was that the reformists had little interest in doing much public work for the demo, with two exceptions: 1) they posted up a few announcements; 2) they arranged for the march to begin at the main church of the black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, and for the keynote speaker at this rally point to be the Church's pastor, a reformist political figure in the black community.

We however intended to use the occasion to let the masses express their militant anti-apartheid sentiment and to render support for the revolutionary struggle in South Africa. We mobilized to the maximum. We published a leaflet with a stunning poster on the back. We did an impressive plastering of sections of the city with it. We ran the leaflet through our usual areas: factories, door to door in the black community (including the key high school), the University of Washington and a community college. We sought to draw our contacts into all this work.

Meanwhile, the reformists (including the "Marxist" liquidators) were fuming at all this and denouncing us (behind our backs) to all who would listen -- for trying to prevent people from coming to the demonstration! How is this? We had a 1/4" square hammer and sickle on our poster! (It can be noted that the hammer and sickle represents to those resolute "Marxists" of the "Line of March" organization and other liquidators what the Cross does to Dracula). Of course the real reason for their frenzy was not that the workers are afraid of the hammer and sickle, but that the liberals and Democratic Party politicians are. They feared that our agitation in support of revolution in South Africa, and its response among the masses, would damage their own carefully constructed alliance with the liberals, the black bourgeois politicians, preachers, and other reformists. The coalition of course, "delicately" avoided any reference to "overthrowing" the South African racists or "revolution".

And what happened at the action? Something like 300-500 people came to the demonstration. The black preacher did not call on his parishioners to attend the rally, and hundreds of them in their three-piece suits and fur coats walked right past the rally with their noses in the air! Then, the preacher's speech focussed on denouncing, not the racists, but communism (!) in South Africa, railing that blacks did not need communists telling them what to do! So the reformists subordinated everything to pleasing the black preachers, who then kicked them squarely in the teeth for their trouble.

On the march itself, the militant and revolutionary slogans introduced by our Party were the ones taken up with the most enthusiasm by the marchers. The same goes for our picket signs. The march was pretty militant. The masses along the route were enthusiastic.

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**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE  
THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA  
FALL 1986**

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Rank-and-file action against the Reaganite offensive  
The Democratic Party is the other face of Reaganism  
Draw the workers into the political movement  
Build the party in the work places  
Build the workers' press  
The historic mission of the working class --  
    putting and end to capitalist society  
Against the union bureaucracy  
Against reformist liquidationism  
Solidarity with the revolutionary struggles in  
    Central America  
Greetings to the Marxist-Leninist communists of  
    the world  
On differences in the international Marxist-Leninist  
    movement  
Message to the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua  
    (MAP-ML)  
Message to the Communist Party of Iran  
Message to the Communist Organization-Workers'  
    Policy of Portugal

in **The Workers' Advocate** of November 15, 1986,  
vol. 16, #11

**SPEECHES FROM THE CONFERENCE**

\*Trends in the strike movement  
\*Speech on work in the 1985 Chrysler strike  
in **The Supplement** of December 10, 1986  
  
\*Introduction to the Third National Conference  
\*Building an in-plant distribution network  
in **The Supplement** of January 20, 1987  
  
\*The Defense of Noah Roisten  
\*Drawing the Working Class into the Political  
    Movement  
in this issue of **The Workers' Advocate Supplement**

And see coming issues.

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### In Closing

One final point. In the last few years, at a time when the political movement has generally been held in check, nevertheless, the party's political work, its agitation and tactics, have advanced in several directions. Perhaps one could say that because the movement has been down, we have had to advance our agitation and tactics.

One can note more sophistication in combining higher and lower forms of struggle. There is also more skill in popularizing the style and language of our leaflets, making them much more readable

for the workers.

And we are learning to maneuver better, so as to unite with the militant aspirations of the masses despite the diehard opposition thrown up by the reformist and class-collaborationist leaders. To build a pro-party trend, the workers must have experience with the treachery and overall vileness of opportunism. We are improving our skill at using a variety of tactics that give the workers this experience.

All this work to draw the workers into the political struggle are indispensable preparations for the future revolutionary upsurge. <>

## THE DEFENSE OF NOAH ROISTEN

Continued from the front page

used the anti-busing movement to organize numerous extremely vicious, racist gangs. And these gangs have continued to operate with the full cooperation of the police and authorities. In the past ten years over a dozen black workers and youth have been murdered by these gangs. And it is hard to find a black person in Boston who has not been physically attacked or threatened by these cowardly racists.

There is considerable sentiment among the masses on this question. The youth, in particular, have a healthy spirit of resistance to the racists. Over a period of years, this has forced the racists to retreat somewhat.

### Black Bourgeoisie Stonewalls Every Attempt to Organize Mass Resistance

But the bourgeois community leaders and politicians have stonewalled every attempt to organize mass resistance to, or even protests against, the racist violence. Four years ago, when William Atkinson was murdered by a gang of racists in the Savin Hill area, the District Attorney went to outrageous lengths to let the racists off the hook. He even invented the absurd theory that William Atkinson was hit by a train, not beaten to death, even though the physical evidence refuted this theory. The masses, both black and white working people, were outraged. But the black bourgeoisie refused to organize a single protest. The liberal white ministers actually made more noise about the murder of William Atkinson than did the so-called leaders of the black community.

So naturally, when Noah comes along and successfully resists the racists, the last thing the black bourgeoisie is going to do is rally to his defense. That would give too much encouragement to mass resistance. It would upset their plans for deals with the white bourgeoisie. It would disrupt their drive to set up their own place in the capitalist sun.

Shortly after he was arrested, Noah's family approached the NAACP to see if they would provide legal assistance. But the NAACP demanded \$50,000 before they would even consider the case. Such was the typical response of the black bourgeoisie towards the defense of Noah Roisten.

### And the Reformists?

Not only did the black bourgeois organizations refuse to help Noah, but the reformists and liquidators, those "left" slaves of the liberals, have

also, in general, shied away from the case. Ten years ago the neo-revisionists [Maoists and others who postured as if they were against revisionism and revisionist capitulation to the bourgeoisie] would have been in a rush to form a defense committee for Noah. But today -- in the period of Reaganism and revisionist liquidationism -- they consider even a defense committee to be in the way of their opportunist maneuvering in the liberal-labor marsh.

### The Black Workers Had a Different View

Yet, while the black bourgeoisie and the "left" camp followers of the liberals turned away from Noah, among the black working masses there was tremendous support for the kind of stand that Noah took. Thus there was a vacuum in the leadership of the movement which provided an opening for our work to develop.

### Years of Party Agitation Against Racist Attacks

Of course, we would not have been able to take advantage of the situation had the Party not already had its own strong, independent agitation on the anti-racist front and had we not established strong ties with the workers, in particular with the transit workers.

Since the mid-seventies our Branch has maintained a very vigorous program of agitation on the anti-racist front in Boston. It has participated in and promoted the major battles against the racist offensive. This included such struggles as the fight to integrate Carson Beach, the trouncing of some South Boston Marshals when they attacked our meeting for the Montreal internationalist rally in 1978, and the routing of the KKK in 1982. This work has won the Party a lot of respect among the workers. And it has played an important role in the development of our work and contacts in the work places.

Thus vigorous revolutionary agitation on the anti-racist front is not something new for our Party. The revolutionary agitation that we have done historically put the Party in the position to seize on the Noah Roisten case and to develop a campaign of agitation around it.

### Building the Party's Ties Among Transit Workers

Equally important to the building of defense for Noah was our extensive ties with workers from the MBTA (Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority).

In 1980 the Boston Branch took a decision to

develop work among the public sector and service workers. These workers form the largest section of the class in the city of Boston. As well, there are almost no factories of significant size inside Boston. So the public and service sector workers are especially important. In 1980 we began investigating the motion of the public sector workers, including the MBTA workers. And we developed a large volume of agitation on their struggles, which flared up in 1981 and 1982.

We paid particular attention to the transit workers. The T is important not only because it holds significance for the economic struggle, but also because it is one of the places where the anti-racist struggle is sharpest in the city. At the same time, both the management and the union on the T are closely tied the Democratic Party machine and are extremely racist. In addition, about eighty percent of all racist attacks in Boston are carried out on T property. Numerous black workers have been physically attacked on the job. Nearly all workers have witnessed or broken up racist attacks.

Our work among the transit workers went fairly well from the beginning even though our distribution of literature was limited by the physical dispersion of the transit workers. Our agitation for the economic struggle -- developed against the complete and open sellout by the union officials -- was quite popular. Even more popular was our anti-racist agitation. By maintaining a vigorous and timely program of leaflet agitation on economic and political issues, and by carefully guiding the day-to-day struggle among the transit workers, we were able to develop ties with a number of militant transit workers fairly rapidly.

#### Ties With the Militants

These militants proved to be quite valuable in deepening our agitation on the anti-racist front. For example, in the spring of 1983 our T contacts gave us important information to expose the cover up the government was carrying out to let the murderers of William Atkinson off the hook. The T militants also provided us with the information we needed to deepen our economic agitation.

By 1985 we had built up a large contact network of workers who we could see outside of work. And there were many more who we could distribute the **Boston Worker** to on the job. A few of the militants would also help us distribute the **Boston Worker** intermittently. And every once in a while one of these workers would go to a demonstration with us. Nevertheless, in no way could we say that these contacts constituted a stable pro-party network or group.

Through these contacts we have had eyes and

ears everywhere. And we have been able to lead a number of small struggles on the job. For instance, in January of 1985 we initiated a petition demanding the reinstatement of a black T worker (who was then pregnant) who had been suspended for defending herself from a racist attack. Within a week, with the help of our party contacts, we had nearly half of the workers on the Red Line sign the petition. The management was forced to back off and re-instate this worker. We quickly reported this victory in the **Boston Worker**, and a number of workers helped us circulate the paper.

It was the extensive contacts and influence among the workers on the T, developed through our straight-up Party agitation, that enabled us to initiate and broaden the campaign to defend Noah Roisten.

#### T Workers Come to the Party to Expose the Racist Cover-up

It was on the evening of June 1, 1985 that

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Noah and his friends were attacked by a racist gang and Noah killed Joseph Hennaghan in self-defense.

The bourgeois media immediately launched a campaign to slander Noah and to paint up Hennaghan, a punk with a violent history, to be a saint. They even tried to make it appear that Noah and his friends had launched a racist attack on Hennaghan.

But a number of T workers had witnessed the racist attack. Pieces of the truth began to circulate among the anti-racist T workers. As the word spread, militant workers sought out Party comrades. From our leaflet agitation and from the anti-racist struggles we had led on the job, they knew our Party was the staunchest fighter on the anti-racist front.

Alerted by our contacts that a railroad job was being done on Noah, we proceeded to investigate what had happened by talking to the workers who had witnessed the incident. Based on the information that these workers provided us, we were able to come out with an issue of the **Boston Worker** defending Noah even before we were able to establish contact with Noah or his family.

#### **The Party Carries the Ball in Defense of Noah**

Through the summer and fall of 1985 the ball was carried by the Party directly. We continued to issue leaflets periodically. We fought for speeches to be given about Noah's case at anti-apartheid rallies held around the city. In the Party's October 1985 anti-apartheid/anti-racist campaign, we made the defense of Noah a center piece of the agitation and the demonstration that we held.

Initially, Noah's family did not have much idea of fighting, but they were happy to see that we were supporting Noah. We invited family members and T workers to participate in the city-wide anti-apartheid actions and in our demonstration. While there was interest, at that point none actually showed up. Nevertheless, our militant public stand in defense of Noah was having some effect in raising the family's confidence that a struggle could be waged as well as preparing the ground for wider agitation among the T workers. When a friend of the family excitedly told a family member about this leaflet she had got in Central Square about Noah, the family began to have some idea of the effect that our policy of going to the masses was having.

#### **The Possibility Opened Up for a Defense Benefit**

As part of our wide-scale agitation, over the winter a comrade began going to a social club and

bar frequented by black T workers. This club is not only a major social center but also a semi-political center among black transit workers. It is also a well-known social center in the whole black community.

In his discussions among the workers at the club our comrade noticed a lot of interest in the Noah Roisten agitation. He suggested to some of the club members that they hold a benefit to raise money for Noah. The worker members of the club, including one of the members of the executive board, were excited for this idea. However, some club members opposed having an event, arguing that the club should just be social and not deal with controversial issues. In addition, a number of black T cops who frequented the club were upset with the idea of taking a stand in favor of Noah, and they defended their fellow cop who arrested Noah. But overwhelmingly the sentiment was in favor of the benefit.

After considerable debate among the leaders of the club they finally decided to allow us to use the hall for a benefit, free of charge. But they did not want to sponsor a benefit in their own name. It doesn't seem that this was a compromise decision. Rather, it appears that this is what the militants meant all along by sponsoring a fundraiser.

#### **Organizing the Fundraiser in Defense of Noah**

We had figured that the club would organize the dance and that we would simply mobilize workers to support and participate in it. But the club's decision threw the whole affair into our laps.

In considering how we should go about building for the benefit, we concluded that we should involve as many people as we could in the actual work to organize it. There was a lot of enthusiasm among the workers and other anti-racist activists for the benefit. So we initiated the defense committee as a form for involving these people in the work to organize the benefit.

We invited various of Noah's family members, a half dozen T workers, and members of **The Student** to an initial meeting to form the defense committee. Transit workers rarely came to the formal committee meetings, but eventually about a dozen or so took up the selling of tickets, distributing flyers, and helping get the food together for the event.

#### **Combining Direct Party Work with the Action of the Defense Committee**

Up to this point all the work in defense of Noah had been done in the name of the Party itself. With the launching of the defense committee,

and the holding of the benefit, the question arose of how to maintain the Party's independent work and combine it with the work of the defense committee.

Initially, this question came up around how to maintain the Party's face and develop its work at the benefit which was being organized in the name of the defense committee. A benefit dance is a particularly rudimentary and informal form of meeting and agitation. We decided that it would be inappropriate to have a Party banner and literature table at this event.

#### **A Speech in the Name of the Party?**

We also decided not to push to have a separate speech in the name of the Party at the dance. Looking back, we think this was a mistake since the Party had played such a major role in organizing the defense of Noah and many of those participating recognized this fact. Nevertheless, we did have a comrade (who spoke as an organizer of the benefit) point out the important role of the Party in building support for Noah and explain the Party's line on the struggle against racism and the general class struggle against racism. As well, other comrades carried out verbal agitation, met workers, and developed new contacts.

We also followed up the event with a summation of the fundraiser in the **Boston Worker**. We organized discussions with the active workers on the need to build up the Party, and around it other independent class organizations.

In short, despite the mistake on the speech, we paid attention to promoting the Party and working to build its influence through the work around the benefit.

#### **Avoiding Hybrid Organization**

While doing work directly for the Party, it is important to keep in mind the basis on which workers are participating in the non-party form of organization. We must avoid the trap of hybrid organizations where, in the name of this non-party form, one tries to carry out actions or put forward political positions which only the Party is ready to support. Such a mistake would tend to restrict the non-party form and drive away workers who find it is not what they thought. What is more, this would tend to downplay the Party's independent work to win the masses to its positions.

This problem of correctly combining straight up party work with actions of a non-party organization came up repeatedly in our work with the defense committee. For example, at a recent defense committee meeting a comrade proposed that the members of the defense committee set up

tables at shopping areas to sell tickets and distribute flyers. The comrade proposed that not only should the tables carry the defense committee flyer but also the Party leaflets. None of the workers or the family opposed this combination, but we feel it was a mistake. This would mean that to do this work a worker would have to be ready to distribute Party literature as well as defense committee literature. We concluded that it would be better to distribute Party literature ourselves, and to directly mobilize people to help us do this, rather than make it a de facto condition of doing defense committee work.

We must be especially careful on this question at this time when there is only a low level of and low sense of organization among the workers, on the one hand, and the very high level of organization and strength of the Party, on the other hand. Inexperienced people might well agree to such hybrid proposals only later to realize, and become uncomfortable with, what they had agreed to. The workers must be trained to support their class Party. But there are no shortcuts in this work. The workers must be helped to come to the conclusion that they must take up party work by our example, by our ideological work, and by their experience in fighting under the Party's leadership. But they must come to that conclusion voluntarily.

#### **Fighting the Racists to Organize the Benefit**

Despite anything we might have done better, the fundraiser was a smashing success. The speeches were wildly applauded. The workers were all impressed with how many of themselves had turned out. And the spirits of the black and anti-racist white workers were greatly raised.

The racists went wild against the benefit. The T cop who had arrested Noah ran around in the racist circles of supervisors and backward workers trying to discredit our story of what had happened. Some of the racists made threats against one of our comrades. But they were powerless to do anything. The T cop who had arrested Noah had even gone to the manager of the club and threatened that if the club allowed the fundraiser to take place it would have trouble with City Hall (liquor license, etc.). But the racists were rebuffed at every point, and the workers' spirits soared.

The agitation around the fundraiser -- though done mainly in the name of the defense committee rather than the Party -- was also useful in increasing the Party's ties among the workers and expanding our contact network. Comrades were able to have considerable discussion with militant workers about the role of the Party in organizing the class struggle. And comrades made good use of the **Boston Worker** article summing up the fund-

raiser. We were also able to draw one of the main workers who worked on the fundraiser into our Party contingent at the June 14th anti-apartheid demonstration in New York.

### Dealing with the Lawyers

Given the high spirits following the fundraiser, we wanted to organize a picket line demanding Noah's release. But we were somewhat delayed by word from Noah's lawyer that his partner was taking over the case and that the trial would be coming up in a few weeks. We wanted to save the energy for a demonstration at the time of trial and so held off calling an immediate protest. But it turned out that the lawyers were lying and never intended to take the case to trial. As a result of this false step we lost the momentum for a demonstration at that time. This disruption was typical of the role of the lawyers.

When the Boston Branch began its agitation in defense of Noah Roisten, we decided that we would not get involved in the legal side of things and would leave that to the family. However by the fall of 1985 it had become clear that Noah's lawyer was not doing anything to build a case for him. We raised this to the family at the time but they wanted to stay with the court-appointed attorney. But by the summer of 1986 Noah and his family had also become convinced of the need to get another lawyer who would at least put up a bourgeois legal defense.

Noah's first court appointed attorney was a big-name liberal trial lawyer. But he never even visited Noah, nor did he show up in court, for a whole year. The second lawyer visited Noah three times, but then only to pressure Noah to cop a plea for manslaughter and an 18 to 20-year sentence. The lawyer refused to even discuss building a case and taking it to trial. The District Attorney and the lawyer figured that if Noah sat in the county jail long enough then he would eventually agree to anything. They were determined not to go to a trial where the facts would expose the state's blatant racism.

Thus in order to defend Noah, and in order to continue our agitation, it became necessary to find Noah a private lawyer. Over the summer we were forced to spend a horrendous amount of time investigating and talking to lawyers. I will spare you the unpleasant details. Let it suffice to say that most lawyers either did not want to touch the case or wanted such outlandish fees that it would be impossible to retain them. The "left"/liberal lawyers were actually the worst.

We have finally retained a lawyer who has agreed to defend Noah. The man is a good legal technician who makes no claim of being a leftist.

We have an agreement that he will provide a good legal defense and bring out the facts and we won't ask him to make political statements in court. At the same time he will not obstruct us from building a political movement.

Dealing with the lawyers has been a very unpleasant but necessary task. The movement is by no means yet strong enough to free Noah without a fight also on the legal front. And if the state were to force Noah to cop a plea after the vigorous movement in his defense, it would be a blow to the idea of building the mass struggle against racism. In addition, forcing the state to hold a public trial -- which in this case would help bring out all the facts -- provides an excellent opportunity for agitation.

### Fall Actions to Protest the Railroad of Noah

This fall we have used the fact that we need to come up with several thousand more dollars to pay the lawyer as a reason to organize another fundraising benefit. Militants among the transit workers are again participating in this campaign. This time around we are trying to use the event for political agitation not only among T workers but also for more widespread work among the workers at other work places, among students, and in the black community.

Last spring there was some difficulty in getting ourselves organized to use to the full extent the agitation around the defense committee fundraiser at other work places and campuses. To some extent this was due to the intense pace of work around the spring demonstrations and the May Day campaign. But, as well, there was a problem of thinking that the Noah Roisten agitation and fundraiser was an issue only for the unit involved and for the T work. Because of this thinking, the potential for drawing the workers at other work places into political struggle around the Party, at this low and very understandable level, was not fully realized. This fall that mistake is being rectified.

In addition we are planning to use the momentum from the second fundraiser to organize a demonstration around Noah's next court appearance, which occurs a few days after the benefit. [For an account of the fundraiser and the demonstration, which were held in November 1986, see the *Workers' Advocate*, December 1, 1986.]

### Party Building and Communist Agitation Are at the Center of United Front Tactics

Comrades, the Noah Roisten campaign has been one of our Party's more successful campaigns. The ferment among the oppressed black workers and

masses is growing, and the black bourgeoisie is allowing it no outlet. This has allowed our agitation on this front a wide impact and has extended the Party's influence.

The work around the defense committee has been a learning experience for us in using non-party and low-level forms. We have used them to broaden our agitation among the masses and to draw wider sections into the movement. And we have used work in conjunction with them to expand direct Party work into new circles among the workers.

However, non-party forms are not some kind of magic wand that will automatically give us numbers. Sometimes they can be useful in widening the impact of our agitation. But in other conditions they can be harmful, mere paper forms that serve to do nothing but to liquidate direct party agitation and to subvert party consciousness among the workers. Whether such forms can or should be used depends on the concrete situation among the workers, the alignment of political forces, and so forth.

If the black bourgeoisie and the reformists had provided even a little support for Noah, the family might not have worked with us. As it is, while the black bourgeoisie and opportunists told the family to stay away from us, they did not do one thing to help Noah. So the family saw that the Marxist-Leninist Party was the only political trend

that was serious about defending Noah.

If the social-democratic and cultural nationalists opportunists were better organized among the T workers -- or even organized at all -- then organizing the benefits would have been much more difficult to pull off.

In addition, it is important to see that the basis for being able to use such non-party forms is our direct Party work of revolutionary agitation and building up the trend around the Party.

As the political situation develops, and as our Party's work among the masses goes forward, the question of united front tactics, and its relation to direct party work and to non-party forms, will increasingly come up. There will be many complex situations. The liberals and reformists will not leave ready-made vacuums when they see the masses rallying around the path of class struggle. This will affect the forms and tempo of our work. But our Party will continue to make use of the vital weapons of party building and Leninist united front tactics.

The successes with the Noah Roisten campaign are a sign of the correctness of our line for work in the present period. And it confirms in miniature the correctness of the Leninist orientation that building the Party and extending our communist agitation are at the center of all united front tactics. <>

