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In this issue:

Armed Insurrection

The Road to State Power

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Notes and Comments

Weimar

Dear **PL Magazine**.

The article "On Similarities between the U.S. and Weimar Germany" (PL, vol. 10, #6) includes some claims that simply lack evidential support. And since the piece represents the party's position, it reveals a serious shortcoming in the party's line. The party, I suggest, exaggerates the speed with which the U.S. ruling class is moving down the fascist road.

The author of the article says the ruling class is "plunging" toward fascism and points up that racism is the cutting edge of this fascist development. He/she cites in support of this contention "the continual ruling class celebration of racists," supportive publicity given to Wilson (sociobiology), Glazer ("reverse discrimination"), and several incidents involving racist murder. And these cases are portrayed as instances of deliberate ruling class support of a growing fascist movement ("Hitler did not lack for friends in high places," etc.).

I ask: to what extent, today, are the KKK and Nazis receiving financial and political support from the capitalist ruling class? Is the ruling class, **at this time**, moving away from its support of "liberal democracy"? We have evidence that German industrialists and bankers, through their funding of the Nazi party in the early 30s, contributed decisively to the successes of the Nazi movement. But where is the evidence regarding the Nazi-KKK connection with the U.S. ruling class? Almost all (if not all) ruling class money still goes to the Republican and Democratic parties, and the ideological organs of the capitalist class still crank out support of "liberal democratic" forms of politics. The evidence is incredibly scanty that the government, through its legal system, accords lenient treatment to fascist thugs (**in the way that this happened in the Weimar Republic** - to point to a **very few** isolated cases won't suffice to demonstrate a similarity).

The ruling class, for the past 20 years, has let up noticeably on the pushing of racist ideology (all that I'm saying here is that the r-c is less racist now than in the past). And note that the relative position of black workers in the U.S. has **improved** over the past 20 years, **e.g.**, the income gap between white and black workers has **narrowed** by 10-15%, and this is the consequence of the gradual integration of the work force (in almost every occupation, from manufacturing to management). There is no evidence of sudden reversals of this trend. (See Al Szymanski, "Trends in Economic Discrimination Against Blacks in the U.S. Working Class," **Review of Radical Political Economics,** Vol. 7, No. 3).

How explain this important development? Why is it, **e.g.**, that almost every element within the ruling class has taken a stand **against** Bakke (take a look at which groups have filed 'friends of the court briefs' on the side of UC-Davis), and through the Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Ford Foundations, has been supporting "affirmative action" (interpreted to include "preferential hiring") for the past several decades? Can there be any doubt that the Supreme Court will take an anti-Bakke position? Does this portend a terroristic fascism of the Weimar variety?

There are two reasons for this long-term development. (1) The ruling class has been **forced** to respond to the just demands of minority workers. Most of these demands have not been **revolutionary** demands, in part because most demands have been filtered by nationalist allies of the bourgeoisie. The ruling class has coopted nationalist "leaders" who have limited themselves to fighting for a piece of the status-quo pie. This nationalist perspective typically involves a perspective setting minority workers against white workers. The line here is "Preferential hiring minus additional jobs for all workers." Was it any wonder that the ruling class introduced "preferential hiring" in the construction trades just as a recession hit the unions in 1969, and that William Rehnquist was one of the Justice Department lawyers defending the Philadelphia Minority Hiring Program at a time and in an industry where unemployment for all workers stood at 20-30%? (2) There is a tendency within capitalism, as it matures, to undermine the practice of racism (see, **e.g.**, the PL pamphlet, "Smash Apartheid!", which notes this tendency). Mature capitalism works to break down ethnic, racial, and national divisions of the working class (Marx saw this clearly). Capitalism tends to, because it needs to, integrate the work force. The profit making character of the system pushes capitalists to take advantage of the skills of **all** workers, to increase worker mobility by setting aside racial and ethnic barriers, and to create finally a working class organized as a class fighting against the capitalist class. The fight is a **class** struggle, not a dog-fight among nationalities, "races," etc. On the other hand, there is a tendency within capitalism to foster racial, ethnic, and national divisions among workers. The capitalists want to maximize profits, **but** they want to maintain **control** over workers, to uphold their privileged position. Thus capitalists seek to atomize or split the workers, and here racist and nationalist ideology comes into play. In a crisis, capitalists will opt for control over efficiency (profit-maximization). The question,

then, is whether U.S. capitalists are feeling the crunch sufficiently to move toward ultimate (fascist) control of the working class. Which of the two tendencies within capitalism is prevalent today? In what direction does its short-term development lie?

This is an empirical question. Dutt's analysis of 30 years ago may or may not be immediately relevant, **depending on the facts of the present day and prospects for the immediate future.** I doubt that there is sufficient evidence to show that the second tendency is presently in force. PL talks about ROAR, KKK, and the Nazi Party. But what about counter-tendencies? The almost universal ruling class support of the anti-Bakke position? The lack of evidence, at this time, that the r-c is providing financial support for fascist groups? The objective evidence showing the relative improvement of black workers and the gradual (uninterrupted) integration of the work-force? Is racist ideology increasing or decreasing over the years (Is **Roots** really more racist than D.W. Griffith or old Shirley Temple movies?) 50 years ago, the ideas of Jensen and Herrnstein were **prevalent** in the "scholarly" journals - are they now?

Racist ideas are to be combatted always, on the grounds of principle and the interests of the working class. The aim is to build a multi-racial, international movement against capitalism. To satisfy this aim, strategies and tactics must be devised. But they must assume shape by paying attention to the present state of affairs. Does the evidence really point to imminent fascism? If not, let's adjust our strategic and tactical sights.

Comradely,
Friend of PL, Seattle

Albania

(The following was sent to *Challenge* but because of its length we're printing it here.)

Comrades:

It was very good that a reader recently sent in a clipping from Albania showing that the Albanian leadership sharply disagreed with the Chinese leaders.

What was not so good was the reader's comment that this Albanian viewpoint "validated" PL's position, which is similarly critical of Chinese policy.

No "validation" from the Albanian leadership can prove PL is correct. Rather it is current events which rush forward to vindicate PL's predictions and demonstrate the truth of PL's statements.

With the openly proclaimed counter-revolution victorious in China, many revolutionary-minded people will look to Albania for hope. They will want to believe in Albanian party chief Enver Hoxha, and will find comfort in his recent statement, "Socialist Albania provides a major example which shows that the emergence of revisionism and a return to capitalism are not decreed by fate to be inevitable."

The reader who sent in the Albanian clipping did not display any need to believe in Hoxha. Quite the contrary, he warned that the Albanian leaders are as willing as are the Chinese leaders to mislead any who care to follow with their delusion that what they call "national liberation" is a first step that must be made before it is possible to successfully raise the goal of socialism. (The truth is that this policy guarantees the emergence and then the dominance of a new ruling class in the future revolutionary society.)

But by citing the Albanian comment without pointing out that here was an example of a quarrel among opportunists (giving truth a rare chance to emerge) the reader may have unintentionally validated the Albanian leaders' reputation in the minds of some **Challenge** readers.

In fact the Albanian leaders are in a terrible crisis. In the past few years Hoxha (who founded the party and army in 1940, led them to victory in 1945, and has ruled the country continuously since) has discovered (as he put it at last year's Party Congress):

- The Minister of Defense and the central army leadership were plotting to overthrow the Party by force, and, by relying on troops from abroad (this always means Yugoslavia) to wipe out the proletarian dictatorship. In preparation they were trying to "introduce the detestable methods of the bourgeois and revisionist armies." They were purged.
- The economic leaders, that is to say those in charge of the State Planning Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the National Bank, the Ministry of Industry and Mines, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Foreign Trade, the Ministry of Internal Trade and the oil industry, all turned out to be "politically and morally degenerate elements who had become bourgeois." They sabotaged the economy, emphasized technocracy, abandoned unified, centralized management, inflated the bureaucracy and tried to introduce Yugoslav-style self-administration which would have led to weakening socialism and "enslavement of the country by foreigners." They were purged.
- Cultural leaders sabotaged "educational and cultural institutions" so as to "cause confusion among the youth and intelligentsia, to turn them against the Party and socialism, just as the enemies of Marxism-Leninism in the revisionist countries have done." They were purged.

Well, these things happen. Hoxha was probably on vacation while the other leaders (all hand-picked by him) were giving the country away.

In this case the Albanian "Gang of One" toppled the Albanian Teng Hsiao-pings, instead of the other way round as in China. Yet all this occurred **after** a 10-year long campaign, which had been acclaimed by Hoxha as a great success, a campaign to ensure "workers' control."

Assume Hoxha's indictment of the purged leaders to be accurate. (In fact it is not truthful,

it is not even consistent. Some were clearly purged for following a Hua Kuo-feng line, Hoxha thereby sending a message to the Chinese that China answered with Hua's gala reception for Tito, Hoxha's greatest enemy—which was also a message of a different sort to the rest of Eastern Europe.) But assume anyway that the greater-of-two-evils was purged. What, aside from the secret police, will prevent these evil types from again rising to power in Albania?

Nothing.

There is nothing new in Albania. Hoxha believes the problems arose because of the "relaxation of vigilance and control, the failure to persistently implement the principles and norms of the Party and state, from various shortcomings in educational work, from failure to keep well in mind the Party teachings on class struggle and the imperialist-revisionist encirclement."

"All the organs of leadership, including the Central Committee and government, bear responsibility for these things that have occurred. Special responsibility, both collective and individual, falls on the party organizations, communists and cadres of those sectors where the enemies were most active."

The obvious solution is to do the same old things better. Whether or not to purge those "specially responsible" is almost a matter of style, and whether there is anyone to replace those purged.

No questions arise for Hoxha concerning the actual social forces in Albanian society, about the social well-springs of this revisionist flood. No questions, so no policy to dam the stream, except to chop the enemies down wherever they arise. But, inevitably, perhaps only when Hoxha dies, there will someday be too many enemies, and then the choppers will be chopped.

Developing the economy, extending the welfare state, advancing the role of women in society—all continuing Albanian achievements—do not equal socialism, or ensure workers' control of society. They can even be—have been—effective barriers to that control.

In foreign affairs Albanian activity is nonexistent where it is not harmful. There are 3 million Albanians. The country is small, but it could play a vital, dynamic role. Israel is no larger.

But in diplomacy Albania limits itself to activities that advance its foreign trade. Aside from this Albania's chief role was to advance China's cause at the UN. When China was finally admitted to the UN, Albania's role shifted to loyal supporter of China's complicated (and unsuccessful) weaving of so-called "First World," "Second World" and "Third World" interests.

(Albanian diplomats would always explain that the Egyptians, for example, were really no good. The conversation was in their headquarters. It was understood that it was "among ourselves" only. Out there, in the world, "we" had to support the Egyptians, because they opposed the Russians, etc. etc.)

When the Chinese made the turn toward America the Albanians disagreed and dropped out of whatever foreign affairs activity they had carried out, other than that related to foreign trade and relations with foreign radicals. Their delegates at the UN now literally choose to see no one. Their students abroad are forbidden from befriending any of their schoolmates from countries other than their host country. (Albanian students are to be found only in China.)

Their relations with foreign radicals are limited to the self-proclaimed "Marxist-Leninist" grouplets, whom they support, and whose allegiance they try to win away from the North Koreans and the Chinese. What a goal! And when achieved, what an achievement!

Why is it that even the best among the leaders of the old communist movement fail to live up to the hopes revolutionaries hold for them? It is because the central policies of the old communist movement are harmful. PL's **Road to Revolution III** statement points out that these harmful policies are summed up in the policy of "national liberation." This policy, and what must inevitably flow from it, undermines and destroys the movement toward socialism and communism.

Perfectly good individuals, with sincere revolutionary urgings, cannot withstand what this policy makes them do. They are transformed by the ideas behind this policy into either opportunists, like Hoxha and Mao (if they hold to the mass line), or rightist counter-revolutionaries, like Hua and Teng (if they choose to subordinate the mass line to anything else.)

Albania's travail is not confirmation of revisionism's "destiny," but rather is another proof that PL's struggle against the discredited policy of the old communist movement is the struggle for the life of the socialist revolution. It is a struggle that can be won only to the extent PL wins a base among the working people in the United States.

The consolidation of revisionism is nothing to be happy about, but it should not overwhelm anyone either. We are forced to reap the crop an earlier generation of revolutionaries sowed. But we don't have to replant the same rotten seeds. In that lies the certainty of our ultimate victory.

Comradely,
N.S.

OOPS

Last issue was Volume 11 No. 1, instead of Volume 7 No. 1 as marked in the front cover of that issue.

ON NATIONALISM, a dramatic essay, part II, will be continued in a future issue.

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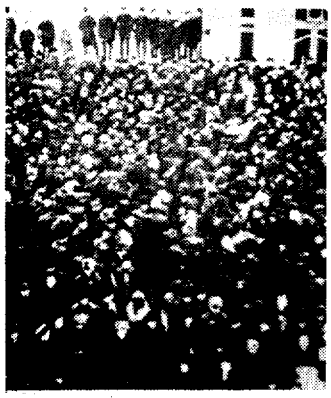


1914: Russian workers strike plant while czar's cops stand guard over bosses' property.

1917: Workers' internationalism: Russian and Austrian soldiers fraternize at the front.

Bolshevik soldiers patrol Petrograd after October Revolution.

May Day, 1919, in Soviet Budapest, Hungary.

Armed Insurrection

No ruling class in world history—slave-owner, feudalist or capitalist—has given up power voluntarily. They have been crushed by armed force, as in the French Revolution of 1789 or the Russian Revolution of 1917. Or they have been confronted by so much armed force, in and out of battle, that they have preferred to compromise with the new ruling class rather than be totally destroyed, as in the bourgeois revolution in England.

Workers make revolution not to substitute one form of exploitation for another, but to end exploitation and build socialism. Therefore, no compromise is possible with the capitalist class. It must be destroyed.

The U.S. capitalist class has proven that it is no exception to this rule. It emerged as a ruling class in a 6-year-long armed struggle against the British imperialists. Following its own liberation, it immediately resorted to force to put down workers who believed that freedom from England would mean their own liberation, as in the suppression of Shea's Rebellion and of the Whiskey Rebellion. The U.S. bosses enforced chattel slavery with an iron hand, until they found it necessary to fight the bloodiest civil war in world history to keep the Southern states under the control of industrial and banking capital. They massacred workers in Colorado mines, at Haymarket Square, at Republic Steel; they lynched black sharecroppers through the South.

More recently, the U.S. bosses killed over a million Vietnamese and over 50,000 U.S. troops in their losing effort to hold onto South Vietnam and keep it out of the clutches of their arch rivals, the Russian imperialists. They first prevented an election in 1956 that would have reunified Vietnam

under the government of Ho Chi Minh. They spent $178 billion in Vietnam, helping to destroy their own economy relative to the economies of the other capitalist powers. They pursued the war to the point where they had largely lost their political grip over their own population and their own army (this finally forced them to pull out of Vietnam, even though they were doing better militarily in 1972 than in 1968, against an enemy that had abandoned people's war and was fighting a conventional war beyond the limits of its resources—see Thompson and Frizzell: **The Lessons of Vietnam**).

The U.S. capitalists spent these lives, money and political capital in an effort to hold onto a small, impoverished country half-way around the world, containing relatively minimal U.S. investments, markets or crucial raw materials. What can we expect them to do when U.S. workers are threatening to take power in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and Detroit? Is anybody expecting them to hold an election to see if the workers want to take over U.S. Steel, GE, GM, Chase Manhattan, Citibank and the Bank of America?

IT WILL BE A LONG WAR

As we are learning from our own practice and from our study of history, the revolutionary process is not quick. It is protracted, with many forms, many ups and downs. Because armed struggle is so central to the revolutionary process, it, too, tends to be protracted, varied in form, with ups and downs.

For example, the year 1905 in Russia saw a massacre of unarmed workers marching on the Winter Palace, waves of strikes and general strikes, the mutiny on the battleship Potemkin, and the beginning of a period of guerrilla warfare. The Russian government had so little control of the population at home that it had to accept a major defeat and conclude the war with Japan. But, "despite the return of troops from the Far East in early 1906, 288 police officials were killed and 383 were wounded. Altogether, up to the end of October, 1906, 3,611 government officials of all ranks, from the governor-generals to village gendarmes, had been killed or wounded." (Asprey, V. I., p. 294.)

Because this was mass revolutionary warfare rather than isolated terrorist acts, the Tsarist government was forced to resort to stepping up its counter-revolutionary terror against the entire population. As one liberal Russian professor wrote in 1913:

"...my pen is reluctant to describe the infamies of this reign of terror... every one in Russia is still an outlaw. It may be said without exaggeration that during the white terror the fear of death ceased to exist. It had been driven away by pogroms; by the death sentences of courts martial and field courts martial; by arrest and martyrizations in the prisons and on the road to Siberia; by the extremities of cruelty and torture; by the frequency of suicide in the prisons; by illness, epidemic, disease and famine." (Asprey, I, p. 295.)

The Tsar attacked, the workers fought back, although for a while primarily without guns:

"From 1905 to 1910 the government handed down 7,101 death sentences and carried out 4,449 executions... In 1912, troops put down a strike in the Lena gold fields in Siberia by firing on unarmed men, killing 170 and wounding nearly 400. Important strikes followed, to culminate in the massive St. Petersburg general strike of July, 1914, which fizzled only in the wash of war's outbreak." (Asprey, I, p. 296.)

World War I set the stage for revolution:

"At the end of June 1915, Russian losses numbered an estimated 3.8 million and had to be replaced with men taken from factories, mines and fields. In all, 15 million were mobilized; about half were listed as killed, wounded or missing. Survivors faced ever-growing shortages in arms, food and equipment; at home, people faced near-starvation. Production slowed, almost ceased. Riots and strikes in cities proclaimed the growing temper and were ruthlessly suppressed. Finally, even the troops rebelled: in February 1917, the St. Petersburg garrison, ordered to break up a massive hunger demonstration, refused its orders. Demonstrations and riots increased in intensity in early March, and still the garrison, some 160,000 troops, refused to act. A general strike brought 300,000 workers into the streets, and now mobs began running amok, attacking police stations, storming law courts, breaking open jails. Police either were killed or fled... While ministers paled and the Duma fretted, the troops, with a few exceptions, still refused to act. On March 12, regiments began to mutiny, and that was the end of the monarchy." (Asprey, I, p. 297.)

The Tsar's regime was replaced by a provisional government that represented the Russian capitalist class. Side by side with the government existed the Soviets—bodies of delegates representing workers, soldiers and sailors, and peasants. During nine months of fierce political struggle involving tens of millions of people, the Soviets increasingly came under the leadership of the Bolshevik party, around a line of ending the war, distributing land to the peasantry, providing food for the workers, all of this to be accomplished by a seizure of power from the provisional government by the working class and its allies.

During this period a number of new types of armed struggles were introduced. In the countryside, peasants organized "illegal land seizures." On the front, Russian soldiers fraternized with the German soldiers, using their rifles to kill their officers or to "persuade" them that fraternization was a better idea than fighting an imperialist war. In St. Petersburg, (and other cities), Red Guard detachments began to form in the factories. Tens of thousands, and even hun-

dreds of thousands of workers, soldiers, and sailors participated in armed demonstrations. When Tsarist officers under General Komilov led troops on St. Petersburg (Petrograd—now Leningrad), in an attempt to restore the monarchy and/or shore up the weakening bourgeoisie, the Bolshevik Party led these armed workers, soldiers and sailors in defeating Komilov's forces.

The Russian working class went on to seize state power in October, 1917. The Bolsheviks organized and led armed insurrections in St. Petersburg, Moscow and dozens of other key cities and towns. Bourgeois political and police forces were disbanded, arrested or killed. Telephone and telegraph exchanges were seized, as were arsenals, government buildings, bridges, railroads. At the front, Bolshevik-led sections of soldiers took control of entire battalions, regiments, divisions, even armies. Bolshevik-led sailors seized virtually all naval vessals, and used their guns to support socialist revolution. This act is what is now commonly referred to as "the Russian Revolution." Of course, it was the turning point where for the first time in history the working class took power in a country. But, as we have seen, a long period of political struggle, including elements of armed struggle, led up to this seizure of power.

Nor was the act of taking power the end of the military contest. It was followed by a three-year period of armed struggle that dwarfed all that had happened previously. From 1918 through 1920, the Bolsheviks led the Russian working class in a civil war against hundreds of thousands of counter-revolutionary forces under Tsarist generals, aided by money, supplies and thousands of troops from 11 foreign countries. In order to win this civil war, the new workers' state raised an army of first one million, then three million soldiers.

Following the working-class victory in the civil war, it was of course necessary to continue to have armed forces available to prevent further capitalist invasion. The Red Army continued to be built. In 1938-39, it repelled a Japanese invasion of Mongolia, at the Khaikin-Gol. If the Japanese had not been defeated here, they would have been encouraged to continue northwest into Siberia, and the USSR would have been forced to fight a 2-front war, against a German invasion from Europe and a Japanese invasion from Asia.

From 1941 to 1945, the Red Army fought the Nazis. Pressed back up to 1,000 miles from their Western borders, workers on the farms, in the factories and at the front refused to give in. They continued to organize production and armed struggle. When the Red Army fought its way into Berlin on May Day, 1945, it had defeated the supposedly invincible Nazi war machine. The Russo-German war was the decisive, and by far the largest, part of World War II. The German capitalist class, after conquering all the rest of continental Europe with relative ease, had been smashed by the socialist state.

The protracted nature of the armed struggle for workers' power is even more readily apparent from the Chinese and Vietnamese experience. The Chinese Communist Party organized armies and led warfare with only short, temporary and conditional pauses from 1926 through the seizure of power in 1949. Immediately following that 23 years of armed struggle, they fought in Korea for three years. In Vietnam, peasants led by communists fought the Japanese for five years during WW II, the French for eight years (1946-1954) and local reactionaries and the U.S. for 19 years (1956-1975)—a total of 35 years of almost uninterrupted armed struggle.

Whether the armed struggle for workers' power here will take 35 years or five years or 10 years is difficult to predict. But if anyone has a vision of a few weeks in the streets with sub-machine guns and then we can get on with building socialist society, that outlook does not appear to be supported by historical precedent. Subjectively, even a few years of organizing military struggle will probably seem like a long time.

October, 1917: Workers demonstrate in Moscow. The USSR was the first dictatorship of the proleteriat in the era of finance capital and the first state to breach the imperialist front of World War I.

THE TROOPS WILL COME FROM THE FACTORIES

Where will the forces come from to carry out revolutionary war in the U.S.? A glimpse of our future can be seen from the Russian past.

The workers, soldiers and sailors, led by the Bolshevik Party, had taken over the capital city of Petrograd. Kerensky, the Prime Minister, fled to the front to try to mobilize troops to return to Petrograd and put down the insurrection. Most refused to march against the working class. Many were openly pro-Bolshevik. Some formations set out for Petrograd, but combinations of railroad

workers, red guards and revolutionary soldiers along the way, and growing internal Bolshevik strength, prevented their arrival. Finally, though, Kerensky was able to get several regiments to Krasnoye Selo and Gatchina, outside of Petrograd. What was in essence the first battle in the open field of the Russian Civil war was fought at the Pulkovo Heights. Here is how the workers organized to win this battle:

"...The Petrograd workers displayed supreme heroism, unprecedented enthusiasm and selfless devotion to the cause of the proletarian revolution. Their courage and self-sacrifice compensated for the defects in organization, which were inevitable in the first days of the new regime.

"The workers of the different factories and mills vied with each other in heroism. Some, in response to the call of the Military Revolutionary Committee, took up arms and went to the front. Others worked on fortifications at the approaches to Petrograd. The district staffs of the Red Guard formed armed workers' detachments and dispatched them to Pulkovo. In the factories the production of war material went on day and night. The workers repaired armored cars, assembled guns and fitted up armored trains. This is illustrated by the following statement subsequently made by the Commissar of the Putilov Works:

"'During Kerensky's counter-revolutionary adventure, I, at the request of the Military Revolutionary Committee, dispatched to Krasnoye Selo and Gatchina, and also to the positions at Pulkovo-Alexandrovka: 2 armored cars; 4 motor trucks mounted with four anti-aircraft guns; 4 trucks loaded with shells; 2 Red Cross vans which we ourselves had equipped with stretchers, medical supplies, etc.; 2 field kitchens, which we had also fitted up.

"'We dispatched together with gunners, gun crews and escort: 4 forty-two bore guns and 19 three-inch guns.

"'I myself went to the forward positions with a workers' unit 200 strong and remained there five days and five nights. Very often mechanics were sent to repair guns. Over 500 Putilov workers and 50 carpenters were sent to the trenches with all the tools they needed.

"'The Putilov Works supplied the men taking part in operations with fuel, gas-driven automobiles, etc. We carried wounded in passenger cars from Krasnoye Selo and Gatchina until the arrival of the Red Cross unit.

"'All damaged motor trucks were immediately repaired in our automobile shop, which was kept running day and night, and returned to the Headquarters of the Revolutionary Committee the moment repairs were completed.'

"The Putilov unit of the Red Guard consisted of thousands of picked revolutionary fighters. In the October days alone the Putilov workers received over 2,000 rifles, of which 1,212 were issued to the works proper, and 804 to the Putilov shipyard. About half of the youths employed in the Putilov Works joined the Red Guard. A large number of the men served in the technical forces,

KARL MARX
"In revolution, workers must always be on the offensive."

VLADIMIR LENIN
The strategic leader of the revolution who was most bold in demanding that it take place at once and that there be no vacillation.

JOSEPH STALIN
One of the Central Committee who planned the details of the uprising for state power in Petrograd, 1917.

some as drivers, others in the artillery. Twenty-two truck drivers of the Putilov Works were placed at the disposal of the Military Revolutionary Committee and sent to the Krasnoye Selo-Tsarskoye line. Later the Chief of Staff of the Gatchina unit issued a certificate couched in terse, military terms stating that they had 'conscientiously performed their duties and are now returning to the Putilov Works." (**The History of the Civil War in the USSR**, Vol. II, pp. 364-366.)

This is what we are talking about when we say **"Build a base on the job."** The Putilov Works was typical, not an isolated example:

"The workers of the Pipe works, Siemens-Halske and Possel's came straight from their work to the commandant requesting that they be given arms and sent to the firing line. During the day, 3000 rifles were issued, and still workers came pouring in. There were not enough rifles to go round, so the workers took picks and shovels and went off to dig trenches.

"The road to Pulkovo was lined with endless columns of revolutionary detachments marching in the pouring rain. They were overtaken by motor trucks filled with armed workers. Old men, and even youths, hastened to the front. The trains to Gatchina were packed, and still men struggled to get in. Red Guards and sailors clung to the roofs and steps of the railway cars. There was a perfect rush to the place from where the dull booming of guns was heard.

"At the front, thousands of men and women toiled in the wet and mud, digging trenches and erecting barbed-wire entanglements . . ." (ibid., p 366)

Industrial workers have the training, the collectivity, the discipline, the know-how to accomplish what from the outside seems impossible. When they have learned communist ideas, and are under the leadership of a communist party, no force on earth can stop them. That's why the bosses are so quick to fire PLP members they detect in auto, steel and the other basic industries. We can recruit faster than they can discover and fire us. But what we must keep firmly in front of our minds is that we are in the shops to build a political base for **revolution**. Workers will not march out of the factories as described above by the Commissar of the Putilov Works if the primary political perspective we have provided them has centered around their particular boss and the immediate grievance in the plant.

Given the membership figures for the Bolshevik Party in Petrograd at the time of the overthrow of the Tsar in February, 1917, it is doubtful if they had more than 30 or 40 members in the Putilov Works, quite probably less. Yet nine months later they had recruited dozens more and were able to move thousands into revolutionary war. This transformation could not have taken place if the relatively few Bolsheviks who had been in this plant prior to February had not had the respect of the masses of the workers, even though the masses of workers up to that time were primarily not in political agreement with the Bolsheviks, and held many anti-communist ideas. They could not have had this respect if the other workers had not known them in an all-around way, as friends and comrades, as well as uncompromising, consistent opponents of the boss.

So when we talk in PLP today about breaking bread with our co-workers, having dinner in each other's houses, knowing each other's families, sharing our day-to-day problems with them, and they with us—about being friends with our co-workers—these seemingly minor, day-to-day things are absolutely vital and fundamental to developing the ties of steel between workers that will lead to armed revolutionary warfare. You cannot have one without the other. Then, when hundreds, or thousands of workers in the plant are becoming convinced, because of the increasingly harsh actions of the ruling class, combined with all of the ideas they have heard from us over a period of years (even though they often seemed to ignore or dismiss these ideas), a rapid qualitative change becomes possible. There will be a worker there to say, "Yes, I know that guy, we've been friends for five years, his kids play with my kids. Not only is he smart politically, he is not crazy, he is not going to lead us into anything crazy—he is a serious, stable revolutionary and through him I've met other men and women in that party, and they are serious, stable revolutionaries. Let's follow that party and destroy capitalism."

No amount of leaflets can replace ties like that. It was having a base among the workers that enabled the Bolsheviks in the Putilov Works, between February and October, to hold increasingly frequent, militant and massive rallies, in-plant meetings, stoppages of production for daily political discussions. Their reform struggles against the boss even included demanding time off for workers to drill in the Red Guard, on the plant premises, with pay!

While basic industry is the most important area from which to raise the red guards of our revolutionary army, we **cannot win** unless we build a base in several other key sections of the population. Here, too, just as in the plants, it is impossible to build a base for revolution without ties of friendship. These areas include:

* Basic industrial workers not in plants. Certain groups of such workers have skills vital to the success of the revolutionary armed forces and to the subversion and sabotage of the capitalist war machine—transportation and communication workers.

* Other workers not in basic industries, such as computer operators and hospital workers, will certainly be essential. Even workers who appear to be in the least strategic positions, such as office workers, are important, both because we need all the numbers we can get and because it is impossible to predict where the sparks that start the revolutionary fires will erupt. This consideration is particularly relevant regarding work among:

* Students. Just to take a few recent examples;

college students started the rebellion in France in 1968 that went on to involve ten million workers, and students played a key role in starting the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam war movement in the U.S., both of which went on to involve millions of working people. Students learn many things about science, engineering, medicine, etc., that are vital to organizing socialist revolutionary warfare and socialist production. **High school students** are future workers and members of the armed forces. Furthermore, a tradition of communist organizing among youth is **essential.** Other revolutions show that the great majority of those inclined to fight in the front lines are in their teens and twenties.

* The armed forces of the ruling class. There is no way that the working class and its allies could defeat the U.S. army, navy, air force and marines if the millions of GI's were dedicated to keeping the capitalists in power. As we saw from the half million desertions and numerous incidents of "fragging" and refusing to go into combat during the Vietnam war, this is hardly the case. The GI's will be less likely to carry out orders when asked to put down a mass revolutionary movement in the U.S. working class.

A political struggle is going on for the loyalty of the armed forces. The ruling class is pushing American patriotism and anti-communism, around the theme of "human rights." They are pushing liberal forms of racism and nationalism (e.g., **Roots**) on the one hand, and overtly fascist forms such as the KKK on the other. We have entered this struggle and are rebuilding our work in the armed forces that we conducted with some small successes during the Vietnam war. Just as our objective in industry is to move large blocs of workers to the Left, our objective in the armed forces is to move large blocs of troops to the Left. This means that in a revolutionary situation, some forces will join the working class—"Turn the guns around." Others will waver and will require a combination of physical and political struggle to change sides or be neutral. Those units that hold out to the end will have to be crushed militarily.

Can our Party actually do this, or does it take supermen like the Bolsheviks? The Bolsheviks were no more supermen as individuals than we are. Any study of their activity shows all the political and organizational mistakes that you would expect to find anywhere else, from the leadership on down. In September, 1917, Lenin had just finished **State and Revolution**, the most lucid book ever written on the need to violently smash the bourgeois state. The armed insurrection was only a few weeks away. Yet, at that very moment, Lenin wrote a few articles suggesting that the workers might be able to take power peacefully. (See **One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution: Lenin, Collected Works, V. 25,** pp. 363-373.) Kamenev and Zinoviev, who consistently sabotaged and openly organized against preparations for an insurrection, were allowed to stay on the Central Committee.

In Moscow during the insurrection, the Bolshevik City Committee made compromise after compromise with the counter-revolutionary Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionary Party, even while Bolshevik-led workers and soldiers were out fighting these same political forces. These facts are not brought out to denigrate the Bolsheviks. They were the first party to lead the working class to take power in a country; they have shown us the way; and we are fortunate to stand on their shoulders. But it was not primarily individual brilliance that enabled the Bolsheviks to accomplish "super-human" feats, but their **collective, unbreakable ties to the working class.** By building these kinds of ties, we can learn to overcome our weaknesses and mistakes as the Bolsheviks did, and go on to victorious socialist revolution.

WHEN WILL THIS HAPPEN?

In **The Collapse of the Second International,** Lenin formulates the conditions necessary for a revolution: (1) The ruling class must be unable to rule in its normal manner, and therefore be weak, divided, hesitant; and (2) The working class must be unable to live in the old way, and therefore desperate.

The United States—and the rest of the world—appears to be heading towards these conditions. We have described in **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** and **PL Magazine** the increasing inability of the ruling class to cope with unemployment, inflation and the energy crisis. They are still able, more or less, to rule as before. But quantitative changes are leading towards qualitative change, and at some point they will find it necessary to resort to war externally and fascism and stepped-up racism internally. The working class appears to be awakening from a period of relative inactivity. We have reported on the new strike wave, ghetto rebellions, campus struggles. Here, too, quantity will lead to quality, as more and more working people feel "desperate."

The question facing our party is, will we be ready? Because the conditions necessary for a revolution do not automatically mean that there will BE a revolution. For revolution to succeed, a third factor must be present—a communist party with a base in the working class and its allies.

Will we have a sufficient base in the working class to take advantage of the objective situation, or will the working class be forced to wait, perhaps several decades, for the next big opportunity? The military struggle that we hope to get into is a desperate effort requiring courage, timing, and precision. Are we willing to put that desperate effort, NOW, into spending our time with, and sharing our lives with, our co-workers? Are we willing to learn timing and precision, now, by organizing struggle against the boss, by recruiting into the party and building party fractions and CAR chapters on the job, by organizing the sale of **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO**? Will WE be content with living in the old way, or will we be the vanguard of the workers who are so desperately dissatisfied with life under capitalism that we will learn to live in a socialist way?

"Rely On The People": Peasant guerrillas in North-West China, 1938, under the leadership of the then revolutionary, now revisionist Chinese Communist Party, extend fight for proletarian internationalism onto the Asian continent.

Given that we need a base for revolutionary communism in the working class and its allies, how is the armed struggle for workers' power actually carried out?

MASS HEROISM LEADS TO VICTORY

When communists rely upon armed forces based in the working class or the peasantry to rise to the occasion and display mass revolutionary heroism, they can overcome enormous bourgeois superiority in money, weapons and technology. The U.S. ruling class discovered this in Vietnam. The German ruling class found this out in 1942-1943 at Stalingrad. The Kuomintang learned this lesson hundreds of times during the Long March. The Russian reactionaries and their foreign allies were repeatedly reminded of this truth during the Civil War.

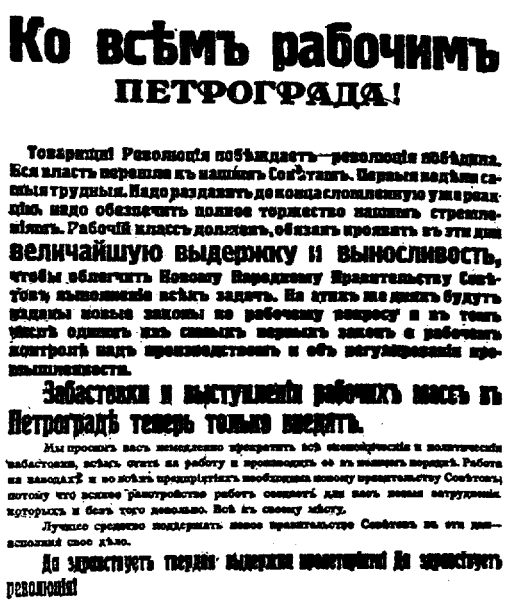
At Stalingrad, the German Sixth Army had "taken" the entire city, reaching the eastern edge, the Volga River, at several points. The physically divided Red troops had possession of only a few buildings. They had virtually no room to maneuver. The Army leadership was out of communication with many of the soldiers. According to bourgeois military textbooks, they were defeated as an effective fighting force. They should have attempted to retreat across the Volga or surrender.

They did neither. Responding to the Party's directive to hold the city, rank-and-file soldiers took the lead in developing "storm groups." The storm groups were units of from three to 20 soldiers that fought from one pile of rubble to another, from building to building, even from room to room. They kept this up all day and all night. They transformed the situation from a defeat into a counter-offensive against the Nazis. They were able to hold the city and to trap increasing numbers of German troops there for three months of bitter fighting, while a larger counter-offensive from outside the city was prepared and unleashed, leading to the destruction of the German Sixth Army and to the turning point of World War II. In the course of this struggle, all kinds of ingenious tactics were developed, studied, improved, tested, re-tested. They are described in detail by General Chuikov, the commander of the Russian division that held Stalingrad, in his book, **The Battle for Stalingrad.** But, as Chuikov repeatedly emphasizes, without the heroism of the masses of soldiers, under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League members throughout the ranks, there would have been no new tactics to study and improve. The military leaders would not have been able to give any leadership.

The Chinese Revolution was one of the most important events of this century. Without mass heroism on the part of millions of peasants who formed the Chinese Red Armies, the revolutionary movement would have been smashed on numerous occasions before marching victorious into Peking in 1949. Faced with encirclement by the Kuomintang forces in 1934, the Red Army set out on the Long March. They broke out of the encirclement and fought their way diagonally across the country to the Northwest to set up a new base area.

Making a wide loop, they marched 6,000 miles in a year (Oct. 1934 to Oct. 1935) across mountains, swamps, deserts, snowfields, rivers.

At one point in this march (Spring, 1935), they had to cross the Tatu River, which was swollen by rain and by melting snow. The pursuing reactionary forces had prevented major crossings at several points. As the Red forces advanced up the left bank of the river, only one possibility remained to get across and escape—the Bridge of the Iron Chains, at Luting. The lives of 100,000 members of the Red Army and the Communist Party, and the future of the Chinese Revolution, depended on this crossing. During the Taiping Rebellion, the Imperial Chinese forces had trapped and wiped out a popular army that failed to capture and cross this very bridge.



Ко всѣмъ рабочимъ
ПЕТРОГРАДА!

Товарищи! Революція побѣждаетъ—революція побѣдила. Вся власть перешла къ нашимъ Совѣтамъ. Первыя задачи сильныя трудныя. Надо раздавить до конца сломленную уже реакцію, надо обезпечить полное торжество нашихъ стремленій. Рабочій классъ долженъ, обязанъ проявить въ эти дни **величайшую выдержку и выносливость**, чтобы облегчить Новому Народному Правительству Совѣтовъ выполненіе всѣхъ задачъ. На дняхъ же должны будутъ изданы новые законы по рабочему вопросу и въ томъ числѣ одинъ изъ самыхъ первыхъ законовъ о рабочемъ контролѣ надъ производствомъ и объ регулированіи промышленности.

Забастовки и выступленія рабочихъ вносятъ въ Петроградѣ теперь только внесутъ.

Мы просимъ васъ немедленно прекратить всѣ экономическія и политическія забастовки, встать отнын на работу и производить ее въ полномъ порядкѣ. Работа на заводахъ и во всѣхъ предпріятіяхъ необходима новому правительству Совѣтовъ; потому что всякое разстройство работъ сощетъ для васъ новыя затрудненія, которыхъ и безъ того довольно. Всѣ къ своему мѣсту.

Лучшее средство поддержать наше правительство Совѣтовъ въ эти дни—исполнить свое дѣло.

Да здравствуетъ передовой пролетаріатъ! Да здравствуетъ революція!

Петроградскій Совѣтъ Р. и С. Д.
Петроградскій Совѣтъ Профессіональныхъ Союзовъ.
Центральный Совѣтъ Фабрично-Заводскихъ Комитетовъ.

A Bolshevik poster (translation, p.15) distributed by the Petrograd Soviet...

The advance guard of the communist forces received orders to march the remaining 240 li (80 miles) to the bridge in 24 hours. They held political discussions about the importance of the task while marching. They climbed to the top of a mountain pass, fought a battle to dislodge the enemy from his fortifications there, and climbed down the other side. There was pouring rain for the last 12 hours of the march. To prevent themselves from falling asleep on their feet, the troops tied themselves together with their ground cloths. They arrived at the bridge in 24 hours, at six in the morning.

The troops ate and held meetings to plan the attack. The planks had been removed from the bridge and all that stretched across the roaring rapids were 13 bare iron chains. Twenty-two volunteers went hand over hand across the chains, firing their weapons and throwing hand grenades at the enemy when they got close enough. Behind them, 22 other volunteers laid planks and provided supporting fire. Following them, hundreds of troops ran across the planks firing at the enemy. The Kuomintang forces had left the planks at their end of the bridge in position. They poured kerosene on them and set them on fire. The Red soldiers continued their advance through the flames. They routed the reactionaries, took the bridge and the city of Luting. The rest of the army, including the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, began to arrive the next day and crossed en masse. (See Schram, pp. 184-186; Wilson, pp. 194-207.)

At Stalingrad, at the Tatu River, wherever the working masses have stood and fought, communists have taken the lead in developing and encouraging this mass heroism by their own example. Based on political understanding communists have been physical leaders among the masses, as well as providing leadership at the general staff level. This is the opposite of the terrorist conception of "inspiring the masses" by violent acts in isolation from the workers.

Mass heroism comes about because the desperation and inability to live in the old way mentioned above leads workers to have a "contempt for death." As Lenin described it:

"...The masses must know that they are entered upon an armed, bloody and desperate struggle. Contempt for death must become widespread among them and will ensure victory. The onslaught on the enemy must be stressed with the greatest vigor; attack, not defense, must be the slogan of the masses; the ruthless extermination of the enemy will be their task." **(The Lessons of the Moscow Uprising,** p. 178)

This contempt for death is not to be confused with a desire for martyrdom or "revolutionary suicide." Good soldiers do not dwell on dying. They concentrate their thinking and energy on killing the enemy. Obviously in overthrowing the U.S. ruling class, we are going to have casualties. Casualties cannot be avoided in war. But they are not the object. The object is to defeat the enemy. In order to do this, we try to preserve our forces as best we can, recognizing that as workers, students and soldiers gain political and military experience, they become more and more useful to the working class and are not to be squandered needlessly.

Nor does mass heroism get the working class very far in and of itself. Many participants in the civil rights movement, the ghetto rebellions, wildcat strikes and rebellious acts in the army stood up fearlessly against the armed might of the ruling class, only to be tricked into following political representatives of that same ruling class. Mass heroism must become intertwined with a revolutionary communist political understanding. More and more workers must learn to view political events from the perspective of class struggle and class dictatorship. Fundamentally, our Party members and friends, and the increasing sections of the working class that we are going to in-

fluence, must learn to use dialectical materialism as the method of understanding the world. When a force like this comes into being, the ruling class is essentially finished. "Political power flows out of the barrel of a gun," and political power will belong to the workers when they are armed with dialectical materialism, because dialectical materialism teaches us why we need guns, how to get them and what to do with them.

Given that we need a base for revolutionary communism in the working class and its allies, and given that we must learn to encourage and rely upon mass heroism, how do we learn military strategy and tactics? How does the Party learn to serve the working class so that its mass heroism is used in the most effective manner, leading to victory? Military strategy and tactics comes from dialectical materialism.

Revolutionary military strategy and tactics is a branch of the general laws of dialectical materialism, like political economics, or like the overall strategy and tactics of building a revolutionary movement, or, for that matter, like physics or chemistry. The bourgeoisie tries to surround all these areas of knowledge with a mystique, creating the illusion that one has to be a super expert to understand them. But all the books at West Point didn't help General Westmoreland, didn't help Maxwell Taylor. Secy. of Defense McNamara even added computers and that didn't help.

The Party and the working class can learn and develop military strategy and tactics by doing the following:

(1) Increasing participation in the class struggle—on the job, the campus, the community. The principles of unarmed struggle are more similar than different to those of armed struggle. For example, the need to rely on the workers, the need for boldness and taking the offense, the need to concentrate one's forces to outnumber the enemy at a particular point, the need to disperse one's forces enough so that the enemy cannot concentrate all his forces at the same point, the need to catch the enemy psychologically off balance. Pivotal to all of this is the need to fight anti-communism and build the Party in the midst of struggle. We must learn to do this in the day-to-day battles now or we will be unable to do it in the midst of revolutionary warfare later.

(2) Studying dialectical materialism. The article on this subject in the Oct. 1977 **PL Magazine** is a good way to begin. (The concentration and dispersion of forces mentioned above is a particular example of the general dialectical law of the unity and struggle of opposites.)

(3) Studying military history. The richest lessons are to be learned from the strategy and tactics of revolutionary movements from the Paris Commune through the present. The Russian Revolution is particularly relevant, as are attempts at insurrection in Europe and Asia during the 1920's (see **Armed Insurrection**). Certain events from U.S. history are useful to study, such as John Brown's military thinking and practice (in Kansas as well as at Harper's Ferry), the general strikes and sit-down strikes, the ghetto rebellions. An article on the events in France in 1968 in the Feb. '78 **PL Magazine** is of great relevance as is the PL pamphlet on the Flint Sit-Down strike. The bibliography appended to this report contains some books and articles that can be a starting point for this study.

One concept that emerges from the study of military history is what Sir B.H. Lidell Hart, the late British bourgeois military historian and strategist called the "indirect approach." The indirect approach is designed to catch the enemy psychologically and, if possible, physically off balance. Throughout history, all successful commanders have used it. Sun Tzu, who wrote **The Art of War** 2,500 years ago and is often quoted by Mao Tse-Tung, said, "All warfare is based on deception... rapidity is the essence of war; take advantage of the enemy's unreadiness, make your way by unexpected routes, and attack unguarded spots."

The Long March is an example of this indirect approach. The Kuomintang forces expected the Red Army to stay in position and fight against the encircling forces, as it had done four times previously. But the Chinese Communist Party made the estimate that the encircling forces were too strong this time. Therefore, it made the decision to break out and escape over a route that seemed physically impossible (in order to apply the indirect approach most successfully, it is necessary to have forces capable of mass heroism). The formation of the storm groups at Stalingrad caught the Germans psychologically, although not physically, by surprise. Following

TO ALL WORKERS
OF PETROGRAD!

Comrades! The Revolution is winning, the Revolution has won. All the power has passed over to our Soviets. The first weeks are the most difficult ones. The broken reaction must be finally crushed, a full triumph must be secured for our endeavors. The working-class ought to —must—show in these days

THE GREATEST FIRMNESS AND ENDURANCE

in order to facilitate the execution of all the aims of the new People's Government of Soviets. In the next few days, decrees on the Labor question will be issued. Among the very first will be the decree on Worker's Control over the production and regulation of industry.

STRIKES AND DEMONSTRATIONS OF THE WORKER MASSES IN PETROGRAD NOW CAN ONLY DO HARM.

We ask you to stop immediately all economic and political strikes, to take up your work, and do it in perfect order. The work in factories and all industries is necessary for the new Government of Soviets, because any interruption of this work will only create new difficulties, and we have enough as it is. All to your places.

The best way to support the new Government of Soviets in these days—is by doing your job.

LONG LIVE THE IRON TENACITY OF THE PROLETARIAT!
LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION!

Petrograd Soviet of W. & S. D.
Petrograd Council of Trade Unions.
Central Council of Factory-Shop Committees.

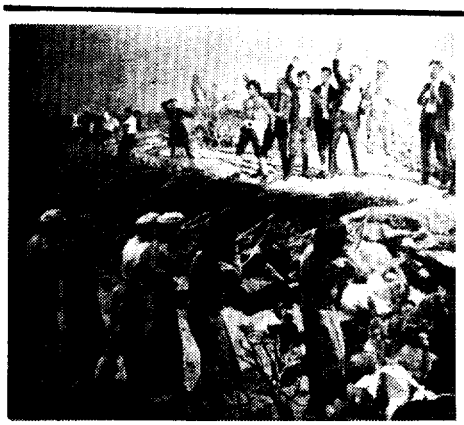
...as the Communists, workers, and peasants began to deal with the order of the day—the building of socialism.

Stalingrad, when the tide turned and the Russian Army began its advance to Berlin, it adopted a strategy throughout 1944 of advancing in between German strong points, compelling the Germans to fall back and abandon many of them without being able to employ concentrated fire-power they had built up in these defensive positions. This was an indirect approach, as was the German sweep around the end of the French Maginot Line at the beginning of WW II.

You may have heard the expression, "like Sherman marching through Georgia." In the U.S. Civil War, for the first time in history, troops became dependent on railroads for their supplies. Thus, major troop movements on both sides tended to predictably follow railroad tracks. Sherman marched out of Atlanta towards the sea but he left his heavy equipment behind, so that he was able to cut loose from the railroad system with a 60,000-strong force of light infantry. Foraging parties accumulated food. By advancing in this manner through the enemy's rear, they severed the Confederate Army's railroad connections, cutting them off from their supplies. Lee's armies were in position, ready to fight frontal assaults but were essentially destroyed by this indirect approach. Tactically, during this 425-mile series of lightning raids, Sherman always had at least two objectives in mind at any given moment, so that if the Southern forces moved to cut him off from one city, he would immediately veer for another. In this way, he was able to retain the offensive. When you planned your last job action, did you do that?

When the workers took over Paris in 1871, Thiers, the reactionary Prime Minister, had a politically unreliable army. Instead of immediately confronting the Communards (the direct approach), he marched this army out of Paris to Versailles. This way he removed them from further political "contamination" by the Paris proletariat. At Versailles, where the troops were surrounded by an aristocratic population loyal to the ruling classes, Thiers gave them daily political indoctrination, money, wine. When he felt they had been sufficiently consolidated politically, he laid siege to Paris and defeated the Commune. The Communards, unfortunately, spent a month waiting to be attacked, when they could have continued on the offensive by marching on Versailles before Thiers could reindoctrinate his troops. "When the enemy retreats, pursue." The defensive, as Lenin pointed out, is the death of any revolutionary movement. One way of summing up revolutionary strategy and tactics (and overall political strategy and tactics) is that it is the art of always maintaining the offensive, even if the enemy is, in an overall sense, much stronger, it is possible to hold out on the defense, but unless you go over to the offense, you will not be able to win and will eventually be defeated. Are you on the offense at your job in terms of building the Party, circulating **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO**, raising 30 for 40 and South Africa, building organizations like C.A.R., carrying the class struggle to the boss rather than awaiting his next attack? Planning how to take the offensive, and then **TAKING** it, is the best possible preparation for the armed struggle of workers' power.

Some people, on becoming convinced that the armed struggle for workers' power is necessary and possible, conclude that the main thing we should do is obtain guns, learn to shoot, and practice military maneuvers. As a first reaction, this may show seriousness and courage. However, after further thinking, it is apparent that this would be a particularly inept example of a "direct approach"—they're in power; we're not, charge! Our equivalent of Sherman through Georgia is to surround the bosses with sections of workers and their allies who are committed to revolutionary warfare. At this time, that is our strategic indirect approach. Given that this is the primary task facing our Party now, we must learn to apply the political and military principle of CONCENTRATION—of people, time, energy—to carrying it out.



Imperialist slaughter: A 1920 Soviet painting depicting the murder of "26 Baku Commissars" by British and White forces (top); Judenrat police arrest Jewish anti-fascist rebels in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, 1943 (bottom).

One result of concentrating on base-building will be winning over many people who own weapons and who know how to use them (the government says there are about 50 million handguns, rifles and shot-guns privately owned in the U.S.). Many of these people will have some training, courtesy of the U.S. army, in maneuvers, reconnaisance, electronics, artillery, tanks, explosives. They will teach the rest of us. When the time comes that hundreds of thousands, even millions, of workers are suddenly ready to take up arms, they can be quickly trained by this cadre of politically and militarily knowledgeable people.

During the insurrection in Moscow in 1917, thousands of workers who had never held a gun were joining the Red Guard. These factory Red Guard detachments were ordered to report to a railroad yard, where soldiers who had joined the Bolshevik cause gave them basic training—in one day. The emphasis was on learning to use one weapon correctly. Most were taught how to shoot and clean a rifle. Others were instructed in how to make and throw Molotov cocktails. The next day they went into battle. They won—including taking the Kremlin—with relatively light casualties against trained troops. But the morale and confidence of the trained troops had been destroyed as the capitalist system declined, while the morale and confidence of the workers was at an all-time high. If there is more than one day available to learn to shoot, so much the better. But the point is that these Red Guards had been in training for a long time based on their participation in the class struggle and their consistent political education over a period of years by the Bolsheviks. The following statements from **Armed Insurrection** can sum up this aspect of the discussion:

"This participation of the masses is not merely one of the key objectives in preparing for armed insurrection; it is the main objective, to which all other objectives must be subordinated...

"The lessons of Petrograd, Moscow, Germany in 1932, Canton, Shanghai, etc., show that, in an acute revolutionary period, it is relatively easy to create a vast combat organization. Ordinarily, several months will be available for this. But a really combat-worthy military organization can only be formed as quickly as this if there already exists a sufficiently large number of cadres with adequate military and political training. Without these cadres, who will provide the skeleton of the combat organization, i.e., its commanders, the military organization will not be worth much in fighting terms...

"The tactics of insurrection and street fighting...is extremely complicated. Its study requires prolonged effort and perseverence. Thus, the revolutionary party which remains Marxist through and through—i.e., which treats insurrection as an art, and propagates the idea of armed uprising in the working class—must confront in practice the question of how to train the cadres of the future insurrection... Every proletarian party must set about resolving this question without waiting for an immediate revolutionary situation (when it will be too late); it must do so independently of the current political situation... Side by side with the study of Marxism-Leninism, the Party leadership must organize the study of military science, with particular emphasis on the lessons of past insurrections..."

FEATURES OF THE U.S. REVOLUTION

We have rejected the idea that proletarian internationalism can be reconciled with any form of nationalism. We have seen that this idea helped restore capitalism in Russia and China. Therefore, we realize that we cannot build socialism here by attempting to have a period of peaceful co-existence with capitalist states following our seizure of power. We will be at war with the capitalist world. It is therefore vital that in our base-building work now, we win workers over to a thoroughly internationalist perspective so that they will support this conception of using a socialist United States primarily as a bastion for world revolution. Likewise, we must do everything we can to strengthen our ties to workers in other countries.

This rejection of nationalism also means that we will not appeal to people on a non-class, "patriotic" basis to help build our economy and army. The Soviet Army that was built up during the Civil War was largely staffed by Tsarist officers, appealed to on the basis of patriotism and money. Many of these officers were later purged when it turned out—surprise—that they did not want to build socialism. We will be fighting pitched battles against army officers and other reactionary sections of the population from the outset. We want to win over as much of the working class and its allies as possible. But our attitude toward the class enemy and his well-paid agents (which in the U.S. includes several million people out of the 220 million population) is not to compromise with them, or re-educate them—it is to wipe them out.

This is not as self evident as it may appear. It flows out of the overall political line. The North Vietnamese army, for example, because of its revisionist, nationalist political position, actually prevented peasants and workers from killing U.S. pilots that were shot down. These men were all officers, all volunteers, all highly skilled agents of mass murder. But because the goal was not socialist revolution, these men were kept alive as a bargaining counter with the U.S. imperialists.

WHO WILL BE THE MAIN FIGHTING FORCES ON THE CAPITALIST SIDE?

At this point—and current trends do not indicate a change—the only significant organized and politically reliable armed groups available to the U.S. bosses are: (1) The big-city police forces (and, to a lesser extent, some of the state police forces); (2) Certain elite units of the U.S. armed services, such as paratroopers, rangers, marines. By politically reliable we mean committed enough to keep fighting in the face of an armed working class. By this standard, most of the army is not politically reliable. Even some of the elite units do not hold up well over time. The marines looked good in Santo Domingo in 1965, when the revolutionary forces, because of their internal political weaknesses, could not carry on a protracted struggle. But they lost much of their will to fight over the long haul in Vietnam. One reflection of this lack of commitment was the U.S. policy of one-year tours of duty in Vietnam. Militarily, this policy was undermining the war effort, but politically, the government estimated that the troops would not accept longer tours.

The probability that the big-city police and a relatively few elite units of the armed services would be the main enemy is a rather favorable one for the working class. There has been a great propaganda effort, spearheaded by TV coverage of the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968 and an inundation of TV cop shows, e.g., SWAT, to portray these police forces as all-powerful. The truth is that unarmed and relatively unorganized students in Chicago burnt out several police cars and put dozens of cops in the hospital. Against masses of working people, as in the ghetto rebellions, the cops have usually been routed. In Detroit, in 1967:

"Widespread and aggressive action by ghetto Negroes (sic) overwhelmed local police forces, leaving them virtually powerless to enforce order in the streets. As the ability of the police to enforce order in the streets diminished, more and more segments of the Negro community joined the young men who had been in the forefront. At the peak of this phase occurred a euphoric realization among Negro rioters that they had nullified the control of the police." (Boesel and Rossi)

The state police and 5,000 National Guardsmen were called in, but could not control the rebellion. Finally, 4,700 paratroopers from the elite 82nd and 101st airborne divisions arrived, equipped with armored personnel carriers and tanks. It took them several days to overcome the rebels. The use of the 82nd and 101st divisions revealed the thinness of reliable reserves even during a relatively small war. These divisions had already had their orders cut to report to Vietnam, and had to be diverted to Detroit. Apparently, there was no one else to send. This occurred against a rebellion by **part** of the population of one city. There was no leadership by a communist party, no plan to take power, and only the seeds of tactics and coordination.

What would the ruling class have done if armed red guard detachments, under communist leadership, marched out of the Detroit auto factories to support the ghetto rebels, with plans to seize city hall, police stations, arsenals, radio and TV stations, railroad terminals, airports? And what if this were happening in New York, Chicago, L.A., Cleveland, Newark, Birmingham, New Orleans, Pittsburg, Houston, Boston, Buffalo, Phoenix, Dallas, Denver, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Miami, Atlanta, Seattle, St. Louis, Washington, D.C. and where you live, all at the same time? Where would they have sent the 101st airborne?

So, on the one hand, we have to take the armed power of the bourgeoisie seriously tactically. They have a lot of police stations, a lot of guns, and are organized. They believe in racism and fascism and making a buck, and they kill people. On the other hand, strategically, against a politically and materially armed working class, they don't amount to much. If we can build a base, they can't stop us.

As a further note on the speed with which workers can absorb military science, the Detroit snipers quickly learned to back away from their windows so that no muzzle flash would be visible on the streets, and about 100 of the rebels learned to maneuver well enough to lay seige to two police stations, trapping the cops and the National Guard inside. They had to be rescued by tanks.

Part of the ruling class's current strategic move to the right is the wave of publicity being given to the "re-emergence" of the Nazi Party and KKK. We put re-emergence in quotes because recent history shows that these groups are continually re-emerging. More fundamental aspects of the move to the Right are the destruction of the trade union movement, the cutbacks in schools and hospitals, the ideological anti-communist offensive around "human rights," the racist drive around everybody seeking their "roots" ("ethnic purity"), the reversal of recent gains made by minorities in hiring and promotion practices and in school admissions.

Although the Nazi-KKK aspect is not primary, it is important to the ruling class for several

Terrorizing Capitalism

Expert on Terrorism Urges U.S. To Press Counteroffensive Plans

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13 (UPI) -- A Government expert has warned that terrorists may soon be able to paralyze entire cities in the United States and has urged that a Federal crisis management group be set up to deal with such potential catastrophes.

Robert H. Kupperman, a specialist on terrorism, said yesterday that the group should use "war games" to develop realistic counteroffensive plans.

Outlining the scope of the potential threat in his report to President Carter's Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism, Mr. Kupperman, who is serving with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, speculated on what might have happened if New York City's power failure last July had lasted five days.

"Looters would run wild, fires starting at random, and jittery National Guardsmen shooting into crowds of panicked people." Mr. Kupperman said, "Food and water would become scarce, the sanitation system would collapse, and the rats, which outnumber the people, would be close to achieving a permanent victory."

"The point is that 'nature,' with the aid of human inefficiency, produced the two-day siege," he said, "but a trained, quite small paramilitary force could take the city of New York—or any large metropolitan area—off-line for extended periods of time."

—New York Times

reasons, including making their liberal forms look good. Kept in the wings, it can be used in the future to mobilize larger numbers of civilians against the PLP and the working class around anti-communism, racism and fascism. Therefore, our Party is quite correct to attack these formations now, while they are small and to turn their "re-emergence" around into an anti-racist, anti-fascist, procommunist offensive. But we must avoid the trap of thinking that these groups are our main enemy. Until we move some sections of the working class to the Left, we can only beat up Nazis and KKK'ers if the cops do not prevent it. If we want to get at these fascists despite the efforts of the police, and if we want to get at the police themselves, we need groups of workers from the shops. So we have to use our attacks on the Nazis and the Klan in a way that helps us build these shop bases and not as a diversion from that main task.

UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES WILL REVOLUTION IN THE U.S. BE TAKING PLACE?

At this time, our answers to this question consist at best of estimates and, at worst, of speculations. Even speculations may not be out of place, if only to get us thinking concretely about a revolution that has been declared impossible by ruling class propaganda. This declaration will go down in history with the ones about the impossibility of another New York City blackout and the impossibility of defeating U.S. fire-power in Vietnam and the impossibility of the Soviet Union defeating the Nazis.

Based on current trends, the most likely situation is that we will be in the midst of World War III. The U.S. and its allies will be fighting the Soviet Union and its allies (in both cases, not necessarily the same allies as now) to settle their sharpening imperialist rivalry for control of the world. Events in Africa, particularly Southern Africa, in the Mid-East and in Europe (Soviet and U.S. armed forces build-up, increasing strength of West European C.P.'s, and increasing disarray in NATO), all point in this direction. The Progressive Labor Party in the USA, the Canadian Party of Labor, and hopefully other groups in other countries—particularly the Soviet Union—will be organizing to transform this imperialist war into civil war. While we cannot make a meaningful estimate of the year this war will begin, the pace of war preparation is accelerating.

Will this be an all-out thermo-nuclear war, involving the massive destruction of cities, population, industrial base? That possibility is the most likely. Even assuming the war did not start with hydrogen bomb strikes, the power that was losing on the conventional battlefield (probably the U.S.) would find it difficult to accept defeat without resorting to at least tactical nuclear weapons. The other side would be likely to respond in kind, and events could then escalate to total nuclear war quite rapidly.

If nuclear war took place, our strategy of socialist revolution would remain the same. Deep ties among the masses would be more critical than ever, given the tremendous social and economic dislocation that would exist. The need to internationalize socialist revolution would be greater than ever. Most of the major urban and industrial centers would have been destroyed. Hopefully, major sections of the population would have been evacuated to the countryside by some combination of the ruling class's efforts and the efforts of the working class itself, and of its party. So we would be fighting for power primarily in agricultural and undeveloped, rather than urban, areas and we would be devoting a large portion of time and energy to sheer survival.

The Russian imperialists and the U.S. imperialists are both planning for war, and the leaders of both ruling classes have hopes of avoiding all-out nuclear war. They would prefer to kill off several hundred million working people that they consider to be excess population, and to redivide world markets and resources (naturally in different directions) without completely disrupting capitalist business as usual. They are engaged in negotiations such as the SALT talks to try to set up rules for WW III in much the same way that poison gas was ruled out for WW II. The use of the neutron bomb and other weapons that destroy people but not industrial capacity might help them accomplish this. At the time of both world wars, the technology existed to kill virtually everybody on earth through the contamination of water supplies with virulent diseases such as parrot fever, and related biological techniques, but the ruling classes avoided using them.

If the imperialists succeeded in having a primarily non-nuclear war, we would be in a situation more similar to that of the Russians in WW I. We would have to organize insurrections in the cities, mutiny at the fronts, as well as fighting battles in the countryside to gain control of the food supply. The working class and its party would have to develop methods to rapidly get our hands on U.S. nuclear missile-carrying submarines, land-based nuclear missiles, and bombers. We would need to do this to prevent the U.S. ruling class from using these weapons against us, and as a threat against the Russian ruling class. Assuming that the Russian capitalists were still in power, they would hardly be likely to continue following the SALT guidelines against a revolutionary communist U.S.

A more remote possibility is the development of a major depression, similar to the 1930s, without a quick move to war. This time, because U.S. imperialism is declining, the ruling class would probably find it necessary to move to a fascist form of government. With the prior existence of a strong Left in this country, this would more resemble Italy under Mussolini than Germany under Hitler. We would have a relatively weak, unconsolidated form of fascism, without a mass base in the working class, and therefore relatively easy to overthrow. As they said in the Italian underground partisan movement, "Mussolini killed and killed the communists until there were two million of them."

On the other hand, if we fail in our base-build-

ing and fascism is instituted without a strong Left, there would be a period of time during which we would have to rebuild our forces from almost nothing under difficult circumstances. The fascists would have a more ironclad grip on the country, as in Hitler Germany.

These scenarios are not necessarily mutually exclusive. They interpenetrate. Presumably during either type of war, particularly with a strong Left, the ruling class would have to resort to fascism to rule. A major depression and fascism might develop first, but with war following shortly thereafter, prior to the success of socialist revolution.

There are certain problems of a technological nature that are common to all these situations. How would we get our hands on those nuclear submarines? How would we operate electrical, telephone and water systems. What about radio, television, railroads? Steel production? Growing food?

If you have read this far, you can probably recite the answer—build a base. It is people, especially working people, who do all of these things. While these problems are technological, they are not **PRIMARILY** technological. They are primarily political. And revolutionary politics—including revolutionary war—is people. If we view the technology that surrounds us from the perspective of a communist-led working class, with communist-led allies among GIs, students and intellectuals, then that technology resembles the police: tactically formidable but strategically takeable. In fact, it is the ruling class that will strangle in its own advanced technology, as it did in Vietnam. As one Colonel Franklyn commented afterward, regarding fighting in Hue:

"The city is an environment that separated the trooper from his supporting arms. How do you use close air support when the bad guys are only 50 feet away, across the street? How do use artillery? How do use 'smart bombs'? How do you use all these things we have been investing all our money in for thirty years?" (Thompson and Frizzell, p. 174)

Just as revolutionary war is based on people and mass heroism, building socialist society and socialist production is based on people and mass ingenuity, mass intelligence, mass creativity—other forms of mass heroism. As we would suspect from studying dialectical materialism, the next main task, building socialism, is directly related to overthrowing capitalism. The destruction of capitalism calls for creation of a working-class war machine which is simultaneously the first task of socialist production. Read again the words of the Commissar of the Putilov Works. His words are probably the most revealing in this report.

The common core of revolutionary war and of building socialist society is continual base-building around communist ideology—the "production" of communist men and women. Our progress can be measured by the movement of sections of workers, students and soldiers, to march under the banners of socialist revolution. On May Day, 1978, we will lead our base to symbolically plant the red flag on the White House. By applying, developing and clarifying the ideas in this report, in the future we will lead the working class to seize state power.

CONCLUSION

To sum up organizationally, the National Committee resolved the following:

(1) Our strategy remains the armed struggle for working class state power. To bring that about, our primary task is to build a base around that concept on the job, especially in basic industry, but in other sectors of the working class, and among students and intellectuals as well.

(2) We must continue to rebuild our work in the armed forces. We wish to encourage party members and friends, especially youths just graduating from high school, to join the armed forces and help build this work. Some older members and friends can join the National Guard. Area leaderships should supervise efforts to put more people into the armed forces. A subcommittee of the National Committee was created to lead this work. Area leaders should make sure that this committee is informed of new people joining the armed forces. **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** should reflect this work.

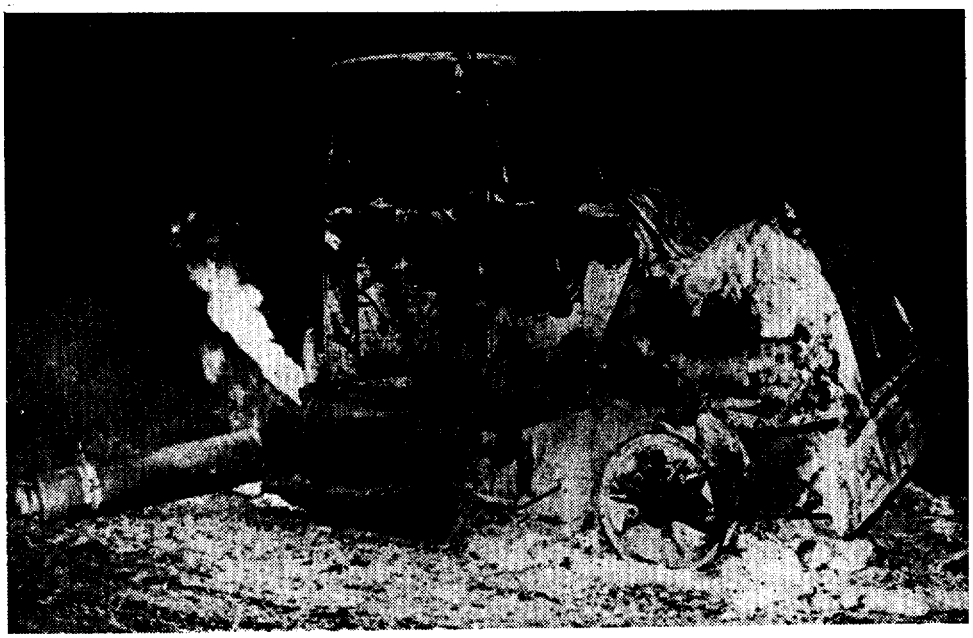
(3) In addition to studying the philosophy of dialectical materialism, and the overall political ideas of Marxism-Leninism, we must guarantee the study of a particular branch of this science, revolutionary war. This report and the works mentioned in the bibliography below can be used to begin this study. Area leaders are to see to it that this study is organized, and that a forum regarding the armed struggle for workers' power is given in each city. As a study aid, but not as a substitute for local forums, a tape cassette of the New York City forum can be made possible.

Miners Battle

As this is being written, the strike of 160,000 soft coal miners—members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA)—is in its eighth week. The actions taken by the miners' rank and file thus far make it probably the most militant strike by industrial workers in the U.S. since the 1940s. The mass participation and leadership by the rank and file is reminiscent of the '59 steel strike, the '64 longshore strike and the '71 postal wildcat. But the miners have gone several steps beyond those walkouts.

They have engaged in armed attacks on scabs, local police, state troopers (often riot-equipped) and bosses'gunmen. They have organized caravans and motorcades of hundreds and thousands of miners into the coal fields of Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Indiana, Illinois, and as far West as Utah, shutting scab mines, blowing up coal equipment and railroads carrying scab coal, storming terminals and loading docks distributing scab coal, burning scab trucks and dumping trailer-loads of scab coal. Hundreds of strikers have been arrested (and hundreds more have been saved from arrest by mass, militant confrontation with the cops).

All this heroic ORGANIZED action is in the best class interests of both the miners and the entire U.S. working class. It represents "the finest hour" for our class in recent memory. To understand what produced this fever pitch of class struggle, one must examine the whole relationship of class forces that led up to it, nationally and internationally.



Over 160,000 striking coal miners have shown the international working class their prolonged strike is, indeed, a "skirmish between labor and capital" and, within this battle, capitalist violence must be met by workers' violence to the point where a variety of tactics must be adopted to achieve victory. Coal dumped on a highway (top), a burning coal truck (left), or a democratic vote held in the thick of the struggle, to allow one truck laden with coal to supply a hospital exhibits the high level of trade union understanding displayed by the miners. Members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party are attempting to link communist awareness with this singularly valiant trade union battle.

I. COAL AND CAPITAL—THE ENERGY CONNECTION

From the late Forties to the early Seventies, the coal industry was viewed as "sick" and dying. The rapid advances of oil, natural gas and nuclear energy literally put coal "on the back burner." Then came the Arab oil embargo of 1973 and the energy situation was completely turned around. The search was on by the U.S. ruling class for a way out of the increasing dependence on foreign oil to keep its profit system going. This was doubly important because U.S. rulers could no longer dominate the rest of the world at will. The rise of capitalist power in Russia, West Germany, Japan and among the Arab overlords of the Mid-east meant U.S. bosses could no longer simply walk into a weaker country and take whatever it wanted. U.S. capitalism had entered a state of decline. This made the search for alternative energy sources all the more desperate.

Coal, of course, was a natural. While not "the answer," it certainly could provide a breathing spell for a capitalist system entering what appeared to be permanent recession, if not depression. Huge untapped reserves still exist, especially in the West but also in the East. And the possibility of converting coal to gas and oil is being pursued—a real plum for energy-hungry profit-seekers.

Thus it was that these very same oil companies entered the coal industry. Among the top dozen coal producers in the U.S., four are owned or controlled by oil companies. And within that, it is the Rockefeller interests who dominate. In addition, the big steel companies—U.S., Bethlehem, Inland—also own huge mines, to guarantee their supply. Thus, the coal industry is no "mom and pop" operation. It is controlled by the main sections of the U.S. ruling class, the very ones who are locked in a life-and-death battle with the Russian and other imperialists for control of the world's markets, on which world capitalism lives or dies.

As a corollary of this movement of Big Capital into a now **expanding** coal industry, the desirability of keeping union wages and conditions **out** was of paramount importance. So many of the new mines, both in the West and in Appallachia, were non-union, scab mines. Often pitched gun battles took place with union-minded miners to keep them that way. The bosses found that having union miners enforcing safety against the normal murder in the mines; requiring helpers on large and dangerous machinery; ready to strike and stop production over these issues—all this made non-union, scab mines much more profitable, sometimes three times as productive based on speed-up, nothing expended for safety and the ability to hire and fire at will. So it was that UMW mines, which once produced 75% of the soft coal in the U.S., now account for only 50%, an important factor in any strike attempt to halt production and put pressure on the bosses.

II. COAL AND THE UMWA—THE COMPANY CONNECTION

The fortunes of the UMWA—the principal union in the coal fields—mirrored developments in the industry. Its capitalist-minded leadership, except for periodic "side-trips" organized by rebellious rank and filers followed the road laid out by the coal bosses. While communists had fought like hell for a militant, rank-and-file-led union in the Twenties and Thirties, and led bitter strikes throughout that period (see accompanying history), they had been successfully ousted from any position of influence by a combination of all-out cold war anti-communist assaults in the late Forties and the communists' own mis-guided faith in capitalism and class collaborationist, no-strike policies during World War II.

So it was that, in 1948, John L. Lewis made an important decision with little organized opposition. Seeing the trend towards automation in the coal industry, and not ready, willing nor able to follow a class-struggle policy of fighting for a 30-hour week for 40 hours pay, Lewis signed a contract which linked miners' benefits to coal **production**. Thus, pension and health plans would be funded based on the tonnage of coal mined—a certain amount of money per ton of coal produced.

This was the signal for the companies to flood the mines with automated equipment and lay off miners, a situation which the UMWA under Lewis had agreed in advance not to fight. The union, once having 680,000 members at its height, sunk to under 125,000 working miners by the early Seventies. With that decline also came a decreasing strength with which to fight the operators' complete disregard for mine safety, their wholesale violation of what was left of the contract, and their increasing ability to mine non-union coal.

But, of course, these defeats for the miners did not erase the contradictions of capitalism in the coal industry. If anything, they became **sharper**, especially in light of the U.S. ruling class's position world-wide and the increasing demand for coal as an energy source. And, as is true among all workers, the need to fight back against this rape of their conditions impelled the miners to do just that.

With Lewis and his hand-picked successor Kennedy gone, and a new, less sophisticated dictator, Tony Boyle, in the saddle, the union became merely a treasury to be milked for all its worth, and the hell with protecting its members. The rank-and-file revolt began around the issue of health and safety, as the movement against black lung, the killing occupational disease among coal miners. It spread to become a full-scale rebellion against the Boyle machine. The first

A Limousine for Sellout Miller

QUESTION: "How do you tell the difference between a limousine-owning coal boss and a limousine-owning UMWA leader?

ANSWER: "The coal boss also owns a Lear jet plane!"

THAT'S NOT SOMETHING WE MADE UP. It comes right out of the mouth of UMWA president Arnold Miller, who rode to power in the union on a "reform" platform and is now "reforming" the miners to death.

Miller has just leased a sleek 9-passenger black limousine at $400 a month to allow union officers to travel with "proper dignity" to appointments. "I have had to hitchhike to the White House. I don't think that's proper," Miller told the Charleston, West Virginia **Gazette** on Jan. 4. This at a time when miners' medical benefits have been cut off and pensions will be voided in February.

Soon after Miller and his crowd took office on his "reform" platform in 1972, the union auctioned off former president Tony Boyle's three limousines. Miller said they symbolized an era in the union's history when "you couldn't tell the union from the coal companies because the officials of both were living off the coal miners."

And how do you tell the difference now? "We don't have Lear jets and they got them," replied Miller. "Some of them got several."

When the miners achieve final retribution over these exploiters, they will place BOTH the coal operators and the union fakers like Miller in the same sleek black limousine—it's called a hearse.

reformer to attach himself to this movement was Jock Yablonski. Boyle had him (and his family) murdered. (A second trial of Boyle for directing that assassination is now under way.) Soon the various reform leaders agreed on Arnold Miller as the candidate to challenge Boyle.

ROCKEFELLER MONEY ELECTS MILLER

None of these developments were lost on the coal operators, especially on the Rockefeller interests who were emerging as the main coal bosses. Seeing the inevitability of an eruption against Boyle, and fearing that the wrath of the rank and file might get out of hand, the liberal Rockefeller wing of the ruling class put their weight behind the reform movement, albeit not openly. Miller's slate, and organization, Miners for Democracy, was directed by the liberal Washington lawyer Joseph Rauh. The money came from philanthropic foundations whose trail led directly to Rockefeller money. (See PLP pamphlet, **Thunder in the Mines.**)

Miller's ultimate election in 1974 was guaranteed by the U.S. government, through the Labor Department under the notorious anti-labor Landrum-Griffin Act. Although cited at the time as a "glorious victory" for the rank and file by various reformers, revisionists and "Communist" Party types, along with the usual assortment of anti-communist liberals like N.Y. **Post** editor James Wechsler and the ruling-class's chief spokesmen, the N.Y. **Times**, the election of Miller was a classic example of capitalism choosing to attack workers covertly rather than frontally, through reform rather than through fascism. However, as shall be seen, the result is the same, if not worse. Miller did virtually everything the bosses wanted, and, in effect, geared up to make the UMWA a fascist union in the name of "democracy" and "reform." (Again, see details in **Thunder in the Mines.**)

The one important gain the rank and file **did** make in this whole movement was the right to ratify or reject the contract (which did not exist under Lewis or Boyle). However, even this became a questionable victory; capitalism takes back with one hand what it is forced to "give" with the other. In the '74 contract negotiations, Miller's first, he attempted to slip through a clause that, in effect, barred the miners' traditional right to strike when the boss baldly violated the contract. Miller billed this agreement as the "best ever" in UMWA history, but after a sampling of rank-and-file sentiment revealed definite rejection of this "best ever," he re-

Cars parked near the Bowersock mine in Indiana, where miner John Hull was killed by scabs.

opened negotiations to get "better than best."

The final settlement was turned down by 40% of those voting, in a balloting controlled by the Miller machine. And the miners soon discovered how worthwhile their new-found "right of ratification" was. The bosses proceeded to violate the contract in wholesale fashion, completely disregarding safety and firing anyone, including local officials, who opposed them. Their new cry was "take it to arbitration," the "best-ever" contract provision negotiated by Miller.

Well, the miners weren't about to knuckle under to that one. Throughout 1975 and 1976, massive wildcats spread throughout the coal fields, often begun by a solitary picket at one mine but respected by as many as 100,000 miners at its peak. Often the miners routed local cops trying to stop them. This reaction to the '74 contract drove the bosses wild, impelling them to rush to court to get injunctions. But the miners simply struck against the injunctions. And, in '76, when the operators and the union announced that the medical benefits had to be cut because the '75 wildcats had so "lowered production" that the health fund was running out of money (remember Lewis' '48 contract and tying benefit funds to coal production?), the rank and file struck against that threat, too.

'WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON . . .'

Now events of the last 30 years had come full circle. The stage was set for a titanic battle. On one side were the operators, needing a docile sped-up work-force to extract as much coal as possible out of the ground for a desperate ruling class, declining internationally and short of energy at home. On the **same** side was the Miller leadership, unable to control the rank and file's fight for their lives and unwilling to lead an all-out pro-working class struggle against the operators, precisely because these reformers were placed in their present positions by the good graces of the bosses' U.S. government and the money of Rockefeller-funded foundations and their liberal lawyers, and believed in the capitalist system. Also, naturally, on this same bosses' side were the various "law enforcement" agencies—local cops, county sheriffs, state troopers, courts, injunction judges, etc.

In addition, the bosses had also built up a huge stockpile of coal which they claimed would outlast any strike. And they now had 50% of the mines out from under UMWA control, supposedly ready to produce scab coal throughout any strike and maintain the strike-busting stockpile.

On the other side of this formidable array of forces and anti-worker factors stood the rank and file, now 160,000 strong, backed up by 125,000 pensioners who also depended on the working miners for the maintenance of their pension plans. This was a rank and file resolved not to allow the destruction of their hard-won medical and pension benefits, of their traditional right to strike over grievances, plus the time-honored idea that one picket in front of **ANY** mine is enough to win that entire mine's UMWA membership to respect that picket.

The miners had two more assets going for them: (1) More than any other group of industrial workers, the miners have a multi-racial, anti-racist history that lowers the ability of the bosses to use the key weapon of racism against them to split their forces (see accompanying anti-racist history); and (2) **the miners have arms with no compunction about using them.**

State trooper car damaged by miners at Ft. Payne, Ala.

III. THE STRIKE

When the contract expired on Dec. 6, 1977, the bosses' media immediately mounted a barrage about a "useless strike" ("look at the stockpile") that "would only hurt the miners and no one else." The idea was to make the miners feel hopeless and settle quickly on the operator's terms. Those terms included:

(1) No strikes over grievances;

(2) Fire all miners caught "picketing, threatening, coercing, fomenting or otherwise being involved in the cause of an unauthorized work stoppage."

(3) Any miner respecting a picket from another mine subject to automatic immediate 30-day suspension;

(4) Bar any arbitrator from changing the penalty imposed by an operator against a miner found "guilty" of starting a wildcat;

(5) Fine wildcatters from $22 to $40 a day for every day out on "an unauthorized work stoppage."

Added later on was a 6th point; eliminate the 80,000 pensions covered under the 1950 pension agreement!

Obviously, to agree to such terms meant destruction of any semblance of a union in the coal fields, as well as of the previous benefits won through past militant strikes. It became clear that fascism was being pushed in the mines. This is the last resort of a weakening ruling class that can no longer rule in the old way. As one company source told the **Charleston Gazette** (Dec. 15), "We're trying to break the psychology of the picket." The chief negotiator for the BCOA (Bituminous Coal Operators Association) himself

Angry miners have taken up guns against scabs and state troopers

openly announced that, "We want a contract that will carry us into the next century." In other words, no more strikes, no more miner opposition to speed-up and killing hazards in the mines —in a word, no more union. This is the kind of dictatorship the bosses desperately need to carry out an imperialist war abroad in their fight to the death with the Russian and other capitalists.

While not necessarily understanding all the bosses' desperate motivations, the miners realized on the one hand that coal, which only they could produce, was urgently needed, while, on the other hand, they were being pushed to the wall to produce it under the worst possible conditions. Furthermore, it already had been announced, as a taste of what's to come, that medical benefits would stop immediately on the first day of a strike, and pensions for the 1950 contract-retirees would also cease, if not in January then certainly in February.

On top of all this, Miller was saying that he agreed "in principle" with the need for "stability" in the mines. He, too, wanted to foreclose the right of miners to spread wildcat strikes (their only real power when the bosses violate the contract). And he was ready to agree to firing miners who organized against "stability."

MINERS CHOOSE TO FIGHT

Rather than live under such fascist conditions, the miners chose to fight. On the very first day of the strike, a combination of rank-and-file leaders and militant local officials began the most widespread armed, militant struggle to shut all coal production in recent memory. Newspapers in the mining areas were filled with stories of hundreds of miners storming loading docks and destroying equipment used to transfer and transport scab coal; organizing 100-car caravans that sped into scab areas of Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee and Alabama, shutting down scab mines left and right. Dynamiting railroad trestles, firebombing mine offices, and dumping scab coal on highways became commonplace. Pictures showing loads of scab coal poured out of trailers and smouldering trucks and equipment appeared frequently in Mid-Western papers.

Inevitably these actions clashed with the "law enforcement" agencies. More often than not, the mass of miners so overwhelmed the sheriffs and state troopers that the latter were reduced to either "monitoring" the motorcades or taking their lives in their hands through direct opposition. "They outnumber us 40 to 1 and if anything happened there wouldn't be much we could do," complained one Tennessee county sheriff, as he eyed a caravan of 200 cars carrying roving pickets in convoys to scab mines in the eastern part of that state.

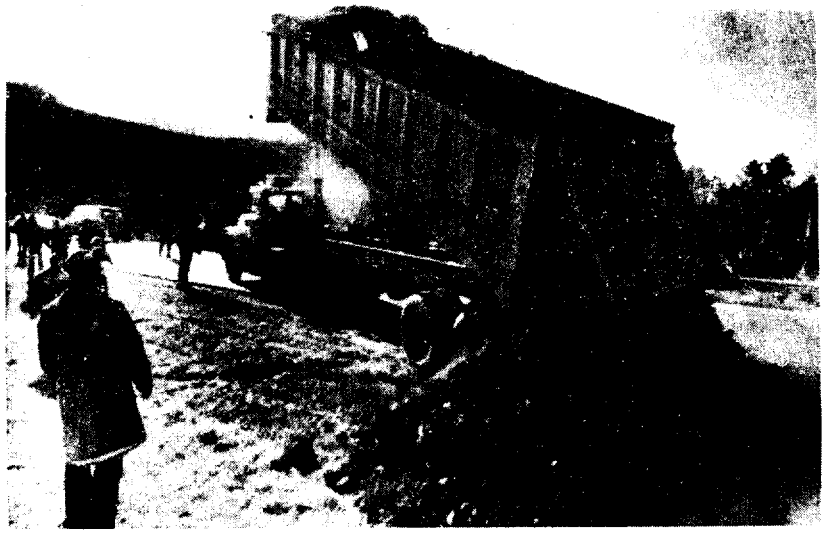
Of course, the bosses' cops weren't exactly rolling over and playing dead either. In at least a dozen cases, armed fights arose with state troopers tear-gassing and shooting at miners engaged in storming terminals or attacking blockades barring access to scab mines. The following stories drawn from December and January issues of **Challenge-Desafio** and various Mid-Western newspapers indicate the sharpness of the clashes and militance of the miners.

PITCHED BATTLE CLOSES SCAB MINES

CLARION COUNTY, PA.—Over 800 armed, club-wielding miners overwhelmed scabs belonging to the company union outfit, the Southern Labor Union, and closed four scab mines here, smashing coal-cutting machines and wrecking at least $30,000 worth of scab equipment. Clarion County mines are half UMW and half company union. The state police were called in but they failed to re-open the mines.

The scabs, who reported "gunfire and weapons were used against us," announced they will be going in again this week to dig scab coal. They were appealing to the State Capital for protection but the strikers declared they would return to keep the mines shut. With reports of help coming from UMW members in nearby Indiana County, a big battle was looming.

Coal miners force the driver of this truck to dump his load of scab coal in Ky.



STOP ANYTHING THAT MOVES

CATTLESBURG, KY.—Striking Ohio coal miners, 400 strong, invaded Eastern Kentucky's scab coal fields on Mon., Dec. 12, shutting down loading docks, slashing tires and forcing truckers to dump scab coal. The strikers swept through the area in a 100-car caravan originating in Gallipolis, Ohio. Entering Kentucky on I-64, they immediately stopped two coal trucks and forced the drivers to dump about 60 tons of coal along U.S. 23. They then headed south, closing several Sandy River coal-loading docks and stopping coal-loading operations at Kentucky Power's generating plant where stockpiled coal was being transferred to a site closer to the huge boiler.

In all, about 20 trucks were stopped and their drivers forced to dump their loads of coal in neat mounds. The miners then stuck strike placards atop each mound. "They swarmed my truck," reported Raymond Russell of Ironton, Ohio, after the miners blocked the road in front of him. "I was carrying 22 tons of coal and they made me dump it all. They told me if I wanted to keep my truck, I'd better take it home and park it. That's where I'm going right now."

Another truck with 40 tons of coal was stopped on the expressway ramp as it turned onto U.S. 23. A dozen miners stood in the ramp, forcing the driver to pull over. One jumped onto the cab's running board and pulled the lever which raised the truck bed, dumping the coal.

Another driver, Joe Simmons, arrived at the scene and reported he had three trucks "and I'm taking them off the road today. These boys mean business."

A boss of an Ashland, Ky. coal-hauling company said the strikers got two of his trucks. "One of my men . . . said they had slashed his tires and made him dump his coal beside the road. And my driver said a state trooper just stood by and watched the whole thing. Can you believe that?"

State road crews were called out to clean up the coal, but many area residents beat them to it. "That makes us look just like Robin Hood," said a miner. "We took the coal from the companies and gave it to the poor folks." He said the caravan planned to continue operations. "Some won't want to quit until the last mine is shut down tight and no scab coal is moving on any road."

THREE COPS HOSPITALIZED

PLEASANT RIDGE MINE, KY.—A battle erupted on Dec. 13 between 400 striking miners and police here in western Kentucky when strikers moved to close the Green Coal Co. scab mine. Kentucky sheriff's deputies and 50 riot-equipped state cops fired tear gas at the rock-and-bottle-throwing mass of miners. In the ensuing melee, two Davies county deputies and one state cop were hospitalized. Fifteen miners were arrested.

Stearns, Ky. miners, on strike for over a year, fought cops who were guarding scabs on Oct., 1977.

STEARNS, HY.—A crowd of 200 miners squared off against state troopers in 30 squad cars equipped with riot gear at the non-union Stearns Mining Co. here. The 200 miners had come to back up the Stearns miners who have been trying to unionize the mine since 1976. A court order limits pickets to six at a time, but the strikers were defying that order. The Stearns miners have engaged in armed battles with company gunmen in their attempt to organize.

On Jan. 7, 500 miners stormed the Rockport, Ind., loading dock of the B and M Coal Co. which has been sending large amounts of scab coal eastward. The dynamiting, incendiary attack set off a spree of explosions and gunfire that resulted in about $800,000 damage. Three trucks, two cars and part of the dock office building were destroyed and 11 cars were damaged. State troopers arrested 194 miners, marching them for one mile along Route 66 to the Spencer County jail where they were charged with criminal contempt of court (for defying an injunction), disorderly conduct and possession of concealed weapons. In nearby Boonville, a fire-bomb set two scab coal-hauling companies ablaze, inflicting a half million dollars damage.

Another major confrontation occurred on Jan. 3 and 4 in East Tennessee where 600 roving pickets moved into Anderson County with bats, axe handles, knives and guns to shut scab mines. On Jan. 2, 110 pickets were arrested in Wise, Va., when they refused to disperse after bombarding scab coal haulers.

A miner looks at the broken windows of a truck which carried scab coal.

THE NEXT DAY A 75-CAR CARAVAN slashed tires, smashed windows, dented equipment and generally shot up $8,000 worth of scab operations at the Three-State Trucking Co. near Holland, Ind. They then moved in on the D and S mine near Dale, Ind., with a similar attack. On the same day, a 200-vehicle caravan moved into Butler County, Ky., where three miners were arrested after five scab coal trucks were dumped and a tipple at the Golden "R" mine was burned. Over in Maryland, 200 miners closed the Mettiki Coal Company's processing plant in Deer Park.

Two large caravans of some 1,000 strikers from Ohio in the north and from Birmingham in the south, set out on Dec. 22 to close scab mines in Alabama and eastern Ohio. Fifty state cops were sent out from the National Guard Armories at Scottsboro and Fort Payne, Alabama after miners had arrived at the Sand Mountain Minerals Co. Pit No. 2 scab mine. The mobile home mining office was burned to the ground; two large tractor tires and several company vehicles were smashed; and scabs were bloodied.

THREE MINERS WERE ARRESTED IN RED Oak, Oklahoma on Dec. 21 for "working over" a cop who had stopped them on a country road for "holding up traffic" near the scab Ferrel-Cooper mine.

Scab coal was also being stopped in transit. Trains had coal cars dumped near Sesser, Ill. Look-outs were awaiting coal trains due at the Baldwin Power Station of Illinois Electric near New Athens, Ill. A Chesapeake and Ohio railroad bridge serving six scab mines was dynamited in Floyd County, Ky. on Dec. 16. And a fire damaged a railroad trestle on the Illinois Central serving scab mines in Kentucky. Towboat crews on the Ohio River near Charleston, West Virginia, agreed to turn their coal barges around and go back south in response to pickets holding large signs along the river bank. One of these barges carries a load from about 100 coal trucks.

On Jan. 23, five hundred Alabama union miners armed with shotguns, handguns and ax handles, attacked a road blockade set up by 100 riot-equipped state troopers trying to prevent them from closing scab mines in the northeastern part of the state. Three cop cars were smashed and 30 miners were arrested on "weapons" charges.

At New Athens, Ill., 75 miners beseiged the Behnken Trucking Service, an outfit that hauls coal from various scab mines to local businesses. Rocks kept the bosses at bay. The assistant terminal manager said the firm "would haul no more coal until the strike is settled."

Four West Virginia miners were charged with conspiracy for dynamiting railroad tracks in Virginia; a scab's mobile home was blown up at the Stearns, Ky. mine of Blue Diamond Coal, on strike for over 15 months; and the Davella Coal Co. scab strip mine in Martin County, Ky., was dynamited—all on Jan. 2.

In the course of the strike, two miners have been murdered, one a pensioner in Eastern Kentucky who was supporting a picket line at Clover Fork, Ky. He was gunned down by a company thug while bringing coffee and sandwiches to the pickets on Jan. 6. The miners "mourned" for their brother by stepping up their actions to shut **ALL** coal production. They had succeeded in closing half the scab operations by mid-January.

While sellout Miller was making "agreements in principle" with the BCOA on disciplining militant miners, the rank and file was creating the strike. Without their actions, an agreement would have been signed long before. But because of the miners' organized armed struggle, Miller was forced to pull back on a "tentative agreement" to fine miners engaging in wildcats. This led the BCOA to walk out of "negotiations" in late December shortly after "a possible breakthrough" had been announced.

Talks were started up again two weeks later, in January. Again reports sifted through that "settlement was near." And again the talks broke down when the coal operators demanded ironclad no-strike provisions and penalties while "offering" half of a proposed wage increase and the end of 80,000 pensions going back to 1950. The inability for even a tentative settlement to be worked out—which, in every case so far, would sell out the miners—is directly traceable to the tremendous militance of the rank and file and its no-holds-barred tactics in shutting scab operations. None of this has been sanctioned or organized by the Miller leadership. If anything, they disavow it.

STRIKE TAKES EFFECT

As this is written (Jan. 26), the "useless strike" theory has been punctured. Already reports have been appearing about "low stockpiles" and "emergency measures" being needed by at least half a dozen utilities to maintain their actual operation. Furthermore, coal profits of unionized companies have dropped to virtually zero. The West Virginia state budget was cut by $15 million due to reduced revenues on account of the strike. And despite a lack of income, inadequate food stamp allotments and virtually no medical care, the miners' resistance appeared to be stiffening.

Having organized themselves into scab-busting units, the strikers refused to back down when facing the forces of the bosses' state. Generally, they fought back, and more often than not won their point, either by destroying or halting the scab operation targeted, despite police protection, or "making their point" in such a way that scabs and their bosses feared to engage in further operation.

While not a conscious attack on the bosses' state as such, the miners' actions were definitely born of being pushed into a corner where they find it intolerable "to live in the old way." Lenin pointed that out as one of the key ingredients in-

volved in creating a revolutionary situation. The other two are the ruling class's inability to rule in the old way and the presence of a strong communist party with a base among the workers, especially the industrial workers. The various steps taken by the coal bosses, representing the main section of the U.S. ruling class, contain elements of the inability to rule in the old way, especially those moves bordering on fascism in the coal fields. The last remaining essential—a communist base—began when forces of the Progressive Labor Party organized to play a role.

IV. THE ROLE OF—AND RESPONSE TO—THE PLP

Recognizing the key importance of the miners' strike—and the emerging element of armed struggle—and having helped make a previous rank-and-file miners' movement into a national issue in 1963, the PLP began to organize support for the miners from the start of the strike. Sending teams of members and friends to the coal fields in Ohio, West Virginia and Illinois, and to a lesser degree in Pennsylvania and Colorado, the

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Dear **Challenge:**

Recently, 2 comrades and I from Chicago PLP went to Southern Illinois to contact striking coal miners. We were all eager to go, but I had to admit some mental reservations because I've heard all my life about reactionary small towns, "red-necks," the KKK and so forth. When we reached the small town, we immediately ran into a group of 4 CAR members and 2 PLers from St. Louis who had been canvassing door-to-door.

I asked comrade Paul how it was going. He said, "We talked to a lot of people; sold **Challenge**; people are friendly. There's a lot of contradictions and we haven't met any revolutionaries yet." We ran across those contradictions when we knocked on our first door. Our first contact was a former military man, retired on $400 a month who thought the coal miners were getting paid too much. We had a long talk with him about the right to strike issues and many other subjects. Was this a typical "red neck?" Well, he told us that he told his son that if Carter started up the draft again, he shouldn't go.

As we talked, his son-in-law, a striking miner himself, drove up. The son-in-law was new to the mines and he said something about Blacks being trouble-makers which surprised us since we hadn't seen a half-dozen Blacks since leaving Chicago. He explained that mines with government contracts had to hire minorities and women first and that his buddy had to wait something like 5 years to get a job (mining jobs are premium in this low-wage area). When asked, he conceded that out of 700 workers in his mine, 3 on his shift were Black. Does that mean his buddy had to wait 5 years, 6 months instead of just 5 years? He was very open to the idea that racism was a dividing tool of the bosses and that we need more jobs and 30 hour's work for 40 hours' pay. It may seem discouraging that this racism popped out at our first stop, but to me it was interesting because a young man who hardly knew any Blacks was prejudiced probably because of what he read or heard in the bosses' media. And encouraging, because he didn't have the bulldog hold on racist ideas that some heavily indoctrinated white workers get. Here were two guys who probably had never seen communists before (unless to fire a shot at one in a bosses' war), talking 45 minutes on their front porch to a couple of PLers, shaking our hands, and wishing us luck!

As we continued door-to-door, almost every family had some connection to the mines. We met one woman whose husband had a broken back from the mines as had her father-in-law. There seemed to be somebody in every family who'd been injured in a mine.

We talked to one fellow who was just leaving his parent's home to go back to his farm. He was from the Inland Mine (owned by Inland Steel) and a part-time farmer. He was very appreciative of the Party's effort to support the strike.

Another man who didn't out right brag, seemed to know an awful lot about how to dump coal cars out on the railroad tracks and some miners had recently done just that to cars in the area.

Only a couple of people—self-identified "company men"—were unfriendly. We had one door slammed in our face when we mentioned communism. Overwhelmingly people were friendly and open with us and interested in our ideas. One woman, living on a miner's widow pension, informed us that several miners has been arrested down in Metropolis for attacking a coal terminal and that there was going to be a union meeting in the armory of a nearby larger town the next day (West Frankfort). We had to go back to Chicago that night, but we informed the comrades from St. Louis about the meeting, and drove over to the town to check it out. We decided to pass out PLP flyers in a super-market parking lot and did so for about an hour. This was the most productive part of our trip. It might have been because we reached a larger volume of people than going door-to-door and that only people who were really interested stopped to talk, but probably it was largely because we had overcome some of our anti-working class timidity during the door-to-door canvassing and the friendly response.

One miner talked to us for a long time and explained many things to us. The first thing he said is that he had seen **Challenge** the previous week because his neighbor had bought one and showed it to him. This guy sounded like he wrote **Challenge**, not just read it. He explained to us that he worked 800 feet down and a mile and a half horizontally in the ground. "When you go down there in the morning, you never know it you are coming up again," he said. "After a while you learn that our lives depend on each other. That's why the older guys are so together. It takes the younger guys a while to learn."

He told us about some of the dangerous conditions in the mines, and the battles being fought during the strike. He saw the picture in the flyer of an anti-Miller demonstration by coal miners protesting scabbing and said, "Before this thing is over we're going to have to shoot Miller or string him up." About this time it dawned on us that we had to get this guy's name and he gave it to us, took extra **Challenges** and flyers, and promised to keep in touch.

A woman came along whose husband was a miner with a broken back. She talked to us a long time, bought the paper, and gave us her name and address.

Well, I could go on with more stories, but I think these will give you the flavor of the trip.

Stalin compared communists to a Greek mythical hero whose mother was the goddess of the Earth. As long as the hero's feet were planted on the earth, he was strong and invincible. He was only killed when he was lifted up from the ground (his mother) and strangled. Stalin said communists are only as strong as their roots in the working class; reaching out to the workers on this trip strengthened us as communists just as the Party's whole effort in the strike (and other industrial base-building) will make the Party strong and invincible.

—A Chicago PLP member.

Party brought communist ideas and analysis to the miners, their families and to the working class in the mining areas.

In addition, in their home cities, many Party clubs organized collections of food, clothing and money to be brought to the miners, explaining the significance of the strike to thousands of other workers. The PLP schools fraction in Kansas City, Mo., won unanimous passage of a resolution supporting the miners' strike, and began organizing work-location collections of canned food and money to be brought to Southern Illinois miners. A member of the Committee Against Racism in Seattle, Wash., raised the issue sharply at a meeting of a Boilermakers local union, leading to a collection of $250 from among the members present to be sent to the family of the murdered Kentucky miner.

The response to PLP's efforts, and especially to the ideas contained in leaflets, flyers and **Challenge-Desafio**, was overwhelmingly positive. Many miners and members of their families took extra copies of the literature to distribute to friends and co-workers. Long discussions ensued about the class nature of the strike. (See Chicago letter.) Based on their own immediate experience with the coal operators and the police, the miners indicated they knew what armed struggle and revolution were all about. Not that they were ready to leap into a revolution right now. But over 50 contacts were made in a few weeks time; over 1000 **Challenges** were bought; and about 15,000 flyers and leaflets were taken, with very few handed back. There was no question that the miners welcomed not only the support but the **ideas as well.** A real opportunity now exists to secure a communist base among miners, winning them to join and help **lead** PLP, and use their knowledge of, and belief in, revolutionary violence in the service of the whole working class.

THE RULING CLASS ATTACKS

These efforts and effects were not lost on the ruling class, to say the least. Only a few days after PLP members had organized a rally on the streets of Wheeling, West Virginia, the local government there attempted to drive them off. A special meeting of the city council was called, including the city manager, police and fire chiefs, lawyer, etc. The PLP representative present (to obtain a "permit" to distribute Party literature) was subjected to the most fascistic type of anti-communism. Grudgingly, they were forced (on advice of counsel) to grant the permit.

Headlines soon appeared in the local papers, warning about the communists and quoting the District 6 leadership of the UMW as saying that "communists were not welcome here." He tried to turn the miners' indelible class hatred of the coal bosses against PLP by saying, "You can't tell the difference between communists and the operators."

This red-baiting orgy was highlighted by a column from the poison pen of the notorious anti-labor columnist Victor Reisel. Syndicated in hundreds of newspapers from coast to coast, Reisel "accused" PLP of organizing the miners' violent actions (unfortunately, untrue). He said the miners' resort to violence was not "modern labor practice" and that even if PLP didn't organize it, the miners were doing "what the communists wanted." He couldn't bring himself to admit that the miners were doing what **they themselves** wanted to do, too, much less reveal that the miners' actions and the communists' ideas were one and the same.

The ruling class and their lieutenants in the union, the press and the local governments were all worried that the communist idea of revolutionary violence and armed insurrection against the capitalist class might flow all too naturally from the actions being taken by the miners to stop coal production and fight the fascist tactics of the bosses. Once the miners begin to understand the essence of their exploitation, they will put their violence to work against the **whole** capitalist system on behalf of workers **state** power, not just to preserve economic gains which the coal bosses are constantly whittling away. That is the meaning of a thousand miners and other workers in the mining regions buying **CHALLENGE** and 15,000 reading communist ideas.

There is no doubt that PLP and communist ideas are here to stay among the coal miners.

V. UPPING THE ANTE OF CLASS STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

While one cannot predict, at this writing, the outcome of this momentous struggle, its lessons to this point will not be lost, either on the miners themselves or on the rest of the working class.

First is the fact that the rank and file can organize itself to take the offensive against the class enemy despite the obstacle of a sellout leadership. But one requirement is the readiness to cast off the chains that tie workers to this leadership and the realization that united, anti-racist, and organized, workers can not only overwhelm scabs but also the local forces of the state. The latter are only "all-powerful" when numerically superior and possessing guns against an unarmed foe. Once the workers themselves are armed, they are at all times potentially overwhelmingly superior in numbers to the biggest force that the ruling class can muster on its own behalf.

Secondly, no matter how militantly workers battle for their immediate demands and even win, the nature of capitalism is such that the bosses will **ALWAYS** be impelled to try to take them back. That is what is happening to the miners' medical and pension plans. And even if some temporary security is won for these benefits, the bosses will aim to extract that cost through other means—speed-up and greater exploitation, continued disregard for safety, and so on. The only sure guarantee of winning and preserving decent conditions for the working class is the elimination of capitalism and the smashing of the bosses' state power.

Thirdly, no matter how hard capitalism tries to solve its problems, they are insoluble and cannot satisfy the needs and demands of the work-

Miners' History

Communists: Key to Survival of UMWA

The anti-communist attack directed against PLP by the District 6 leadership of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) is only the latest in a long line of such attacks dating back 50 years. The fact is, if it were not for the organizing work of communists in the 1920s and 1930s, the UMWA would probably not even exist today.

IN THE 1920s, THE COAL INDUSTRY FACED A depression, as part of a world-wide crisis in coal, caused by over-development in World War I, intense competition, mechanization, and the rising use of oil and water power. This crisis produced chronic mass unemployment, with wages and working conditions sinking to depression levels even prior to the 1929 crash.

Amid these stark conditions facing coal miners, UMWA president John L. Lewis did absolutely nothing. However, the communists organized the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL) nationally, and developed a strong following among the miners, leading to the formation of the Progressive International Committee within the UMWA. Its program included: workers' ownership of the mines, a labor party, organize the unorganized, recognize the then socialist Soviet Union, alliance between miners and railroad workers, a six-hour day, national agreements only, no dual unionism, and union democracy. Lewis' "answer" to the TUEL organizing was expulsion from the UMWA for communists and TUEL members.

In the 1924 union elections, the TUEL's Progressive International Committee ran George Voyzey, a communist rank-and-file miner from Illinois, against Lewis for UMWA president. Lewis' machine reported the final vote at: Lewis–136,000, Voyzey–66,000. But Lewis refused to present a tabulated vote (as required by the union constitution) to the convention. No wonder. Voyzey had actually won a majority of the votes cast, but Lewis' manipulations produced his fraudulent re-election.

THE COAL CRISIS CONTINUED UNABATED. The bosses attacked the union and Lewis continued expelling communists and left-wing militants. Lewis himself was a registered Republican and his organizers and district presidents had close ties to employers' associations. With this kind of "leadership," the UMWA crumbled in middle Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Alabama and Canada. By 1925, the big Pittsburgh Coal Co. had laid down the gauntlet by repudiating the national agreement and going open shop.

The TUEL answered with a national "Save-the-Union" committee to (1) organize vigorously in the South and other unorganized districts; and (2) unite with the anthracite miners. In the 1927 election, the TUEL fielded a "Save-the-Union" ticket headed by left-winger John Brophy. The final vote reported by the Lewis machine was: Lewis–173,323, Brophy–60,661. Lewis had stolen votes from Brophy and padded his own to the tune of 100,000! He did this in the following ways:

In District 19, which had 482 dues-paying members, Lewis reported 3,962 votes for himself, 15 votes for Brophy; in District 30, with 377 dues-payers, Lewis got **14,000** votes! In District 30, with **NO** dues-paying members, Lewis reported 2,686 votes for himself, none for Brophy! In the Pittsburgh district, one-third of the voting locals existed only on paper, the so-called "blue-sky" locals. This produced 167 delegates from only 337 members at the 1927 convention (usually a delegate will represent anywhere from 100 to 1000 members, depending on the local's size). A total vote of 223,000 out of a total membership of 273,000 was considered astounding to say the least. In effect, the communists and left-wing had been elected by the rank and file miners but Lewis –through all sorts of fraud–had stolen the election.

The UMW still faced a desperate struggle, with the agreement expiring and absolutely no preparation made by the Lewis machine. On April 1, 1927, the UMW either struck, or was locked out of all the northern bituminous coal mines. The rank and file fought back, with the then militant Communist Party and the TUEL in the lead, throwing all their forces into the battle. They set up mass picketing and organized a nation-wide support campaign of food, clothing and funds. The UMWA "leadership" in Washington had raised exactly one week's strike funds. Yet, a year later, the miners were still standing solid in key districts, despite starvation and police terror.

AT THAT POINT, THE SAVE-THE-UNION movement organized a national conference in Pittsburgh with 1,125 delegates representing 100,000 miners. This helped stiffen the picket lines and extend the fight into western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and into the anthracite fields. With the revival of picketing, 19,000 unorganized miners struck under TUEL leadership in Fayette and Westmoreland counties near Pittsburgh.

Seeing this renewed communist-led, rank-and-file threat, Lewis signed a separate agreement in Illinois and miners started straggling back to work. The UMWA was wiped out in western Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia and Ohio. Miners lost wages and working conditions that had taken 30 years of struggle to win. It was not until the 1930s, with the heightened leadership given to the labor movement by communists, especially in the organization of the industrial unions into the CIO, that these areas were to be recaptured by the mine union.

When the labor-fakers who run the UMWA today scream about "not wanting support from communists," what they're really worried about is that communist ideas combined with the militancy of the rank and file would sweep these phonies down the sewer where they belong–and will be sent in the not-too-distant future.

ing class, who produce everything of value in society. Here the bosses thought they "had it made" with the 1948 contract. But 30 years later they find themselves in an armed battle with militant miners, supposedly so weakened by past sellouts and reduction of jobs that they can only launch "useless strikes."

Fourthly, no matter what sellout lieutenants the bosses work through—either the openly dictatorial Boyle type or the liberal reformers like Miller—neither can hold the allegiance of the workers or even hold them in check. Here, only three or four years after Miller assumed power, the miners are engaged in all-out struggle **against him**, to a point that—as the miner in the accompanying letter from Chicago indicates—they are ready "to string him up."

Fifth, the insoluble problems of capitalism force it to oppress workers. The energy shortage, the decline of U.S. imperialism on a world scale, the refusal of workers to accept the burden of these bosses' problems on their backs—all this is **forcing** the U.S. ruling class to move towards fascism as their only "solution" to hold on to their dying system. This is certainly a sign of weakness, not of strength, and it has been proven in spades in this current struggle with the miners. Capitalism cannot be reformed.

Sixth, miners, as all workers, will respond very positively to communist ideas if they but get the opportunity to read and hear them, as well as see them in action, as they have done ever since the first socialist revolution in the Soviet Union in 1917. There is no question that the miners can and will be in the vanguard of the revolutionary process in the U.S.

THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

And finally, the armed struggle of the miners is a harbinger of things to come. The movement towards fascism by U.S. bosses, in order to be able to fight imperialist war abroad and maintain the squeeze on workers at home, is reflected in the current attack on the miners. The coal barons want to bust their union, bust their medical and pension plans, ban their right and ability to strike, and foist a liberal fascist union leader on their backs, all so the Rockefellers and their cohorts can guarantee an uninterrupted supply of coal at the cheapest possible cost to them and at the highest profit. The miners refuse to "go quietly" in the face of this fascism. Given these opposite poles, armed struggle is not just one choice among several tactics—**it is INEVITABLE.**

Precisely when this militant armed struggle for immediate demands escalates into armed insurrection for state power will be determined by many factors, not the least of which is the adoption of communist ideas by the miners and the whole working class. The inability of the ruling class to function in the old way, and the refusal of the working class to live under fascist conditions, must be accompanied by **a base for communist ideas, and the recruitment of communists, from among the working class to the Progressive Labor Party.**

Acceptance of these ideas in an immediate sense means mobilizing the whole working class, especially industrial workers, to support the miners in this titanic battle. The struggle is not over by a long shot, even if still another sellout were to be rammed down the miners' throats, a result less likely this year than in '74. To the degree that other workers support the miners, to that degree will the entire working class be strengthened against the inevitable attacks coming from a desperate ruling class.

Acceptance of communist ideas also means unity of the working class, both within the U.S. as well as internationally. For instance, the fight of South African miners and all workers there against fascist Apartheid, **against the same bosses who own the coal mines here in the U.S.,** is most certainly the fight of miners here. What the coal bosses really want is the conditions they thrive under in South Africa, where U.S. boss-owned mines produce fantastic profits because the fascist Vorster government imposes slavery based on racism against all black workers. Rockefeller would love to force U.S. coal miners to work under the conditions he profits off in South Africa —no right to strike, no union, no benefits, no rights at all; only the supreme capitalist right to make profit.

With the understanding of the communist idea of internationalism, of workers of all lands victims of the same exploitation, and therefore uniting against international capitalism, it will become possible for unionized miners in Kentucky, West Virginia and Illinois to mount a simultaneous battle alongside the miners of Johannesburg, Capetown and Soweto against U.S. bosses. That kind of international solidarity against the same international class enemy would really drive the bosses wild and put them on the road to their final destruction.

THE ONLY WAY THESE KINDS OF COMmunist ideas can be put into practice is if miners, and workers from all the basic industries, become communists. It is the responsibility of the members of PLP to guarantee that this happens. Fascism and war will come whether or not this responsibility is fulfilled; but how long it lasts, and how soon it is transformed into Socialist revolution most definitely depends on the spread of communist understanding and action throughout the world's working class. There is no greater goal towards which our Party and our class can aspire.

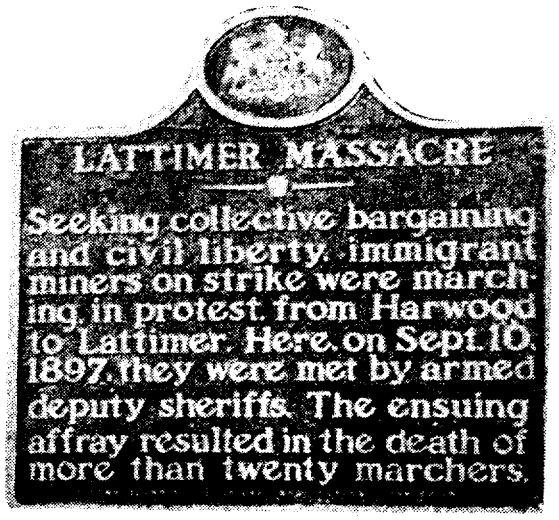
Roots of Solidarity

Miners: Anti-Racist History

Dear **CHALLENGE**,

I am writing to **CHALLENGE** to reach thousands of anti-racists about the anti-racist character of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). All progressive anti-racist forces should rally in support of the striking miners.

(1) The media is presenting the striking miners as "all-white." But, in fact, over 30 per cent of the coal miners are minorities. Native Americans and Latinos work in the open-pit mines of the southwest; black miners live by the thousands in the southern areas of Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania, and in the "border states" of Kentucky, West Virginia and Tennessee. Misleaders like Lewis, Boyle and Miller have constantly sought to maintain non-legal segregation—all-white and all-black locals. But thanks to the trade union militants, the UMWA constitutions were among the first of the 20th century unions to eliminate legal segregation.



(2) During the ultra-racist days of the 1920s and 1930s, when Klan terror was unleashed throughout the agricultural and industrial areas of the South and Mid-West in order to crush the workers' and farmers' militancy generated by World War I, many rank-and-file workers fought back hard against the attempt to segregate the locals. They fought armed battles against the Klan in West Virginia, fought to defend black miners from segregationist harassment in Kentucky and Tennessee. Of course, the UMWA leadership often worked hand-in-glove with segregationist and Klan terrorists. And in some areas, like Louisville, Wheeling and Knoxville, white miners—because of capitalist conditioning (poor education and religious fundamentalism), fought against black people. But this did not represent the actions of the broad masses of miners. The brutalizing labor in the mines and the vicious union-busting and strike-breaking tactics of the Klan/mine owners' coalition **created the objective conditions for a strong, enduring, fighting tradition of multi-racial unity.**

(3) That such multi-racial unity should exist would be strange to those of us who have never lived in the coal-mining regions of Appalachia. One of the key reasons for this unity is the fact that many black workers settled throughout Appalachia. There are all-black towns and villages living in peaceful co-existence with all-white areas. This condition was imposed by state law, federal indirection, and the company towns' policies. But even in such "ghetto-ification," black and white workers labored side by side in the homicidal darkness of the mines. In addition, there were more multi-racial towns and villages than segregated ones. Where the segregationist law was ineffective or weak, blacks and whites grew up, played and worked together and created a bi-racial culture. Many cases of "illegal" bi-racial marriages took place in the mining hills of western Kentucky, far removed from the more ruthless racism/sexism of the large cities and the agricultural areas.

Another reason for this tradition of anti-racism and multi-racialism among the masses of the mining region is the pro-unionist, anti-secessionist, abolitionist politics among the mountain people who lived in the mining region prior to the coming of the BMC (Big Mining Companies). The main reason that the border states did not successfully secede from the Union during the 2nd phase of the American Revolution was because of armed rebellion of the Appalachians—white and black—against the pro-slavery governments. The Appalachians of Virginia seceded from Virginia when Virginia seceded from the Union! John Brown was counting on the known support of the Appalachians for Abolitionism to set up his ill-fated plan for a haven for escaped slaves in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Hundreds of escaped slaves were hidden by Appalachian members of the Underground Railroad, who often killed slave-catchers in skillfully-set ambushes.

After the Civil War, Reconstruction politics, which called for social and political equality for black and white Unionists, were deeply accepted by the Appala-

chians. Later, when Reconstruction was betrayed in the Deep South states, many of its effects continued in this area.

When the BMC moved into Appalachia in earnest—with the need for huge quantities of coal to fuel the new steam engines and the new Bessemer process for making steel (1880-1885), they (the BMC) sought to introduce heavy doses of racism by using black convicts from the lowlands as slave-scabs (during strikes) and as slave labor during "normal" periods. When this was tried in northern Tennessee, 400 white and some black miners formed a rescue team and helped 200 black convicts to escape. Both sides would agree that self-interest and class interest, combined with anti-racism, saved the day.

(4) **With such a great tradition, multi-racial anti-racism is the key to much of the solidarity and militancy of the miners today**. Thus it was when the Communist Party USA sent organizers into the mining region to rebuild locals destroyed by the BMC and to organize new ones for the UMWA, they had a broad tradition to build on. And it was the experience of many communists in the bloody organizing drives of '36, '37 and '38 with black/white unity among the miners that helped defeat the racist notion in the C.P. that black people as a whole constituted a separate nation in the U.S.

(5) However, no tradition can survive the impact of capitalist economies and capitalist conditioning. And we don't want to romanticize the multi-racial tradition. It has existed, but alongside a racist tradition that in the past has infected many white miners and is seeking to do so today. Right-wing preachers, wealthy ex-miners, racist politicians and thousands of young people from mining families who live in all-white cities and have never been exposed to the multi-racial tradition, plus aggressive non-unionists, form a mass base for a racist/fascist movement among the Appalachians. Racist groups like the Klan and SOAR (which organized anti-busing, anti-textbook attacks mainly against black literature books), themselves the populist agents of the new BMC, are seeking—more thoroughly this time—to create racism. Racism in the coal fields is a prelude to the fascist enslavement of the mine workers. Only a strong multi-racial, anti-racist union, like the UMWA, controlled by the rank and file, can prevent this open move to fascism in Appalachia as a prelude to fascism all over.

We must see the industrial unions, like the UMWA, as actual and potential weapons in the war against racism. (Such weapons—forts, if you will—must be defended.) This is why I applaud, and call on CAR forces to support PLP's decision to bring in radical ideas and material support to the striking miners. We must join this effort, under PLP's leadership, to get out CAR's ideas and literature. Hopefully, this letter could be the basis for a CAR flyer.

(6) One last point: the Exxon Corporation which is seeking a monopoly in Appalachia, is the same company that has large investments in the gold, coal and uranium fields of South Africa. South African miners and South Appalachian miners suffer the agony of a common enemy; they must one day carry out an internationally-coordinated, multi-racial struggle against a common foe.

To conclude: CAR members must join the PLP struggle to give radical leadership to the UMWA strike. At the same time, we must develop our own program of support for one of the largest multi-racial unions in industry in order to win thousands of UMWA workers to join CAR.

Sincerely yours,
Dr. Finley C. Campbell
National Chairperson, In.C.A.R.


EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT MOBIL ATION RALLY
PUT AMERICA BACK T WORK!
WORKERS
WORK 40 HOURS PA


COLUMBUS
KANSAS CITY
ST LOUIS

Reform and Revolution

This report is reprinted exactly as it originally appeared, as special issue of CHALLENGE-DESAFIO, Vol. 13, No. 20 (October 14, 1976). The Editors hope to encourage new attention to the political line set forward here. The original introduction by the PLP National Committee reads as follows:

"The following report is our attempt by the Progressive Labor Party to review its theory and practice on the question of revolution and reform, the solution of which is central to achieving and maintaining the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. It grew out of a recent meeting of PLP's National Committee, some beginning discussion among the Party's members and friends, and then more discussion at another National Committee meeting. The sum total of the above is printed here so that we can share these views with all the readers of CHALLENGE-DESAFIO and supporters of the Party, with the hope that you will write letters and talk to Party members about your agreements, disagreements, criticisms and suggestions on these vital questions. It is our hope that this report will receive the widest discussion, with the view to advancing the line of the report still further. So let us hear from everyone.

Ever since the founding of our Party, PLP has put forward communist revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working class—led by a communist party—seizing state power.

There have been many changes in our line over the years. While the line has constantly moved to the Left, we have found ourselves applying far too much of our time and thinking to building militant reform struggle rather than revolution. The roots of this contradictory development will be traced shortly, but it should be stated now that unless we FIT THE REFORM STRUGGLE INTO REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS AND NOT VICE-VERSA, no matter what we say, we will become a revisionist party, that is, a party that accommodates itself to—and works within the framework of—the capitalist system.

Pursuing reform or revolution involves two totally different tasks. Reform **builds** the system (tries to make it work better); revolution **destroys** it. Therefore, the theory and action of trying to win immediate reform demands can never, in and of itself, lead to a revolution. By definition, it is not designed to do that.

We participate in reform struggles in order to get the opportunity to put forward communist ideas and goals. These communist ideas CANNOT BE DRAWN FROM THE REFORM STRUGGLE ITSELF. Workers do not come to Marxist-Leninist conclusions merely from working on an assembly line. These ideas must come from outside the reform struggle and are directly opposed to reformist goals of working within and building capitalism. Communist ideas have always been

brought to workers from outside the reform struggle itself, from Marx to Lenin to Stalin to the present day.

The Party's role, therefore, is to make a revolution that destroys the system, not to make reform and build it. The Party leads people in reform struggle to the goal of a better union or of rank-and-file power. Building the Party is primary, not building the union, although a by-product of building the Party, of building for a revolution, can be, and often is, a better union. (Yet it is possible for the Party to win the union leadership and for the workers to get less than before, with a communist leadership, as we shall note shortly).

Obviously we have improved in trying to put forward revolution rather than reform, compared to years ago (see historical section). Yet as the line moves to the Left, our practice tends to trail this movement, tends to move more in the direction of primarily fighting militantly in the union to throw out the sellouts (or similarly in any reform organization), to run for elections, to go into a strike with the main idea of "winning the strike," or building militant picket lines, etc. And correspondingly, we judge "victory" or "defeat" based on whether or not we achieve these reform goals. We tend far less to think in terms of how well **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** was sold, how many subscriptions were bought, how much anti-racist struggle was organized, how much workers were pointed in the direction of seeing the necessity to take state power, how many workers and others were recruited to the Party on the understanding of the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Our main goal in going into virtually every strike has been building the strike and a militant, democratic union, not building the Party and revolutionary ideas.

Thus, we tend to spread the illusion—and are victims of it ourselves—that to build a militant reform struggle, a democratic union or strike is to be Left (revolutionary). But militant reform struggle does not lead to revolution. It didn't in the 1930's when communists organized 5,000,000 workers into the CIO; it didn't in the 1960's in the civil rights movement and the ghetto rebellions; and it didn't during the anti-Vietnam war movement which involved millions in militant action against U.S. imperialist war. Even insurrectionary armed struggle does not spontaneously lead to communist class consciousness and the establishment of socialism.

Reform, militant or otherwise, is not revolution. The movement for reform and for revolution are two parallel movements. Fighting to reform the system will not lead to its overthrow, to revolution. In the sense that fighting strictly, or even mainly to reform—patch up—the system spreads illusions that capitalism can be reformed, in this sense reform politics are completely divorced from revolutionary politics. In this sense, fighting for reforms will never lead to revolution. Of course, if communists fight in, and even lead, the reform struggle with the idea of tieing that struggle to revolutionary ideas, of showing how merely fighting for reforms is a dead end, that it will never change our lives for the better because capitalism will always take back any gains in another form—if we do that in the reform struggle, we will be concentrating on the main function of a communist: WINNING WORKERS DIRECTLY TO REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGY, TO JOINING THE PARTY, TO FIGHTING FOR STATE POWER FOR THE WORKING CLASS.

Yet, for the most part, we have ended up concentrating on trying to lead the reform struggle to victory under capitalism. We haven't participated in the reform struggle as one tactic in the revolutionary process. Most of the time it has become our all-consuming passion, with (sometimes) the tacking on—virtually as an afterthought—the necessity to destroy, not reform, the system, to make a revolution. Because of that, we rarely go into a reform struggle with the main idea of building the Party, as the main instrument with which the working class will make a revolution. Therefore, the implied conclusion is that somehow a revolutionary struggle will grow out of militant reform battles. It won't. (See Lenin: **What Is To Be Done**, Chapter III, Section A).

To better understand how and why we in PLP have allowed reformism to dominate our actions, we should look at revolution and reform more dialectically, as two sides of a contradiction. In every contradiction there is a unity of opposites. In this instance, we would agree that, on the one hand, we can't just shout revolution at workers and expect one to happen. We must participate in the reform struggle. On the other hand, we also agree that we can't simply participate in reform struggle limiting ourselves to reform goals; we must raise the need for revolution, the need for the working class to take state power, and therefore the need to build a party. So here, in the necessity to fight for revolution while we also work in the reform movement, there is a unity of opposites.

Yet, in every contradiction there is a **primary** aspect and a **secondary** aspect. The primary aspect determines the essence of a thing. For instance, in bourgeois or capitalist society, the main contradiction is between two classes, the bosses and the workers. But the primary aspect of that contradiction is that the bosses hold state power and control all production and distribution of all value created by the workers. It is this primary aspect that determines this society to be a bourgeois or capitalist society.

Similarly, as regards building a revolutionary movement: although there are two aspects to this—reform and revolution—**one** is primary and will determine the essence of what we are building. Too often **we view both aspects as equal**, and that therefore if we "do both" (the unity indicated above), we will achieve our goal of revolution. This belies material reality. When our anti-communist enemies accuse us of not really being interested in the immediate reform ("you just want to use the reform struggle for you 'ulterior' motive of building your party"), they are actually saying that revolution and reform **are** contradictory. We have been trained to resolve that contradiction in a reformist way, by saying, "No the two aspects are compatible; that, in fact, if we have a strong revolutionary Party, we are

CHICAGO—PLP members attack Nazis in front of their Bunker (July 1977).

more likely to win the reform."

Yes, while revolution and reform do—in one sense—go hand-in-hand, they are also contradictory, two aspects of a contradiction. One, if pursued to its inherent logical conclusion, would **destroy** capitalism and build Socialism; the other, if pursued to its inherent logical conclusion, **maintains capitalism.** If we must do both, revolution and reform, **which is primary** in our work? Again, the primary aspect determines the essence of what our Party is building, a revolutionary movement or a reformist movement.

This essence came out sharply in the old Communist Party during the late 1940s. When the ruling class mounted a ferocious anti-communist offensive, they forced all union officials by law (a fascist law) to sign non-communist affidavits if they were to remain as union officials. The C.P. leaders of unions virtually all decided to resign from the party, sign the affidavits and continue as union officials, on the "theory" that they must sacrifice politics to "save the union" ("but in our hearts we're still communists"). We'd characterize this as an abject sellout of principle. But when we're faced with essentially the same choice, although on a lower (and not so pointed) level, we act to prove ourselves in the reform struggle as real militants, "win the respect of the workers as fighters" (for reform), and **then** introduce our revolutionary politics, later. We therefore build a good base for reformism, and when the struggle gets sharp (in a strike, etc.), it is our friends (not our anti-communist enemies) who say to us, "don't sell C-D"; "don't raise your Party"; etc. In life, by concentrating on reform work in a reformist way, we have made reform the principal aspect of the contradiction. The working class has recognized this and acted accordingly. And, just as happened with the old C.P., we will end up with a revisionist, sellout party if we pursue this path to its ultimate conclusion.

We cannot win workers to communist ideology if we come off to them, in practice, as "better reformers," as promisers of reform victory. Firstly, if we do win an **immediate** reform gain without the main idea of tying reform struggle to the necessity to make a revolution—to take state power—then it will only re-inforce the idea among the rank and file participating in the reform struggle that you **can** win under capitalism—therefore, why do you need a socialist revolution? Secondly, whatever gain might be won will **always** be reversed by the capitalist class because it has state power and can always take back the gain in another form. Thirdly, with communists in leadership the boss might deliberately take a harder line and refuse to grant anything just to "prove" to workers they can do better without communist leadership. And they have the power and resources in this period to outlast workers, if they deem it better for them in the long run. (In the late 1940s and early '50s, GE granted wage increases to the newly-chartered anti-communist IUE while denying them to the communist-led U.E. precisely to break the UE. They succeeded (and in the whole-

sale switch-overs to IUE, 250,000 electrical workers were lost to unionization).

Finally, we will not be able to lead a revolution for state power based on "first" winning power in the unions through militant reform struggle and "then" launching the struggle for state power. First of all, the ruling class will never let **revolutionary** communists get to the top of the labor movement, and possibly not even to head a big local in steel, auto, etc.; they will pull out all necessary stops, including plenty of force and violence, to prevent it. Therefore, to prepare workers for that inevitable ruling class reaction, we would have to RAISE THE NEED TO SEIZE STATE POWER right from the beginning of building our base with a group of workers.

Furthermore, if we were to fight for rank-and-file power in the labor movement **without** raising revolution as the **main** and **primary** goal, we will inevitably end up like the French and Italian "communist" parties: leading (misleading) millions of workers into the arms of the ruling class, with the idea that through capitalist-controlled elections we will proceed on a peaceful transition to socialism. (In fact, there is one section of the bourgeoisie in these countries that envision themselves being able to continue their rule by taking these revisionists into the government). The French and Italian party leaders did not start out as dishonest sellouts. But, without revolutionary consciousness they must accommodate themselves to capitalism and work within its framework. Either you go beyond the system with the goal—**all the time**—of smashing it, or you work within the system's ground rules, within capitalist ideas, and you end up accommodating yourself to capitalism and therefore selling out (revisionist).

Here in the U.S. we often follow a reformist line in opposing the revisionists. We usually center our attack around how they sabotage the reform struggle. This is not the essence of our ideological differences with them; this is not necessarily how they are leading the workers into the bosses' arms. In fact, at times the revisionists themselves criticize the union leaders; some are militant and even build a base. Here again, oppose the revisionists on revolutionary grounds, not reform ones; show that they put forward sharing power with the "good" bosses, that they believe the ruling class will give up its rule peacefully, while revolutionaries understand that there are no "good" bosses (only bad ones with different tactics on how to exploit workers); that no ruling class ever gave up its power peacefully, and that therefore we must destroy what is essentially a dictatorship of the bosses and replace it with a dictatorship of the working class, of the proletariat; furthermore, that the revisionists are nationalists and in practice oppose the time-honored internationalist slogan of "workers of the world unite!" It is on these and similar grounds that we should oppose the revisionists, not on who does better in the reform struggle.

Even recruiting to the Party is not necessarily a measure of whether or not we are pursuing a correct, revolutionary course since we can—and do—easily recruit workers and others on a reformist basis. Two million workers belong to the Italian "C"P; they have been recruited on the basis that the "communists" will bring them more UNDER CAPITALISM. Recruiting by itself doesn't mean building the Party. Recruiting **on a revolutionary political line** means building the Party. Recruiting on a militant reform basis means you are building a militant reform organization that will only help capitalism show how "democratic" it is—it "allows all kinds" of groups.

The further danger of recruiting people on a militant reform line is that once the ruling class succeeds in reversing the gains won through the militant reform, once the first dip in the reform

struggle comes along, this new recruit winds up leaving the Party. They do not have the staying power of revolutionary ideas and commitment to a long-range, protracted revolutionary struggle for the seizure of power. But, if we have already recruited people on a reform basis, we shouldn't now ask them to leave; we should attempt to **consolidate them on the basis of revolutionary ideas and struggle.**

If we allow ourselves to fall into the essentially bosses' trap of concentrating primarily on maintaining and "winning" the reform struggle, of allowing reform to precede revolution, it will only impel us to back off when workers answer our ideas with ruling class ideology. We will not fight

for our communist ideas because we will want to "keep our base to be able to fight the reform struggle, the grievance, the militant strike," etc. And we will end up with the "base" that the French, Italians, and other revisionists have "achieved," a base for capitalism.

All this **does NOT mean we get out of the reform struggle.** It does **not** mean we don't go to union meetings, that we don't run for union election, etc. It **DOES** mean that we pursue these activities and others in the reform struggle with the eye to BUILDING THE PARTY, with the goal of how do we use the union—as one aspect of the fight for revolution—to recruit to the Party and to the idea of the working class seizing state power. We advocate, participate and even initiate struggle in the reform movement, but **within the context** of building for a revolution (which means building the Party). It is necessary not just to win reforms (which, **by itself,** builds capitalist ideology, that you can reform the system), but to move masses to revolution.

We should help organize unions as part of the reform struggle, but primarily to sharpen the class struggle with the bosses as a **class,** not merely to win reforms. If we do the latter, we inevitably will develop at best an ineffective union and at worst a sellout one, because in operating simply as a reform organization we operate under capitalism's ground rules and are **subservient** to them. (When the bosses say "there's no money," the ground rules say layoffs. When workers strike and the bosses say "it's against public or national interest—read bosses' interests—the ground rules break the strike).

But coming out of every one of these reform struggles—and even more so out of major upheavals like the ghetto rebellions of the 1960's, the anti-Vietnam war movement and the rank-and-file wildcat strikes of the early '70s), out of all this should come more **revolutionary** forces. In other words, we must use the reform struggle to build the Party.

Of course, our enemies will try to malign us by saying we are "using" people and struggles with "ulterior" motives. We shouldn't back off from this charge but actually should turn it around and take the offensive. Yes, we **are** using the reform struggle as a tactic in building a revolutionary movement that will not stop at the useless and impossible aim of reforming capitalism but will enable the working class and its allies to **USE THE PARTY TO MAKE A REVOLUTION.** If by "ulterior" motive is meant using people against their own class interests, that is standard operating procedure for the capitalist class, using workers against each other day in and day out. Communists want workers to use their strength as a class to overthrow their oppressors, and that can only be accomplished by building a revolutionary party—which they must join—and has that as its only goal.

The fact is that our Party has made its biggest advances when we have raised our revolutionary politics front and center as our main activity. This was true in raising the anti-Vietnam war movement to an anti-imperialist level. It was certainly true in organizing and carrying out our May Day action in Boston in 1975. It was then and around other May Days that the most workers have seen the need to join the Party and build for a revolution, not simply stick to reforms. If we just put forward our revolutionary politics for a few weeks before May Day, the workers view us as militant reformers the rest of the year and find it harder to understand the major political ideas raised around May Day—the fight for Socialism, internationalism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, etc.

Putting revolution primary and reform struggle secondary means building for something like May Day **all year round.** It means building a **communist** base who we can go to about participating in such an important Party activity. Otherwise May Day will get smaller and smaller.

One reason we often view the reform struggle as primary is because we believe the revolutionary struggle is either too distant or impossible. Often we tend to see the objective situation in a limited and static sense. For example, some of us do not believe the ruling class is in a state of accelerated decline. Therefore, it is very hard for us to accept the Party's line on war and fascism. Sometimes we are frustrated because the class struggle appears to be quiet. It seems that the working class will always submit to the dictates of the ruling class. Consequently, if our thinking is dominated by the fact that the bosses are on top, and that this is permanent reality, then our attention must turn from revolution to reform.

If we believe reality to be a passive working class that won't fight back, then we will abandon a revolutionary perspective. At "best," we will stay in the reform struggle. And, if we don't accept the Party line about war and fascism, don't understand that the only way to defeat these capitalist developments is by revolution, we will never see the urgency of building our Party.

These weaknesses occur in all of us because we don't have an historical view and historical information about the inevitability of change and the **INEVITABILITY** of the revolutionary process. Particularly unfortunate is the fact that we don't draw the proper conclusion from recent important political events. For example, while it's true that the anti-Vietnam war movement and the black rebellions were not revolutionary, the fact is that both these developments shook the ruling class to its heels.

On the one hand, the black rebellions were violent and involved millions. Our Party predicted the rebellions and developed its cutting teeth in them. Similarly, the anti-Vietnam war movement —which our Party inaugurated—involved tens of millions. We lost the leadership of this movement, but this was the first time there was open rebellion against the foreign policy of the U.S. ruling class. It reached such proportions that desertions, loss of morale and confidence, etc., made the ruling class unable to field a reliable army. A reliable army is one essential aspect of holding state power. While the anti-Vietnam war movement was pacifist, a certain amount of anti-

imperialism was evident.

These were two major upheavals in our short lifetime. Both shook the ruling class badly. But the fact is that these upheavals **did happen!** The other reality is that without a revolutionary party in the leadership of these movements they will falter out.

More to the point is that we should encourage insurrection; every upheaval should see our party grow, leading to faster and continuous struggle in which we and the working class move to the left and to revolution. Strikes, or even general strikes —both of which are goals we seek—are not the quintessence of the struggle. We must learn how to direct these struggles into open rebellion against the ruling class, challenging them for state power. **More and more workers must be won to the outlook of state power.**

However, in the absence of a serious revolutionary outlook, the reform outlook becomes primary. In such a situation, when the reform movement is smashed (as it has been in N.Y.C., for example), then it is our reformist outlook, that is smashed because our revolutionary perspective has been weak. So, in a period when the ruling class is unable to make concessions and attacks workers harder on all fronts, the situation cries out for socialism.

If our revolutionary outlook were staunch, then our revolutionary will would grow.

Our problem, as stated, is that our revolutionary outlook has been limited in the first place. But our illusions in reformism have persisted or even grown. So what often seems to be a weakening of revolutionary will, is in fact our loss of **reformist** will. This loss CAN AND MUST be replaced by revolutionary consciousness. Historical example, as well as more recent ones should give us overwhelming confidence that the workers can ultimately play their revolutionary role. CAN WE?

FIGHT IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY

The question of fighting in the reform movement in a revolutionary way—for revolutionary ideas—rather than in a reformist way (that maintains and even builds the system and its ideology), is no academic question. In fact it goes right to the heart of why we're **fighting for Socialism** and on what basis we recruit someone to that fight and to the Party.

If we fight in the reform movement in a reformist way, and tag on the necessity to fight for Socialism as the way to win the reforms we can't win under capitalism, we will be planting the seeds of the reversal of Socialism once we were to win it. If the reason we fight for Socialism is only to win material gains, then what would happen if workers were won to the Party solely on these grounds and did make a revolution? Once the working class has destroyed the capitalists and their ability to reap surplus value (roughly, profit) from the labor power of the working class, it does not necessarily mean that each individual worker under Socialism would get the full value of his/her labor power in his/her paycheck, to do with what we will. Where, then, would the **social** value come from to build whatever workers need in common —hospitals, dams to prevent floods or more factories and machinery to produce whatever the working class decides it needs? Still further, where would the value come from to help revolutionaries elsewhere in the world to take state power, to overthrow the ruling class that not only oppresses them but also has as its aim to destroy Socialism where it has already been achieved?

The fact is, under Socialism, with the working class in control of the state, it would decide collectively how to apportion the value it produces. It might not mean that every reform demand fought for under capitalism would be met right away, because other social and political needs might be more pressing. But if Socialism were won mainly on the basis of material incentives, rather than the **ideological** level of preserving and spreading the revolution to make it world-wide, then working-class rule would eventually be destroyed, as happened in the Soviet Union and China. Khrushchev made that into a principle: "goulash communism." He vowed that Russian workers would live better than anyone else, and "by example," capitalism would be toppled in the rest of the world. But unfortunately, that's not the way the real world operates.

Firstly, if all Socialism meant was more goods in more hands, we would have had it in the U.S., since the most goods in the hands of the most people exists right here. Secondly, "goulash communism" means forsaking revolutionaries elsewhere, since you're committed to producing the most for yourself. This creates the basis for your own destruction, since it leads to (1) more powerful bosses outside the Socialist state being allowed to exist and aim their guns at you; (2) the drive to produce for the individual rather than for the social good of all; and (3) the opposite of proletarian internationalism, imperialist expansion, where the Soviet revisionist leadership expands its tentacles around the world on the grounds of feathering its own material nest and power.

Still further, winning workers to Socialism based mainly on material incentives (fulfilling the economic reforms not realizable under capitalism), leaves aside the whole superstructure of culture, relations between people, the question of family life, of what values will govern the society—communist or bourgeois values. It leaves aside the whole question of politics. Lenin said, "The economy is primary, but in the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat, politics must take absolute priority over economy." During the struggle of ideological incentive vs. material incentive as the mainstay of Socialism, in the early days of the Cultural Revolution in China, they wrote:

"The superstructure of society is determined by the base, reflects the base and serves it. But it is not a passive product of the base. It's role in socialism . . . can decide the very fate and road of this development. The bourgeois degeneration of socialism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere was d e c i d e d first of all by the degeneration of the superstructure . . .

"Social ownership of the means of production

Soldiers must be won to turn the guns around against the imperialists.

is that material base which defines the character of politics in socialism. But if bourgeois politics ... emerges as the most important, then the social ownership in fact loses its socialist character; the economy, though it may preserve for a time its external socialist appearance, in fact is changed into a state capitalist economy of a special type, which is developed to the interests of the new bourgeois strata or class which has state power in its hands and which follows bourgeois policy.

"To give first importance to politics does not mean to replace the economy with politics and to neglect the economy, allegedly for the sake of politics, but means that each economic problem and the whole development of the economy **must be seen through political eyes** and be carried out in the direction defined by proletarian politics..."

What we are mainly fighting for in the reform battles under capitalism—material gain or building a revolutionary party with a revolutionary ideology—will determine on what basis we recruit to the Party, on why we're fighting for Socialism, and ultimately on whether ideological incentives will govern, preserve and spread that Socialism or whether material incentives will plant the seeds of its destruction and the restoration of capitalism based on capitalist ideas.

EXAMPLES OF A REFORMIST LINE IN OUR PRACTICE

In the recent NYC hospital strike (Local 1199), the plan was to build the Party (recruit) and contrast the "demand" of arbitration with the necessity to win through violence, raising the whole communist concept of the need to seize state power (arbitration and the use of the ruling class state apparatus to enforce adherence to it reflects the bosses' state power).

Now, there was improvement in this strike. PLP leaflets did come out putting forward revolutionary ideas as primary. Some workers were recruited to the Party (although we would have to examine how much was based on Party ideas and how much on reform, change-the-union ideas). However, the Party leadership spent entirely too much time giving leadership to the reform struggle (exposing the sellout, organizing stronger picket lines, etc.) and far less time to plans for the two goals mentioned above. Therefore, too little **political** discussion took place in the clubs. Thus, the larger fraction meetings achieved during the strike became little more than left-wing caucuses. Thus, recruiting would tend to be on a reform, "we're-the-good-guys" WAM-type basis.

In the 38-day San Francisco city workers strike (see further analysis in PL magazine), the Party leadership planned a focus on three points: (1) racism; (2) who controls the city government; and (3) exposing the union leaders as sellouts. The idea was to build the Party around these points.

In practice, fighting racism and linking the strike to the broad political point of how **capitalism** uses racism to stay afloat (and therefore, why it can only be smashed with a **revolution**) became a very secondary thing. The question of who controls the city government—basically a question of state power—was non-existent. This left the exposure of the sellout union leaders as the main point and led to the Party forces trying to become—and sometimes achieving—the tactical leadership of the strike. By not teaching the lesson of the capitalist government—in this particular case, the actual boss—smashing the working class with its state power, and by concentrating on the union sellout issue, even though we led hundreds in militant struggle, the net result was no city workers were won to the Party.

Still another example is the recent strike by AFSCME Local 1006 in Chicago against racist layoffs and led by the Party. Two Party members were elected to the 1006 executive board, the recording secretary of the local and the chief shop steward (who has since left the Party as a culmination of putting reform struggle before building the Party and revolutionary ideas—the leadership's fault. Unfortunately, he was not struggled with to really forge the 50 Shop Stewards into a functioning body through which many stewards could be won to the Party's ideas). In addition, the editor of the local union paper is a PLP member. Three Party goals should have been: (1) since the strike was a Party-led action against racist layoffs (120 minority workers were axed), a good issue, broaden this out to oppose the Nazi racist attacks and general ruling class offensive in the city of Chicago; (2) Defeat the revisionists ideologically in the union; and (3) Re-

cruit to the Party on the above basis.

(1) No fight was made to expand the strike to oppose the broader manifestations of racism, thereby failing to politicize many in a mass way, to understand the relation of the strike to Mayor Daley and the whole ruling class, etc. The strike was restricted to the fight inside the union against layoffs, (2) We allowed the revisionists to run over us ideologically. We backed off selling **C-D** as "divisive" (it was done, but weakly), when we should have thrown the revisionists out of the union and explained why. (3) When we met with the strike leaders we discussed mainly how to build the picket lines, not how to build the Party.

All this happened after conducting a long and positive fight in 1006 to actually go on strike, and against layoffs. When it happened and with Party members in leadership, it appears we felt impelled to "win" the strike to show how good the Party members were ("better reformers"), rather than **really** winning by recruiting to the Party based on revolutionary ideas, at the same time as we participate in a militant strike, using the latter opportunity to make the points we had planned to.

Finally the government/boss fired 300 strikers who were protesting these racist layoffs. Then the AFSCME International sellout Jerry Wurf came down, put the local in receivership, declared the strike over, and connived with the bosses to split the strikers, maintaining the firing of 33 (PLP'ers and other militants).

The communists who, in attempting to carry out the political fight against racism and thereby organized the strike, were virtually all fired, without, so far, having recruited any workers to the Party out of this struggle. There is no PLP fraction there. Therefore, not only was the revolutionary movement not built, but the bosses, having accomplished their most important aim—lessening communist influence—can now go about driving the workers down still further, with far less communist leadership to contend with. This was a defeat. Whether the Party forces can recoup somewhat by involving workers in 1006 in the fight against these firings in a political, revolutionary way, and thereby recruit them to revolutionary politics and to the Party, remains to be seen. It is obvious that the Party leadership, starting with the National Committee, did not make the kind of political struggle that was required to turn this fight into a winning one. It somewhat put the PLP'ers in 1006 in the position of doing what they did because they thought that was the line and they were carrying it out.

The entire line of putting reform before revolution has been reflected in our leaflets and **C-D** articles. We have spent most of the leaflet discussing the ins and outs of the reform struggle, giving good advice on how to militantly overturn the union sellouts' tactics, and ending up with "PLP fights for socialism and workers power; for more information, call ( )."

While this may sound too crude, it is essentially what most of us have done. And this is the way our activities have been described in **C-D** articles. All instead of **starting out** with revolutionary politics, why we are involved in this reform struggle, in what way does it show the need for overthrowing capitalism, in what way does it show capitalism as the cause of the problem, etc., and **then** spending some time on tactics, growing out of this communist analysis which would imply sharper class struggle and an understanding to act against **capitalism** (not merely against union sellouts or this particular boss),—i.e., join the Party or a fraction or a study group, etc.

How has all this happened? Is it wrong to be active in the union, to run for union leadership, to be militant, to immerse one's self in the working class at the point of production, etc.? Definitely not, but certainly we shouldn't do it in the one-sided, reform-over-revolution way we've done it. The reformist errors described above did not result from Party members not carrying out the Party line. It was the Party leadership who allowed the line to develop in a one-sided way. The fact is the Party membership followed the example set by the leadership. When articles appeared in **C-D** in the fashion described, members could only conclude that this was desirable and followed suit. When the leadership concentrated on the reform struggle, making it primary in practice, the membership followed suit, "carrying out the line." Now, based on a review of our practice and where it has gotten us, we are trying to correct these mistakes and develop the line in such a way that it isn't practiced one-sidedly, so that the advances made each step of the way are not undercut. Advancing our theory and practice is a protracted process, not an all-or-

nothing affair. It is a painstaking struggle to constantly test it, evaluate the results, make necessary changes and then test it again, always using the mooring of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessity for the working class to seize state power, and the need for a communist party to lead to that goal.

At this point it might be helpful to examine the development of our line, especially in the labor movement.

MOVE TOWARDS THE WORKING CLASS

When the PLM (Progressive Labor Movement) was first formed in 1962, it was based on the fact that the working class was the key class historically in making a revolution and that it needed a communist party to lead to the smashing of bourgeois state power and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. This was the answer to the old CO's total abandonment of the fight for Socialism. The PLM period ('62-'65) re-asserted the public role of communists ("out in the open, on the streets"), laying the basis for the formation of a party. There was plenty of "reporting" on the role of workers and class struggle but absolutely no communist base-building (there were very few Party members who were workers; at the time of the founding convention of PLP we had one "trade union club" with four members out of 200 people at the convention).

From '65 and the establishment of PLP to around '68, we attempted to move members to work and into the unions, mostly to try to establish a base within the working class at the point of production and secondarily to get some stability. Since most of our members were students or ex-students, these were the people who "entered" the working class to carry out the line.

The main emphasis was to "get our feet wet" in what Lenin referred as the "muck and mire" of trade unionism. We were going to try to build a rank-and-file movement, caucuses, a Left-Center Coalition, learn trade union and strike tactics and organize struggle so "Marxist-Leninist conclusions could come out of the struggle." For students and ex-students to stick in the working class—given many romantic notions of workers—and therefore to avoid adventurism, we opted for opportunism and downplaying the open Party role at the expense of avoiding sectarianism (and getting fired immediately). This meant little putting forward of the Party in the here and now. Most members were not known as PL'ers by their co-workers. Although the Party was buried for the most part because of this, one important advance in this period was the development of the base-building concept which became the main speech at the 1968 Party convention). While this was the height of the period of the ghetto rebellions and the anti-war movement, there was very little relation between our activities in those two movements and our work in the labor movement, partly because of the lack of a communist base among workers (although many small attempts were made to link them).

As we began to see that putting students in the "front lines" wouldn't work and that they either left the Party or they buried themselves at work (and left the Party behind), we pulled many of them out of the industrial working class and put them in situations more related to their backgrounds, some still in unions, others in situations where they could more naturally win their peers to a proworking class stance. This period, from '69 to '71, was characterized by the more mass putting forward of the Party, especially through the mass sale of **C-D**. Members were encouraged to sell the paper in front of their plants, to tell workers about the Party right at the beginning, etc. Sales of the monthly **C-D** reached 100,000 in the summer of 1970. Sellers collectives of Party and non-Party were formed. With the start of the recession in 1970, Workers Councils and Unemployment Councils were formed to try to win workers directly to the Party, although done essentially away from the point of production.

In '71, with the advent of a big wave of wildcat strikes and general working-class unrest (rejection of contracts, etc.), we suddenly realized we were outside this movement. Members organizing sellers collectives, unemployment councils, selling the paper outside plants, etc., were not even attending union meetings and participating in the main mass organization of the working class. They were therefore unable to put forward politics in that struggle. So '71-'72 marked a return to unions, slates, caucuses, union activity (both by members in unions in which ex-students were naturally accepted on the job, and by those in-

dustrial workers recruited out of the Councils work), but this time on the basis of telling co-workers about the Party and the intention to recruit "out of the struggle."

In the beginning of '72, WAM was formed to organize a mass-based Left organization around a major issue—30 for 40. To WAM we would win the most advanced workers who we would then recruit to the Party. Party members would be open in WAM. It would unite the working class, engage in strike support, and fight racism. But the intention was for it to be a single-issue organization, to re-develop the Left inside the labor movement. Actually, WAM developed as a militant, class solidarity group, with an everything-but-the-dictatorship-of-the-proletariat program. It led to it being "unnecessary to join the Party because it is no different than WAM" and the Party was generally buried in WAM activities (reform work), although some workers were recruited to the Party through WAM. Yet it was generally on a militant WAM line, not on a revolutionary line.

The period from Dec. '74 to the present was marked by a drive for a mass Party, to recruit those who were hidden from the Party by WAM, etc. Party membership jumped. WAM was dissolved, having outlived any usefulness it might have had, to be replaced by communist fractions (a line which began in Aug. '75). The idea was, and is, to win workers ready to function directly under the leadership and line of the Party, and from there to recruit them. Still ready to join caucuses, we now distinguish between them and fractions—the caucus is not set up to build the Party, although workers could and should be recruited to the Party or fraction out of caucus work.

Fractions were formed on the basis of "linking reform to revolution," seeing that the working class won't get Marxism-Leninism simply by working on the job, nor simply from class struggle at the point of production. The fraction, and the Party members in it, must run the whole gamut of political ideas and events, on and away from the job, since (1) a communist outlook goes far beyond the point of production, and (2) the battle for state power is one that occurs away from the factories, although occupying factories could be one aspect of a revolution. The ability to "take over" production is really dependent upon having state power and out-lawing private property. As long as the ruling class has state power, it can use it to prevent workers' control over production.

However, while putting forward communist fractions and the above ideas, we have still managed to organize fractions that are essentially reformist in nature. That is in "linking reform to revolution," we still use reform struggle as "the basis" of winning workers to the Party, which also means they can be won to the Party on a militant reform line, not on a revolutionary line. We are now coming to the conclusion that fighting for reforms without the main content being to tie the fight to the communist idea of overthrowing the system (i.e., fighting in the mass movement in a reformist way), is contradictory to the fight for revolution. Winning workers to see the need to take state power, and therefore to join and build the Party to lead to that goal, **does not grow out of the simple fight for reforms.** Therefore, it is only capitalism that can be built by fighting in the reform movement in a reformist way.

Yet we can see from tracing our history in this very cursory fashion, that there was both a good side and a weak side—a revolutionary side and a reform side—to our work. There was always a concentration on the working class as the revolutionary class, and, after '68, an attempt to win workers directly to the Party. Within that we developed the concept of building a communist base in the working class. We always put forward the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessity of the working class to seize power and smash the bourgeois state. We always put forward the need to fight racism as necessary to unite the working class to a point where it could move for state power. This central anti-racist thread, along with the analysis of the decline of U.S. imperialism, has laid the basis for the development of the line on fascism.

Each advance in the line produced something positive which we still incorporate into our current work: the working class is the revolutionary class; do communist work in the unions, lead class struggle at the point of production; build a personal/political communist base among workers; tell workers about the Party; put forward the Party in a mass way; mass sale of **C-D**; boldly

Armed wives of auto strikers during the 30's.

put forward the Party at plant gates; intensify work in the unions on the basis of talking about the Party and recruiting to it; putting forward 30 for 40 and anti-racism to the whole working class; uniting the working class through these issues; fractions, not caucuses, as **Party** units; winning workers to communist ideas beyond just the momentary boss-worker relationship; seeing that revolution will accur away from (although sometimes including) the factories.

We published Road to Revolution I as a reassertion of the dictatorship of the proletariat after its abandonment by most of the world communist movement at that time. In Road to Revolution II we corrected errors on the question of nationalism, seeing that this is a ruling class ideology and cannot lead to socialism but leads to the maintenance of capitalism. In Road to Revolution III we attacked the two-stage theory of revolution, declaring that workers, peasants and other can be won directly to fighting for Socialism.

However, our practice has tended to tail this progression in our line. Part of what we have been doing is a reflection of winning workers on a two-stage basis—first to militant reform and then to revolution. We have rejected this in theory. We must reject it in practice. The fact is that when we win workers to militant reform first, it can and does just as easily turn into its opposite and away from revolution and joining PLP.

This happened because (1) of many early subjective weaknesses; (2) when it comes to a choice of pursuing a revolutionary path or a reform road, a reform fight will always meet with a lesser resistance from the ruling class; therefore, without revolutionary politics being foremost in our minds, we are most likely to pursue a reformist road; and (3) we haven't understood the Leninist thesis that the reform struggle is just one tactic in the revolutionary process. Therefore, we haven't entered the reform struggle with a communist understanding, with the primary goal of building the Party, but rather from the point of view that the working class is the revolutionary class and that "therefore" out of the class struggle will grow Marxism-Leninism. Our practice has taught us that this is simply not true. So somewhat inherent in the way we have developed the various changes and advances in our line over the years—and there was always a positive and more advanced concept in each successive change, growing out of practice—there has also been a one-sidedness that allowed reformism to override revolution. It is this weakness that must be reversed. We can no longer have the idea, present in many past trade union programs, that we will take over the unions and from that vantage point launch a fight for state power. The ruling class will opt for violent struggle to save their system long before we "take over" the unions. Therefore, we must, right from the beginning, win workers to the concept of state power, **not** to the idea that they will win through rank-and-file power first and revolution later. Sure, we should and must be active in the unions, run for office, participate in the fight for rank-and-file power against the sellouts. BUT ONLY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF FITTING THAT STRUGGLE INTO ONE FOR REVOLUTION, not from the point of view that this reform of the unions precedes the fight for revolution.

The concept of making the primary fight one of fighting for revolution, and therefore of building the Party, and the fight for reforms secondary should not view recruiting to the Party in a narrow or limited way. Winning someone to join the Party is not simply meeting some numerical quota, and after we've won 51 percent of the working class, we'll simply "have Socialism." Winning someone to join the Party **around a revolutionary line** means winning that person **to go back into the reform movement**, into the mass movement, participate in the class struggle in a way that sharpens the fight against the ruling class as a class, tie the reform struggle to capitalism and why and how it must be overthrown, and in that way recruit still more workers to the Party. Winning someone to join the Party is not merely an intellectual exercise; it is winning them to be active in leading and initiating class struggle around a revolutionary line, rather than just being a militant fighter for reforms.

Some examples of putting the fight for the Party and revolution—the need to seize state power—ahead of the reform struggle:

On one job where the Party had been very active in the reform struggle, a real effort was made politically to win workers to go to May Day, on the basis of the need for workers to have state power, not on a reform, militancy line. Six

workers met before May Day to discuss these things. Four went to May Day. This group is now a fraction which has studied the Communist Manifesto and plans to take up the Paris Commune, the 7th World Congress, the Chinese Revolution, and events in the U.S. (the communists in the 1930's, the Flint Strike, etc.). One of the tests of this fraction's work is its ability to lead class struggle, fitting that struggle into the revolutionary ideas it is learning. Two workers have now joined the Party, with a much clearer understanding of the Party's revolutionary line.

It is important to note here that all this political discussion—from May Day on—with the fraction was **preceded** by the same discussion in the section committee and the club **within** the Party. If these kinds of political discussion predominate **inside** the Party, they will reflect themselves in our relations with our base. Similarly, if the main discussions internally in the Party are tactical ones, of how to build the reform struggle, the union, etc., that will be the dominant discussion with the base.

Similar attempts were started in the Party in various places this past summer. Club-organized dinners with PL speakers to recruit the Party's base to fractions and clubs; consolidating "nominal" members who don't attend club meetings regularly; giving everyone a Party assignment, something to do to help build the Party (selling **C-D**, helping to organize Party activities, financial contributions, seriously winning them to participate in Party rallies and demonstrations, etc.).

All this should involve a struggle over revolutionary ideas and trying to win them to build the Party based on revolution, not reform or militancy. In addition, an educational program is being organized. Every section committee meeting starts with discussion of something being read; there is an ongoing cadre school every two weeks (taking up **What Is To Be Done, State and Revolution**, etc.); every club to have a study group along these lines; and every fraction to study **C-D**.

OUR COMMUNIST LINE IN PRACTICE

In the recent NYC Local 420 hospital strike, a leaflet was distributed which put forward the Party's revolutionary line and explained how capitalism has caused the strikers' problems, therefore why a Party and Socialism was needed. An expanded Party meeting was called on the first day of the strike and 15 non-Party workers came. It was announced at the start of the meeting that, while it was important to discuss strike tactics, it was **more** important to discuss the overall ravages of the system, of racism, etc., and why it was necessary to build the Party in this strike.

The sharpness of the revolutionary line during the Aug. 28 Detroit auto march helped recruit five workers to the Party. Many workers who have been around the Party for some time were recruited simply by asking them in a serious way to join. They had been ready for some time but had never been asked or followed up seriously.

The Party's leadership of the wildcat strike at NYC's Montefiore Hospital involved anti-racism (uniting white professionals with black and Latin non-professionals), pointing out the class nature of the system, and pointing out the necessity to join the Party and build for a revolution as the only way out. Four workers joined who participated in the struggle. Now a shop paper is being distributed there among Local 1199 members entitled, "We Tried Arbitration; Look What We Got—Revolution is The Only Solution" (in answer to the Davis sellout of the recent strike).

The bosses in one shop posted an order requiring workers to submit to lunchbox inspection "because supplies were being stolen." Black workers were singled out for special harassment. The Party put out a leaflet asking "Who is stealing from whom?" and went on to explain the robbery of surplus value by the bosses off the workers' labor, and showing how Socialism will stop the biggest thievery of all, tieing the racist nature of the attack into this explanation.

There have been similar attempts elsewhere at fitting the reform struggle into the revolutionary goal. Some of this has been more reflected in the kinds of articles now being written in **C-D**.

These are good beginnings. As we attempt to change our approach, we will no doubt make mistakes. But we must make decisive changes in the work. One way to do it is the following:

Instead of beginning by becoming active in any reform struggle that is occurring in our area of work, begin with studying the problems in an industry (or elsewhere) from a communist point of view: what are the main reflections of capitalism in that area (unemployment? racism? high accident rate? etc.). Then develop an explanation of how these problems **result from capitalism**, and therefore why we need socialism and how socialism would solve those problems. The idea is to explain why the problems exist in such a way that it would impel workers to act in a way to **destroy the system**, not to merely oppose the sellouts and fight for rank-and-file power. Acting in the direction of destroying the system means joining a fraction or the Party, spreading revolutionary ideas, recruiting others to the fraction and the Party, as **well as participating in the reform struggle to get the opportunity to do the above.** It would mean entering a strike, for instance, with the understanding of how capitalism is organized against the workers, and therefore winning workers to the idea of destroying it; not entering the strike with the main goal of working out the tactics. Good tactics may very well be a by-product of the first point, but it should not develop into the main effort in the struggle. Workers should be won to the Party during the strike not on the basis of the need to replace the sellout leaders but on the need to replace capitalism with socialism. This can't happen if all we discuss is how to organize the picket lines.

Leaflets, **C-D** articles, and other written material should START with the concepts of revolution, not dwell on reform. This means that the political goals set forward, for instance, in the plans as outlined previously in the NYC Hos-

pital strike, the S.F. city workers strike, the AFSCME 1006 strike, should be the bulk of the leaflet or article, with a much lesser amount devoted to the ins and outs of the reform struggle, and then mainly as they fit into the revolutionary struggle. In other words, we shouldn't merely reverse the present content, putting the present last sentence or paragraph about **PLP** and revolution at the beginning and then just proceed with our usual concentration on reform. We must really think out how the main problems in the struggle reflect capitalism and therefore win workers to the necessity to get rid of capitalism, not merely change the union.

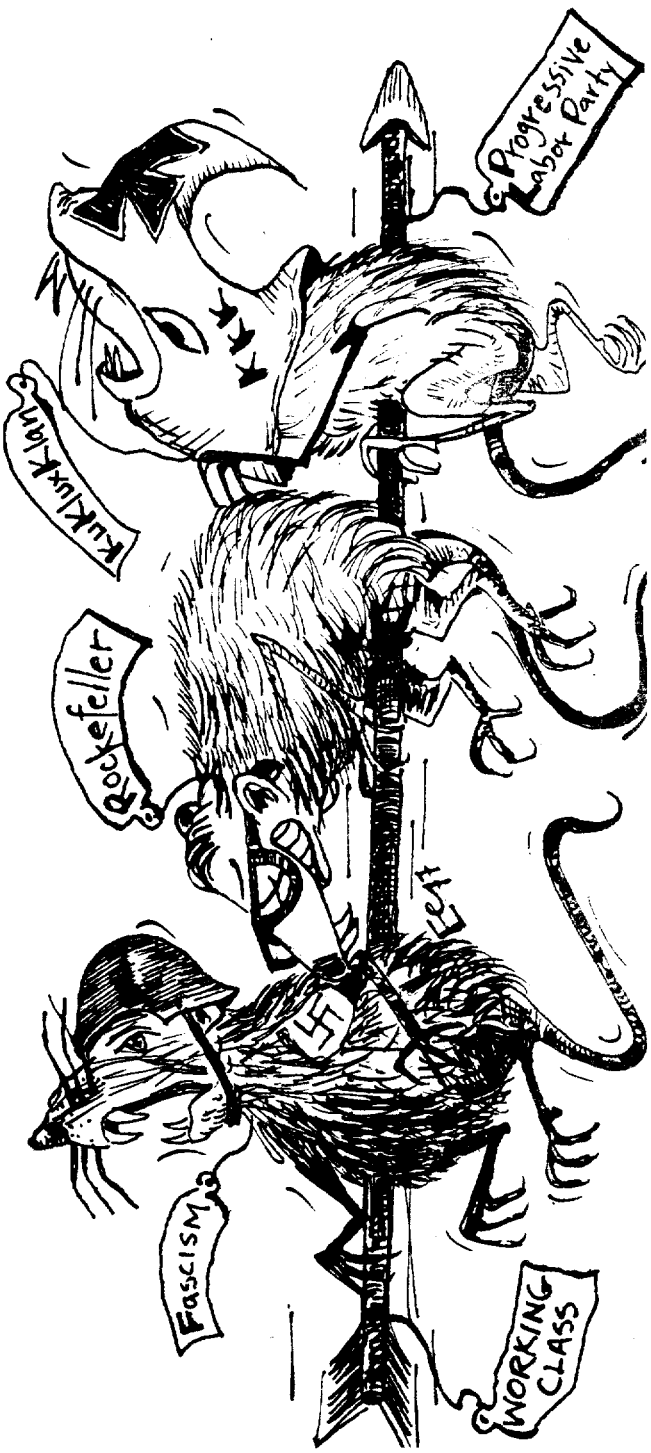
Finally, if we are elected to union office, we should: (1) tie every grievance to capitalism, which should make us a fighting grievance person (do not feed the illusion that a communist, or communist-led union, can make things better under capitalism; use the grievance to win workers closer to the idea of destroying capitalism and therefore joining the Party or Party fraction); (2) use the union office to conduct political discussion, at union meetings, in union committees, at shop steward meetings, etc.; (3) use the union office to win workers to join the Party.

If using our union position to build the Party in this way leads to a sharp struggle and even ouster from the position, this would be a victory if it meant that we had recruited workers to the Party, to seeing the need to destroy capitalism and take state power. That is the barometer of winning or losing, not the votes in the election or the ability to hang onto the office.

ANTI-RACISM NOT 'JUST ANOTHER REFORM'

A final note on the questions of racism, 30 for 40 and imperialist war as they relate to the issue of revolution and reform. While racism cannot be solved under capitalism, and therefore fighting anti-racist activities are in a certain sense reform struggles, at the same time anti-racism is not "just another reform." As has always been said, racism is "the Achilles heel of capitalism." It is fundamental to the ability of the ruling class to exercise its control over the working class. Without fighting racism, the working class will never be united and in a position to move for state power.

While fighting racism does not necessarily or automatically lead to a revolutionary outlook, adding communist content to anti-racist struggles —working-class unity, internationalism, exposing the ability of the ruling class to exploit the whole working class even more based on the super-exploitation of minority workers—all this falls on qualitatively more fertile ground for winning people to revolution when involved in fighting racism. The fact is, in the U.S. racism enters into **virtually every single reform struggle** because of its all-embracing use by the ruling class to defeat those struggles. Therefore, organizing anti-racist struggle gives us a unique opportunity to win people to revolutionary ideas in **all** of these struggles, provided we raise the communist content of anti-racism.



Rioters chase police near Ford's River Rouge plant at Detroit in 1932 in a scene from labor's militant past.

Only a communist party like PLP, based on its Marxist-Leninist understanding of the fundamental role of racism under capitalism, can bring workers to this revolutionary conclusion on racism, that it cannot be destroyed unless capitalism is destroyed. Non-communist organizations like the Committee Against Racism (CAR) cannot draw these conclusions. On the other hand, organizations like CAR can play a vital and important role in uniting masses of white and minority people in struggle against racism in every aspect of life under capitalism, providing a political framework in which they can readily be won to the fight for revolution, if communists do their job.

Therefore, we should not hesitate to put anti-racist struggle into the heart of class warfare and make it the central feature of our fraction work.

On the fight for 30 for 40: shortening the work-week and work-day will not destroy capitalism. The bosses will still seek ways to overcome the effects of the shortened hours, through speed-up, automation, etc., as they have in the past, as long as they have their state power to enforce the attempted reversal. But, at the same time, shortening the work-day means reducing the amount of hours a worker is working for the boss, reducing the time in which he or she is producing surplus value. It is much easier for a boss to take back a 25¢ wage increase in another way than it is to compensate for 30 for 40. Marx spoke about the shorter work week as a "revolutionary" demand. (Material on this has been printed in PL magazine and in the 1975 May Day pamphlet).

Historically, the fight for the shorter work-day has involved the working class in some of its sharpest battles with the bosses **AS A CLASS.** The fight for the shorter work-day cuts across all lines of craft, union, industry, sex, nationality and color, internationally. Again, it is a universally unifying fight. Because of this it tends to bring workers together **as a class** fighting the bosses **as a class.** This is much more marked than, say, the fight for higher wages, for health and safety, against foremen's harassment, or any of the other myriad of reform struggles. The fight for 30 for 40 **escalates** the class struggle, precisely because the ruling class sees it as a demand which snatches from them hours in the work-day that they, the bosses, want workers to spend producing surplus value—profits—for the capitalists. They fight it, on the whole, qualitatively more fiercely than most other demands. Therefore, in uniting workers **as a class** and developing class consciousness and an understanding of the source of profits in surplus value, the fight for 30 for 40 also provides communists with a greater opportunity to win workers to see the need for revolution and Socialism, and therefore to join the Party needed to lead it.

Finally, on fighting imperialist war. Again, workers can make this fight, against a foreign capitalist class (imperialists), without necessarily concluding that socialist revolution—the dictatorship of the proletariat—is needed to defeat exploitation, foreign or domestic. However, the fight against imperialist war helps to reveal some of the sharpest contradictions of capitalism.

Uniting against it means uniting the working class **internationally,** the communist content of anti-imperialism. One only need look at the anti-Vietnam war struggle to see the limitless opportunities it presented for exposing the capitalist/imperialist nature of exploitation as the cause of all workers' problems. Fighting imperialist war not only offers the opportunity to the victims in the colonial country to develop class consciousness against capitalist exploitation through communist ideology; it also offers the opportunity in the home country of the imperialists to lead workers there in the direction of "turning the imperialist war into a civil war," into class warfare for the very control of state power. Again, this is only possible under communist revolutionary leadership.

Fighting against racism and imperialist war, and for 30 for 40, should be viewed as major goals in fighting the capitalist class and driving them more into a corner from which they can be driven off the stage of history altogether.

STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA MAJOR BLOW AGAINST RACISM AND CAPITALISM

Two immediate actions that can bring together much of the content of this report in a measurable way are raising the fight of the working class of South Africa in all our activities here, and secondly, increasing the sales and subscriptions of **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO.**

The eruption of anti-racist class warfare in South Africa is a major upheaval in the capitalist world, with the potential for equaling, and possibly exceeding, the effects of the Vietnam war. Workers and students in South Africa are challenging the fascist government there—and by extension, their mentors in the U.S. ruling class (witness the demonstrators' signs against "Kissinger the murderer")—as they fight to the death although with vastly inferior weapons. Whether or not a revolutionary movement for the dictatorship of the proletariat surfaces in South Africa remains to be seen, as does the possibility of the revisionists in the Soviet Union or elsewhere trying to move in at the expense of U.S. bosses and capture the anti-fascist fighters' movement.

In any case, the links to workers' struggles here against capitalism are vast; the same companies (GM, FORD, etc.) exploit and use one country's workers against the other; the same weapon, racism, is used; the same weapon of state power—fascism—is used in S. Africa and threatened in the U.S.; the question of international working class unity is raised, by U.S. bosses using South African workers to undercut workers in the U.S.; the racist wrath of U.S./S. African bosses victimize workers here, too. All this presents innumerable opportunities to win workers to revolutionary ideas and to join the Party, at the same time as they participate in class warfare against the ruling class. We should organize demonstrations in all cities protesting the racist fascism in S. Africa and linking it to racism here; distribute leaflets; raise the issue in unions and all mass organizations; get resolutions passed and protests sent to the appropriate enemies; creatively think out how we can upset the normal racist, fascist routines of the enemy; link the auto strike to the fight of workers in South Africa; link the racism of Carter and Ford to this issue; etc., etc. In this movement we should be able to win many workers and others to understanding the nature of these attacks and to a revolutionary solution.

The Winter Palace under siege (1917)

Secondly, if winning workers to revolution is primary, then nowhere are these ideas spread more widely than through the pages of **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO**, on a regular basis. Increasing the sale of, and subscriptions to, **C-D**, is not just some numbers game but part and parcel of the fight to win thousands of workers and others to the Party's ideas. It should lead us to many new recruits, workers thirsting for the real solutions to their problems. It can provoke discussions about revolutionary ideas among thousands and tens of thousands, if they are given the opportunity by us to read the paper regularly. It can result in hundreds of new sellers of the paper, scores of networks in the plants and offices in which we work. Therefore, we are proposing the following; that 2,500 new subscriptions to **C-D** be sold by Jan. 1st, and that this help us to maintain subscription selling as a regular activity the year round; that there be a daily sale of the paper in, or in front of, every Party member's work-place or school; that there be regular public Party rallies, and the sale of **C-D**, at selected workplaces and campuses; that every subscriber and regular reader of the paper be asked to take two or more papers to

sell to friends. More will be said about this spreading of revolutionary ideas in future issues of the paper.

CHANGE IN LINE IS PART OF A PROCESS

There are at least three dangers in discussing and trying to carry out the line of this report, thinking:

(1) That this report "represents no change at all from our previous line; it's just sharper." This is not true, since it is a very definite change from the way we've been working in the reform movement for many years;

(2) That "we no longer want to work in the reform movement, unions, etc. and that we think this is unimportant." Also not true, also having been explained **how** we want to work in the reform movement, in a qualitatively different way.

(3) How a line changes and advances. This is a process, not something that is completely right and then completely wrong at one time. It was shown how we advanced from Road to Revolution I to II to III, how we tried to move the Party to the fore, but that our practice has tended to trail somewhat behind that line. As our practice and experience moves forward, there will be more changes. This is healthy and not to be afraid of.

Comrades and friends: a future of revolution was never brighter. The objective situation is worsening; the bosses' economy is headed for another slump. This will mean new attacks on the working class and increased imperialist meddlings abroad, pointing to war and fascism. Against all this the working class can take the offensive, if led by a communist party that follows a line of putting revolution first, that bursts the chains of capitalist reformist ideology. This is our historic task; let's get to it!

New Democracy

The present period of historical development differs from Lenin's day, from Stalin's and even from Mao's. Colonialism has all but disappeared; the majority of countries are primarily capitalist and no longer feudalist; state-capitalism has developed out of the former socialist revolutions. These are the three conditions upon which any Marxist analysis of the world must be built.

New Democracy was a theory developed in 1940 to justify the alliance of the Communist Party and the workers and peasants with the national bourgeosie of China, in the conditions of imperialist invasion and feudalism. It presented two major ideas. The first is the notion of the "progressive" nature of capitalism in comparison to feudalism, especially as applied to the country-side. The second is the notion of the "progressive" nature of a "patriotic" sector of the national bourgeoisie, and its role as one of the four "revolutionary" classes.

From there this theory has been extended to be the basis for the foreign policy of the Chinese Communist Party in the present period, and of smaller groups in other countries, notably the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party.

The line of the "progressive" nature of capitalism is basically taken out of the 'theory of the productive forces,' a theory which runs like a thread through every form of revisionism, from Bernstein to Liu Chao Shi to 'Lyn Marcus.' It says that we should keep capitalism. Bernstein believed that capitalism would evolve peacefully into social-

ism. The Mensheviks argued that capitalism must run its course in Russia before socialism could be built, thus giving a theoretical cover to their opposition to the October Revolution. Trotsky believed that socialism couldn't be built in one country which was not industrially developed, like Russia, but only in the major imperialist nations where capitalism was developed. This was the basis for his opposition to socialism and his eventual alliance with fascism. Khrushchev believed that the gauge of socialism was the number of TV sets installed. This was correctly christened "goulash communism" by the Chinese. Liu Shao-chi maintained that the Chinese CP should build capitalism so that class contradictions could heighten, while at the same time building the material base for socialism. Now Hua Kuo-feng emphasizes the need for China to become a powerful industrial nation, with production primary, as the road to socialism. And such open police agents as Lyn Marcus of the fascist NCLC believes that U.S. capitalism must be saved because it has not developed to its highest level, and proposes, along with Rockefeller, a new international currency and bank for the world. The Soviets justified their alliance with the Portuguese bourgeoisie during the '74 overthrow of fascism with the excuse that capitalism had not sufficiently "matured" for revolution to be ripe.

And all these people call themselves Marxists! Every Marxist-Leninist has had to battle the capitalist ideologies for hours with their attempts to identify socialism and marxism with economic determinism and government control, only to have some phony turn around and, in the name of Marxism-Leninism, spout the same nonsense within the revolutionary movement!

No amount of production guarantees socialism. But we have William Hinton, author of **Fanshen** and friend to every right-wing current within China explaining and justifying New Democracy with the proud announcement that capitalism is a form of "progressive exploitation"! Thank you. And is it much better to be "progressively exploited" than to be exploited in a reactionary way? Many of the poor peasants and hired agricultural workers, not to mention the workers in the scattered capitalist industries wanted to kick out the capitalists and take over after the defeat of the Japanese. They were prevented in this by the theory of the productive forces.

New Democracy is also a perpetration in theory of a tactical retreat during the early years of socialism, the New Economic Policy (NEP). The **real** reason for the NEP is found, not in the progressive nature of capitalism, but in the fact that the peasants in the Soviet Union had not been won to socialism. Here we come to the second justification for New Democracy. This is the alleged "reactionary nature of the peasantry."

Marx was the first to state this, especially in his observations of the French farmers during the Paris Commune. He concluded that peasants or farmers are "reactionary" because they were all small businessmen. This might have been true in France at that time. We can see the same thing in our own countryside where most farmers are small-time capitalists. Nevertheless even now there are opposing tendencies especially among the small number of small farmers, who share equipment and labor, who many times live below the poverty line and work a job in town in addition to their farms. But a farmer in France is not necessarily a peasant in Russia, China or Ethiopia. The bulk of the peasantry were either those who rented another's land (poor peasants), or those who had no land and hired themselves out as laborers. This was and is 80% of the world's peasantry, similar to our own sharecroppers and farm-workers. The other parts of the population are middle peasants (those who own but do not hire) and rich peasants, those who hire but do little work. A landlord does no work and hires many, owning much more land than one person like a poor peasant would own. As can be expected, the Chinese landlords also ran capitalist enterprises on the side, allied with the Kuomintang and the Catholic Church. The landlords formed the social base for the Kuomintang, ran the countryside through control of the military, the town governments and making loans at high interest. In South America, a small proportion of the population controls all the land.

We have said that the majority of peasants are proletarianized and own little. This is why they are a revolutionary class and are not the reactionaries which Marx encountered.

Engels began the investigations of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry with his writings on the peasant rebellions of the 1600's during which the rebels advocated killing the landlords and distributing the land. Lenin, after Marx, was the first Marxist to correct Marx's anti-peasant view and see that peasants could be an ally of the proletariat, not simply reactionary or neutral. Half of the original Soviets after the revolution were made up of peasants. 1917 could not have been possible without their help.

Yet the Bolsheviks never formed deep ties with the peasantry and took over almost intact the political program of bourgeois peasant groups like the Narodniks. Collectivization was never put forward. As a result after the Civil War, the peasants were not won over to socialism. The Bolsheviks found it necessary to turn the countryside over to capitalism to keep production rolling (NEP)—which is exactly the nature of New Democracy. All this took place under the hegemony of the proletariat, but it weakened the dictatorship and reduced its base, since communists presided over capitalism, a real contradiction. As in China, the rich peasants or **kulaks** grew stronger as a class and the mass of poor peasants were increasingly oppressed. The NEP, which was called a "temporary retreat" by Lenin was reversed under Stalin's leadership and the countryside collectivized. The poor and landless peasants led the attack on the **kulaks**, with cadres from the city assisting.

The experience of the NEP was based on Marx's early estimation of the peasantry and resulted in the Bolsheviks not fighting for collective ownership and control in the countryside. Because of

Aidit, head of the Indonesian CP, shakes hands with Sukarno, August 1965. Alliance with 'progressive' bosses led to his death and the massacre of half a million revolutionaries three months later.

this incorrect assessment, NEP was made inevitable. New Democracy is basically the temporary retreat of NEP made into a constant program of Marxism. This "temporary retreat" is now a constant retreat. Is this not the nature of mechanical and reactionary Marxism?

It is ironic that Mao, who took the belief in the revolutionary potential of the peasants one step further than Lenin, in the development of peasant-based people's war, should have turned around and opposed the socialist aspirations of the peasantry.

No one denies that the struggle in the countryside will go through different steps, although the recent experience of Cambodia suggests that immediate collectivization in certain circumstances is possible. It is not known whether the experience in Cambodia is through pressure or because the mass of peasants understood that without working together many would starve. Nevertheless nearly all peasants are in Communes of 1,000 or so and two rice crops have been gotten out instead of one. The stories of famine and slaughter are those of former rich peasants and landlords who have been offered land by the Thailand fascists to tell their tale. Who was slaughtered? One statement said to the effect that everyone who could read, 600,000 people, were killed. Yet there are probably not 600,000 readers in all of Cambodia. Why kill those who read? This is the crudest anti-communism.

Now the majority of peasants in China are in Communes. What this proves is that peasants can be voluntarily won to socialism and this is the great achievement of the socialist revolution in China. This was through class struggle in the countryside.

Whether Mao acted on it or not (evidence is that he vacillated) the line that "class struggle is primary" is the gauge and the motor for historical development, and not the mere development of the productive forces, although this is important in a non-industrialized country. These two are dialectically interconnected, since a successful resolution of class struggle in favor of the working class will lead to higher production as well. This is one of the secrets of socialism that the capitalists are trying to tap with their "worker responsibility" movement.

Stages can be gone through quickly and a hundred years can be compressed into a few months. **What is primary is the political consciousness of the oppressed workers and peasants and their desire to take power.** This is Leninism. If workers are ready to rule, the duty of the Party is to lead the way. In order to get to this point, the party must organize struggle and develop propaganda so that this point is reached as soon as possible. The duty of a communist party in the countryside is to prepare the ground for collective ownership and control, the dictatorship of the proletariat, not "new" democracy.

There is the second notion of New Democracy to be considered. That is the "progressive" nature of the bourgeoisie. In China at the time of the anti-Japanese war, the CCP and the Kuomintang were the two main forces opposing the Japanese fascists. They signed an alliance of unity. Whether this alliance was more on paper or in practice, it is clear that the Kuomintang, representing the national capitalists, spent a lot of time fighting the Communists and only some time fighting the Japanese, who were mainly by the two communist armies. Evidently the Communists

got some use out of the Kuomintang, while at all times building up their own armies, base areas and political power. This particular strategy should have lasted from the beginning to the end of the anti-Japanese war (since the basis of the alliance—the KMT's half-hearted fight against the Japanese, would have been over). But instead of a temporary strategy, which would make sense (didn't Lenin say he would unite with the devil himself to get socialism?) the Chinese CP allowed capitalism to develop inside China after the revolution, did not expropriate many small bosses, allowed private plots, and allowed the former capitalists to continue running their operations without formal ownership, but with power and annual compensation paid to them for expropriation. How polite the dictatorship has become!

All these mistakes, along with those made during the NEP, come back to haunt the working class. These concessions to bourgeois power, managers, individual incentives, primacy of production quotas all lead straight to state capitalism and the development of a new bourgeoisie out of the old and out of the Party. The reversal of socialism in the USSR and now China are part of the legacy of New Democracy.

What is even more glaring is the continuation of the principles of "progressive" bourgeoisies out of one historical period in a certain country to extend to the whole world at all times. This is the chief legacy of New Democracy. Chinese foreign policy in the last 7 years has been determined by the application of this one strategy and principle. Thus classes no longer exist in the Chinese view, only "three worlds." The poor "third world" must unite with the middle second world against the two super-powers, of which one is worse than the other. Of course it is "our duty" to unite with the U.S. against the USSR much as the CCP united with the KMT against the Japanese long ago. Marxism goes out the door and in comes full-blown revisionism.

The most significant thing happening on the left around the world today is the rejection of this particular theory. The Chinese alliance with every "third world" butcher (third world was a phrase coined by Brazil, another "anti-imperialist" power) like Pinochet in Chile, the Shah of Iran, South Africa, Bhutto's Pakistan, Indonesia's Suharto, Zaire's Mobutu, has exposed New Democracy for what it is—the desertion of the workers and peasants in favor of currying favor with various national bourgeoisies. Now we come to the case of Ethiopia. We must remember comrades, that the Soviet Union has just about the same line as the Chinese. They also support "progressive" butchers like Ghandi, Amin, Assad, Nasser, Sukarno and at one "time" Numery of the Sudan. Most of these people are just as right-wing as those the Chinese pick but the Russians, because of their longer involvement on the revolutionary scene, have aided real anti-colonial struggles in Angola, Mozambique, Vietnam, Laos, Guinea Bissau, South Sahara, Cuba. While socialism has not been the result (state capitalism has), this accounts for the rejection of China and acceptance of the Soviets by a lot of people.

The Soviets have begun to move into Ethiopia, since Megistu is seen as a "progressive revolutionary nationalist." The national bourgeoisie in Ethiopia is either allied with the ruling Dirgue or with the Ethiopian Democratic Union, a pro-west group made up of landlords and former friends of the deposed Haile Selassie. Into this situation is another factor, the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP). They carry the line of New Democracy. Where is China? The "new" democrats hosted Haile Selassie in 1971, greeting him with a banner reading "Long Live the Emperor!" In 1977, just a week ago, the CCP greeted Numery of the Sudan. Numery is the pro-west, anti-communist military butcher who slaughtered thousands of rank-and-file communists in a military coup in the early seventies and now takes money from the Saudi Arabian sheiks and the U.S. through Egypt to develop his grain economy. What is he doing in Peking? They use him to denounce the military aggression by the Soviets and their Cuban puppets in Ethiopia. Where were the Chinese when the U.S. supported the Dirgue? Not a word out of them. And who does Numery back in the Ethiopian Civil War? Not the EPRP, who should be his friends in "new" democracy, but the Ethiopian Democratic Union, the monarchist, feudalist, pro-west gang. China hasn't changed their line since '71 and still backs the most reactionary (but anti-soviet) Ethiopian fascists... this is new democracy in practice.

And what of the Ethiopian peasants? Are they all middle peasants with no revolutionary potential? No. Most of them are hired or landless. And where is the progressive national bourgeoisie? They have beaten the EPRP to the punch.

What remains is for the EPRP to take up a class line and fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This they have not done. It will lead them into either the arms of the U.S. or the Soviets. If they succeed, they will go much the same way as China, allowing foreign investment, which they have said could be unlimited. The workers and peasants dying in Addis Ababa are heroic, but their leadership is not.

As more parties see the revisionist nature of Chinese foreign policy, they should also examine its roots in the Maoite theory of New-Democracy. Now that the world's peasants are even more proletarianized, now that colonialism has all but disappeared, now that capitalism is dominant in nearly all countries and feudalism withering away or being destroyed, socialism and the workers dictatorship, the unity of workers from the city and the countryside, the rooting out of the roots of state-capitalism are on the agenda. Every other road leads to defeat or a new form of exploitation-state-capitalism.

It is clear that the Chinese Communist Party is following the road of the Soviet CP and no longer leads the world revolution. While they are separated by mutual national antagonisms, they are united on the road to bourgeois state-capitalist power.

Internationalism!
Communism!
REVOLUTION!

U.W. FORCED TO WITHDRAW S. AFRICAN INVESTMENTS

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CHALLENGE
The Revolutionary Communist Newspaper

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MINERS SHOW THE BOSSES CAN BE TAKEN

"The government may be able to plow peanuts, but they sure as hell ain't gonna mine no coal." That was an Oklahoma miner's answer to Peanuts Carter's veiled threats to seize the mines and try to force the miners back to work. But the militant actions of 160,000 black, white and Chicano miners had Carter and the bosses he represents in chaos, unable to make a decision on how to free their capitalist economy from the miners' refusal to allow the movement of scab coal.

THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS CAUGHT between the miners' multi-racial unity and the necessity of U.S. rulers to put down just such opposition to their aim of shifting the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working class. While the bosses and their loyal servarts in the media attempted to blame the miners for every ailment caused by capitalism, we should make no mistake about it: the cause of this crisis leads right to the doorstep of the coal operators, in particular, and the whole ruling class in general, both of whom are led by the Rockefeller interests. By presenting the miners with an absolutely fascist contract—completely unacceptable—they have forced a situation that is leading to mass unemployment and dark and heatless homes and workplaces. The responsibility for all this lies squarely on the bosses' drive for profits, the basis for capitalism.

Calling out the troops will not bail out the bosses so easily. Carter "may be confronted with rebellious miners who refuse to go into the mines without a settlement and troopers or National Guardsmen who simply aren't able to become instant fill-ins." **(Christian Science Monitor)**

The miners answer, of course, is "Let the troops mine the coal." But, as one rank and file miner declared, "If non-union coal starts pouring into Appalacchia, they'll be able to break our strike . . . . If they try . . . there'll be bloodshed."

That the miners mean business could be seen in their latest actions. When the National Guard was called out in Indiana (carefully avoiding any call-up from southwestern Indiana, center of the coal fields, reflecting the bosses' belief they would be unreliable), they tried to escort coal truck caravans to loading terminals. When one train arrived at a transfer point, the troops found all the trucks had flat tires. Another caravan war forced to travel over a bed of nails strewn on the highway.

SCAB COAL MUST NOT GO THROUGH . . . . Miners' bonfire blocks tracks in Baldwin Illinois.

MEANWHILE, 29 BARGES ARE SITTING IDLE IN the Monongahela River loaded down with 27,000 tons of coal, unable to move power stations in western Pa. Why? "Six of the barges have been fired upon and the barge operators fear other attacks from people sympathetic to the mine-workers' union anxious to cut coal shipments." **(Wall Street Journal)**

The Norfolk & Western R.R. had already had two dynamitings of coal-laden freight trains and the Burlington & Northern removed dynamite from two of its railroad bridges. In Vinton County, Ohio, two scab strip mines were closed "at the request of" 100 roving pickets. Three miners were arrested near the Karst-Robbins Co. mine at Breeding Creek, Ky., after 100 strikers confronted 20 state troopers during a mine closing. The 100 miners then descended on the local courtroom and "conferred informally" with the circuit judge who promptly released the arrested trio.

All this led the ruling class's chief spokesman in the press, the **N. Y. Times**, to conclude that "the coal operators . . . have seriously misjudged their workers." (The understatement of the year!) Noting how the miners have turned the threat of a Taft-Hartley injunction (supported by AFL-CIO boss George Meany--see **Red Bits**, page 9) into a nightmare for the bosses, the **Times** points out that, "Instead of producing coal, an injunction might produce dangerous confrontations between Federal troops and miners." Dangerous all right--dangerous to the bosses' image of "democracy" which would be further exposed throughout the world.

The **Times** laments that " the ability of the Federal government to end the strike or soften its impact is extremely limited." With 90 per cent of the electric power in nine industrial Mid-Western states dependent on coal and half of this electricity used to run industry, the entire auto, rubber, and steel industries are threatened with being closed down. Key plants affecting GM, Ford and Chrysler are located in Ohio where power may be curtailed in early March to plants that supply parts to the entire auto industry. But these power companies are already getting 75 per cent of all potential aid from out-

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Laid-off Workers Back Miners

'All they have is their labor to sell'

NEW MADRID, MISSOURI, Feb. 16--Three hundred and fifty workers laid off by the Noranda Aluminum Co. here "because of the coal strike," say they are more than happy to stay at home "until our brothers in the mines get back to work."

"Let 'em strike," said Floyd Helton, a maintenance mechanic and chief shop steward of Local 7686 of the United Steel Workers union. "That's the only bargaining power a working man's got."

All of the laid-off workers who were gathered at the union office yesterday said they did not want their own jobs back enough to wish that the miners would accept an inferior settlement.

"We have no hard feelings against them," said James Winn, a laid-off crane operator. "We support their right to bargain 100 per cent. They're in the same boat we are. All they have is their labor to sell." (from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Feb. 16)