

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

The Workers' Advocate Supplement



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Jan. 15, 1986

On Nationality Organization

Speech at the Second National Conference
of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

In this issue of the **Workers' Advocate Supplement** we continue the coverage of the material from the Second National Conference of the MLP of Fall, 1984. This conference was held under the slogans "Deeper among the masses -- Build the Marxist-Leninist Party!" and "Carry forward the struggle against racism and national oppression -- Work for proletarian leadership!" The Conference discussed the methods of work needed to implement the revolutionary line of the Party in the present conditions of the capitalist offensive and the temporary ebb in the mass movement. And it also helped deepen the line of our Party on one particular, but quite important, front of the revolutionary mass movement, namely, the struggle against racism and national oppression.

The resolutions of the conference were published in the December 1, 1984 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**. A number of speeches have been published in the **Workers' Advocate Supplement**. These include the following:

"Carry forward the struggle against racism and national oppression -- Work for proletarian leadership" in the Jan. 1985 issue.

"On the League of Revolutionary Black Workers" also in the Jan. 1985 issue.

"On the Struggle Against National Oppression at Roswell Park Hospital in Buffalo" in the March 1985 issue.

"On the Black Panther Party". Part one appeared in the June 1985 issue.

"On the Black National Question and the Right of Self-Determination" in the Oct 1985 issue.

"On the History of the CPUSA and the CI on the Black National Question in the U.S." in the Nov. 1985 issue.

Below we carry the speech from the conference that dealt with the question of the Marxist-Leninist stand towards "nationality organization", that is, organizations made up exclusively of people of one

nationality (or group of nationalities). A related question was dealt with in the July issue of the **Supplement** in such articles as "Should the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class Be Divided on the Basis of Nationality?"

This speech concerns the question of nationality organization.

The formation of nationality organization, of organization composed solely of people from an oppressed nationality, is a reoccurring phenomenon in U.S. history. Numbers of the organizations which we are discussing in the course of this conference have been nationality organizations including such all-black groups as Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), or in the '60's the Black Panther Party (BPP) and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW), or more recently the Caribbean Progressive Study Group (CPSG).

Nationality organizations have at times played important roles in the struggle against national oppression. Some, like the League, have also played a role in the workers' movement. In the late 1960's such organizations occupied key places in the black liberation movement and to some extent in the work-

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A LIQUIDATOR QUAKES BEFORE THE HAMMER AND SICKLE

The so-called "Communist Labor Party" is a pro-Soviet liquidationist group. It presents its reformist line of bowing down to the capitalists as "communism". For years it tried to cover up its reformism by having the hammer and sickle on the masthead of its paper, the "People's Tribune".

But the hammer and sickle proved more powerful than the CLP reckoned. The CLP, presumably as its new year's resolution for 1986, began the year by dropping the hammer and sickle from its masthead. Quaking in the face of the Reaganite offensive, the CLP apparently felt a contradiction between the hammer and sickle and its reformist path, and the CLP didn't hesitate a moment. A big empty space appeared in the CLP masthead.

This showed that the hammer and sickle emblem is only a temporary visitor to the pro-Soviet revisionists. Although the Russian revisionists themselves may still display this symbol, in an effort to fool the Russian working people into thinking that the Gorbachev, Brezhnev and Andropovs are followers of Lenin, there is good reason why the revolutionary, anti-revisionist communists will never abandon this symbol. The days will come when the Russian workers will rise up again under this symbol in order to carry out a new socialist revolution.

A "Communist" Press That is Scared of Communism

Meanwhile the Jan. 13th issue of "People's Tri-

bune" carried an article "explaining" its abandonment of the hammer and sickle under the title "New times, new social battles demand revolutionary newspaper." The hammer and sickle may go, but CLP's phrasemongering remains. According to the article, the present times "demands a communist press for the masses", and presumably the one thing a "communist press" shouldn't have is the communist emblem.

Indeed, the CLP presented its stand as the implementation of the call of the Comintern. It wrote: "We are not stepping away from our revolutionary duty - we are implementing the battle cry of the Comintern: 'The mass struggle, the class struggle is the Alpha and Omega of all our work'" Imagine that! The CLP is dropping the communist emblem in order to follow the inspiration of the Communist International. Can greater hypocrisy be found?

But for CLP, this is old hat. They have always held that "communism" is for window-dressing, while the real work among the masses is something else. In 1978, for example, CLP's leader Nelson Peery pontificated that the work among the masses means "only...the struggle for reforms". Thus, according to him, the CLP, solely in order to achieve the revolution, you understand, must abandon anything but reformism. He summed this up in his typical style by saying that "No 'revolutionary' party has ever led a revolution." (See his "Closing Remarks" in CLP's theoretical journal *Proletariat*, vol. 4, #3, Fall, 1978, mislabelled as vol. 4 #2 on the cover. This is also cited in the MLP pamphlet "The Struggle for the Party Versus Chinese Revisionism", p. 18)

We presume that Nelson Peery would update his epigram today to read: "No 'communist' party has

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ever dared display the hammer and sickle." But for us, we are even more proud to use this emblem seeing

that it has triumphed yet again over another group of reformists. <-

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LETTER FROM TEXAS ON THE STRUGGLE IN THE PRISONS

We condemn the barbaric treatment of prisoners by the capitalist jailers. The capitalist police and jails not only mistreat the yet unconscious section of the working masses who fall into social crime through hopelessness and despair, but also try to intimidate and ruin the lives of activists, immigrants, revolutionaries, strikers and protesters of all types and in general to break the fighting spirit of the masses. One of the cornerstones of the present Reaganite offensive against the working masses is turning the whole country into one big network of jails and police, informers and secret agents.

Despite all the hypocritical words of the bourgeoisie about how it has failed to find a way to "rehabilitate" the prisoners, the fact is that rehabilitation was never the goal of the prison system. Its purpose was and remains repression.

The letter below concerns the attempts of the notorious Texas jail system to eliminate correspondence between prisoners. In regard to correspondence to prisoners from the outside, the **Workers' Advocate** can testify to the barriers placed by the prison authorities. There is everything from arbitrary regulations which provide innumerable opportunities to confiscate letters for the sin, say, of having the wrong form of return address to the innocent shrug "We have no record of having interfered" with that publication or letter. Yet correspondence is particularly important for prisoners, both to provide them with information about what is happening in the world and to provide a certain check on the prison authorities through the possibility of publicizing abuses inside the prison system.

The following letter was received from a prisoner in the notorious Texas prison system:

December 24, 1985

Dear Staff (**The Workers' Advocate**):

Fraternal Revolutionary Greetings!

My comrade (fellow captive) [name omitted] provided you with information as to the archaic prison conditions and current fascist oppression being lashed out on politically-conscious prisoner-leaders in Texas prisons.

The situation is not reflected truthfully in the bourgeois press; there are no outside, functional, advocates to voice our views — and the prison administration aims all its "security" interest in obstructing our growth as a sector of class-conscious prisoners. They fear the prisoners becoming class-conscious! Especially now, they fear a rise

in class-consciousness which would bring together different nationalities and cultures to combat (one) oppressor. What is intensifying the situation is a prison administration who fumbled their false propaganda as to a prison crisis they manufactured surrounding "prison gangs". TDC [Texas Department of Corrections] tried to use the gang violence to mislead the public as to the real prison problems, mainly a corrupted prison administration.

For many years Texas prisons have been isolated off as to any prisoner-voice escaping its confines amid the deaths, murders and assassinations of a lot of good fighting captives.

At this very moment we are waging a confined battle (but one nevertheless) of class-conscious prisoners vs. prison suppression; with the intense levels of confusion and anarchy in our midst. That's why prisoners kill one another, because the system still keeps us divided. yet, as never before, the defense groups are spreading, have acquired non-profit status, are spreading literature -- but most importantly -- we are networking via correspondence effectively.

And, the whole state prison oligarchy is out to suppress completely our rights to freedom of expression by denying us [the right] to correspond to one another. They claim under pretense that inmate-to-inmate correspondence is used by inmates (37,000 plus) to recruit gang members and communicate gang activities -- and they claim that the rise in gangs is a "phenomenon", and took them by surprise. Pure lies!

Of course, those of us who have been fortunate to learn the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, and our continuing study of same, along with **The Workers' Advocate**, are able to maintain a united force of prison jailhouse lawyers, prison committee members, political activists, and a lot of the 5,000 who were forcibly locked-down (segregated); and, spread a rough but yet form of class solidarity crossing the racial barriers even as the racism continues to take its toll!

The prisoners' struggle as maintained by these class-conscious prisoners, most of which have spent over 5 years in prisons, needs to be assisted from the outside.

There needs to be a genuine exchange of information and correspondence; and stories written of the current events of prison struggle. I realize it's hard for the Party and intellectual comrades to concentrate on our sector — but I would apply our comrade Lenin's approach, as he so eloquently put it:

"You must not sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata

of the class. That is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. ... But at the same time you must soberly follow the actual state of class consciousness and preparedness of the whole class (not only of its Communist vanguard), of all the toiling masses (not only of their advanced elements)." (V.I. Lenin "Left-Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder [Section VII])

60 Minutes is going to do a story on the prison gangs. I have contacted them, as has [name omitted] -- and we are providing them with numerous facts, dates, etc., to show how the prison administration tried to mislead them by providing them with "well documented" lies, perjured testimony, etc. 60 Minutes had made contact with us -- and now that they're open in our info and opinion we're going to emphasize how TDC wants to particularly suppress freedom of expression because of TDC prisoners who are Marxist-Leninist or revolutionary inclined.

Comrades, we feel like the comrades who had to work underground, under Tsarist censorship! That's why we have the reform vehicle(s) -- yet this is part of the education process -- we push to bring a genuine class awareness and consciousness.

If anything, you must be informed that we are raising class consciousness -- and believe the class captive population in this state needs more proletarian advocacy, so as to give inspiration to the prisoners who struggle, wallow, labor 37,000 strong in these pig's sties! Neo-slave plantations!

In closing I want to include some material to shed a bit more light on our current struggle. Of course, this prisoner class struggle exists in most all states -- as rebellious tendencies become revolutionary thought and actions, in 1986!

En Lucha [In Struggle],
[Name omitted]
Huntsville, Texas

[The appended material supplied information concerning the scandalous behavior of the TDC officials. There were, for example, bourgeois press clippings concerning the brutality of the "elite TDC guard corps" called the "Special Operations Response Team". At one point in Nov. 1984, even the bourgeois courts feigned disgust and forced 9,000 TDC guards and other employes to sign a court order prohibiting them from interfering with an investigation of the prison system.

There was also a document that is part of the court case against the TDC's prohibition of inmate-to-inmate correspondence. This document came with 25 signatures, with name and prisoner number. These were simply the supporters of the document from one prison unit, with this legal motion in circulation among various units. Among other things, the document pointed out that the court, while allowing TDC officials to give testimony, had usually refused this right to the prisoners.] <>

"Operation Taxicab" in Chicago: ANOTHER OUTRAGE AGAINST THE IMMIGRANT WORKERS

Last month, 40 federal agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) unleashed what they called "Operation Taxicab" against Chicago's cab drivers. On December 17, there were mass sweeps at O'Hare Airport and other major tax stands. 29 drivers were dragged from their cabs and put under arrest. Those arrested came from 22 countries, mainly Nigeria and Pakistan. Eighty of those arrested are in the process of being deported for being "undocumented" workers.

The INS -- Diehard Racists

The INS officials have tried to cook up a big fuss against the foreign-born cab drivers. They talk about the need to rid Chicago of what they describe as the "serious menace" of immigrant cabbies. District Director of the INS, A. D. Moyer, justified the gestapo-like roundups by charging that the immigrant drivers "are raising havoc with the city" and that "they are a nuisance. They are abusing passengers, taking them to the wrong locations and overcharging them. And they are taking jobs away from American citizens and legal foreign residents."

But Moyer's charges are lies and racist rot from top to bottom.

Except for the fact that some may hail from different lands than immigrant drivers that have gone before them, Chicago cab drivers remain what they have always been. Whether citizen or "undocumented", they are hard working and underpaid. And in the capitalist press there have been accounts of other drivers coming to the defense of the arrested immigrants, with one worker saying that they are "really poor people and they work hard."

As for the claim that the immigrant drivers "are taking away jobs", Moyer failed to mention that it is the capitalists who overwork millions of workers while leaving other millions unemployed. Nor did Moyer point out that INS terror against the immigrants is designed to keep them disorganized, desperate and unable to resist the worst exploitation. Indeed cab drivers in Chicago are paid so poorly that the cab companies are crying for help. Veteran drivers point out that some days it is hard enough just to break even, after paying the \$66 per day lease fee. No wonder the companies had to run advertising campaigns to recruit drivers.

The truth is that Moyer and the INS men are

racist tyrants. They want to whip up race hatred against people with accents and dark skin. And the racist and reactionary immigration laws in this country give the government free rein to treat the so-called "serious menace" of foreign-born workers with the police state methods of mass arrests, jailings and deportations.

Mayor Washington's Hypocrisy

As part of his anti-immigrant hysteria, Moyer is fuming against Mayor Harold Washington and his executive order denying the INS use of city records and agencies to track down undocumented workers. But Harold Washington is hardly the great defender of immigrant workers that Moyer's fuming might lead one to believe.

Last February, there was a similar INS roundup of 90 cab drivers. At that time it was also revealed that the city government had provided records to help the INS vultures track down their prey. This provoked outrage in the Mexican community and among the working people. Meetings and marches were organized, including one which protested at the home

of the racist chief Moyer. The MLP took an active part in these protests, bringing out both the crimes of the INS and the dirty role played by the Washington administration. In the wake of the public outcry, Washington had to cover his tracks and he produced his executive order.

Mass Support for the Immigrants

Similar measures denying the INS the use of city agencies have been adopted in several cities across the country, including New York and Los Angeles. This provides a barometer of the strong sentiment among the masses in defense of immigrants and Central American refugees. But, as "Operation Taxicab" shows, these measures in themselves are at most only an inconvenience to the INS in its attacks on the immigrants.

The real defense of the immigrant workers lies in the united strength of the working people of all nationalities, native-born, "legal" and "undocumented". It lies in mass action against INS raids and deportations and for full rights for all workers in this country. <

Many have second thoughts "LEFT-WING" APOLOGISTS FOR FARRAKHAN

The hypocritical campaign against Louis Farrakhan continues among the politicians and in the media of the capitalist rulers. They are building up this minister of the Nation of Islam (NOI) as a most dangerous character — as a man to be ostracized and isolated because of his threatening message of race hatred and anti-semitism.

But since when did these same mayors and newspaper editors become so concerned about racist messages? President Reagan's religious advisor, Jerry Falwell, has recently launched a nationwide fund-raising and public relations effort on behalf of white supremacist slavery in South Africa. And the President himself has given his blessing to white supremacist academies in this country. But there are no comparable cries on the editorial pages that these chieftains of church and state be branded as dangerous racists and driven from public life. After all, these are the type fascistic and racist messages one expects from the top spokesmen of the capitalist class, a class which is racist and bigoted to the core.

No, the hypocritical cries against Farrakhan have nothing to do with opposing racism. On the contrary. The ruling white bourgeoisie has found in Farrakhan a useful prop for their own racist stand. Their media builds him up as a fiery militant and champion of the black people. At the same time, they tear him down as a manipulating race baiter. In this way, the bourgeoisie wants to discredit every sign of militancy among the black people, every serious struggle for black liberation, as an

expression of racism inside-out.

The hysteria against Farrakhan demands a two-sided response from the class conscious workers and anti-racist activists.

On the one side, to expose the filthy hypocrisy of this hysteria on the part of the white racist capitalist politicians and press for what it is.

And, on the other side, to tell the masses the truth about what Farrakhan stands for. To explain that, despite all the attention he is getting these days from the bourgeois media, he is trying to pass off on the black people the same dead-end trap of black capitalism and capitulation to racism that the leaders of the NOI has been selling for the last half century.

The Liquidators Sing Farrakhan's Praise

Nevertheless, in the camp of the liquidators, those reformist would-be "Marxists", the hysteria against Farrakhan has caused a good deal of trauma. Under the conditions of the reactionary offensive and the ebb in the mass struggles, the pro-Soviet, Trotskyite, Maoist, and other opportunist groups have liquidated any pretense of an independent class stand. They are cowering under the skirts of the Democratic Party politicians and the trade union bureaucrats. And, in the black people's movement, they have lined up behind the reformist voices of the black bourgeoisie. Their lack of revolutionary footing has left them at the mercy of every bourgeois breeze. It was not surprising then that when

the reformist Jesse Jackson welcomed Farrakhan into his Rainbow Coalition, the liquidators smiled on Farrakhan. And when the anti-Farrakhan hysteria of the capitalists was blowing full force this fall, the reformists were tossed around on this issue like the autumn leaves.

Just as the capitalists and their media machines painted up Farrakhan as the militant black leader of the 80's, a number of these reformist groups chimed in to say the same thing. The opportunist newspaper The Guardian promoted Farrakhan's alleged "anti-racism" and "eloquent appeals for black empowerment". (See the October 9 issue.) The Maoists of the LRS declared that Farrakhan "should be considered a part of the Black united front, insofar as he opposes racism, national oppression and imperialism, and fights for democracy." (Unity, October 25)

What's more, in the guise of criticism of the capitalists' hypocrisy, the reformists went out of their way to cover up for the backward politics of the NOI. Take, for example, the Trotskyist SWP. Since last year's Jesse Jackson campaign they have been prostrating themselves in their efforts to paint up Minister Farrakhan as a noble spokesman for the black people. These efforts were capped this October with two blaring editorials in newspaper Militant under the headlines "Racist attack on Farrakhan" and "Provocations against Farrakhan." (October 4 and 25) These editorials loudly declared that the charges of racism and anti-semitism directed against Farrakhan were completely groundless and that they are "a frame-up, not only of Farrakhan but of many thousands of Blacks." (October 4 and 25)

Some Liquidators Have Second Thoughts

But Farrakhan's politics are just too blatantly backward, making things miserable for all those reformists who have rushed to apologize for him. The more Farrakhan opens his mouth, the more difficult it becomes to lie and cover up for him. After climbing way out on a limb to cover up for Farrakhan in October, the SWP's Militant was scurrying for a safer footing by the end of November. All of a sudden the Militant's writers came out as "bold" critics of Farrakhan, even recognizing his "anti-Semitic and reactionary statements." (Editorial, November 22) Similarly, The Guardian began editorializing about Farrakhan's "Mixed, but wrong message." ("Guardian Viewpoint", October 30) Even the Maoist LRS, while lauding Farrakhan, was at the same time uncomfortable enough to make mild criticisms and confess that they "would surely not want to live under a government headed up by Farrakhan." (Unity, October 25)

Farrakhan's right-wing features are hardly new discoveries. One wonders whether the reformists have really just discovered them, or perhaps they have found that other bourgeois elements that they want to woo are on the anti-Farrakhan campaign of the bourgeois.

The WWP However Goes Down to the Wire with Farrakhan

But there is one group of liquidators, however, that has been totally shameless in its continuing support for Farrakhan. Free of the embarrassment that has stung the other groups, the reformist Workers World Party has unflinchingly carried on with its hosannas for Farrakhan. WWP chieftain Sam Marcy likens the NOI minister to "the voice of the oppressed... sound[ing] like a tocsin, ringing out for freedom."

Below we will examine just how Marcy builds his case for Farrakhan. We think this is worthwhile because it sheds light on the approach of the liquidators to the black liberation struggle. It shows just how far these self-styled "Marxists" will go to help strengthen the hand of the bourgeois and anti-revolutionary trends in the black people's movement.

Capitulation to the Racist Offensive

The reformist scribbler Sam Marcy lauds Farrakhan for allegedly "giving voice to mass anger and protest growing out of the deep and profound exploitation and oppression" of the black people. (All quotes are from Workers World, October 17.) True, like every demagog, Farrakhan spews fiery words against oppression. But since when did Farrakhan or the NOI ever aim their fire against the concrete measures of oppression weighing on the black masses? In fact, anyone who has listened carefully to Farrakhan knows that he agrees with the ongoing segregationist offensive of the capitalist rulers and that he has repeatedly praised the arch-racist policies of the Reagan regime.

In his apology for Farrakhan, Marcy writes about "the reign of political reaction", which he says "is most clearly seen in the support [by a section of the white liberals] of the Reaganite offensive against affirmative action and other issues which deeply concern the oppressed masses." Then Marcy very carefully avoids telling the reader where Farrakhan stands on this issue and the other issues facing the masses. He is silent because of the embarrassing fact that, apart from Reagan's hatchetman Clarence Pendleton, Louis Farrakhan is one of the most outspoken black opponents of affirmative action and other measures against discrimination.

Farrakhan gave his typical rap on this question to students at the University of Pittsburgh. "Black brothers and sisters, look," Farrakhan lectured. "You can't say to white people, 'if you don't hire me, I'll go get the NAACP and we'll come on down here and picket you people, because I just graduated from Pitt and I know that I'm more qualified than that white person that's in front of me, and you gave them the job! You're nothing but a racist, that's what you are!' Now just a minute, brothers, **you hush your mouth.** It is human nature for a people to look out for themselves first. You cannot call a white person a racist because a white person

wants to give a job preference to one of their own..." And Farrakhan then goes on to say he would discriminate in the same way. (Pittsburgh Courier, November 30)

This, in fact, is the historic stand of the leaders of the NOI. Don't picket against the racists. Don't protest inequality. Hush your mouth in the face of discrimination. After all, it is only "human nature" for the white capitalists to push you into the worst jobs, the worst housing, and the worst schools.

But Farrakhan's open sympathy for Reagan's segregationist offensive doesn't phase Marcy a bit. He just does his best to cover it up.

Boosting Black Capitalism

Farrakhan's sympathy for Reaganism is linked up to his fundamental program of black capitalism. (See "Louis Farrakhan: Peddler of Black Reaganism", Workers' Advocate, August 5, 1985.) For Farrakhan, the struggle against segregation and discrimination is an evil which undermines black business interests in general, and the profits of the multi-million dollar NOI enterprises in particular. Looking out for the selfish interest of the capitalist handful is what Farrakhan means when he talks about putting one's own interests first.

Of course, it is not only Farrakhan, but also the leaders of the NAACP and other voices of the black bourgeoisie, who are accommodating Reagan's racist offensive. Despite the differences in rhetoric, they share a common class basis in their treachery; they are looking out for their investments and careers, leaving the millions of oppressed and exploited blacks in the lurch. And in this treachery, the liquidators have taken the side of the black bourgeois — from Farrakhan, to the NAACP, to the black mayors and politicians — as they sell out the black workers and downtrodden in the face of the capitalists' racist offensive.

WWP takes this support for the black bourgeois to the extent of painting up the efforts of the black capitalists to squeeze money out of the black community in glorious liberation colors. They even hail Farrakhan's economic proposals to "support businesses and banks" that are "under the control of Black individuals instead of the oppressor." (Workers World, October 17)

Farrakhan on South Africa

Hard-pressed to point to any progressive stands taken by Farrakhan on domestic questions, the WWP and other of his apologists try to portray him as a fighter against imperialism and racism internationally. But here too the question must be asked, since when?

Over the last year, the oppressed people of South Africa have been on the frontlines of the fight against international imperialism and racism. But Farrakhan will have nothing to do with the fight

against apartheid. As the anti-apartheid demonstrations were taking off last year, Farrakhan spelled out the NOI's policy of avoiding such protests: "We prefer," Farrakhan explained, "to organize our people in a constructive manner to put pressure on the administration to change the policy toward South Africa." (Detroit News, January 20, 1985) And since that time, Farrakhan has stuck to this "constructive" policy towards the Reagan government's "constructive engagement" with apartheid slavery.

Palestine and the Middle East

But when all else fails, the WWP and the other Farrakhan apologists point to Farrakhan's denunciations of the crimes of Israeli zionism. True, mixed in with his religious tirades against Jews, Farrakhan will denounce crimes of the Israeli regime against the Palestinian people. But this does not amount to an anti-imperialist stand. This does not even mean that he supports the revolutionary struggle of the working and oppressed Palestinians and other victims of zionist and imperialist aggression. On the contrary. Farrakhan's sympathies lie with the princes of Saudi Arabia, the remnants of feudalism and other pro-U.S. reactionaries.

If you want to know where Farrakhan stands on Middle East politics, you should look at the July, '85 issue of the NOI's newspaper The Final Call, which covered Farrakhan's last tour of the Middle East. Much of the tour was devoted to paying homage to the feudal lords of the Arab Gulf, to Idi Amin and his family, and to other hangmen of the Arab and African peoples. For religious and other reasons, a number of such reactionaries have their contradictions with Israel. But far from being "anti-imperialist", they are vehemently anti-communist and pro-imperialist, and some have even leased their countries as launching pads for the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force.

The attempts of WWP and the other opportunists to describe Farrakhan's stand as "anti-imperialist" only reflects on their own policy of trying to paint up the bourgeois and even reactionary regimes in the Middle East in liberation colors.

Anti-Semitism

At first, a number of groups such as the SWP attempted to claim that Farrakhan was simply a critic of Israeli zionism and to outright deny that Farrakhan voices anti-semitic views. But these attempts to cover Farrakhan's tracks and make him more palatable to democratic-minded people grew more difficult as Farrakhan kept up his anti-Jewish sermons.

At a big Madison Square Garden rally on October 7, Farrakhan shouted: "Jesus had a controversy with the Jews. Farrakhan has a controversy with the Jews. Jesus was hated by the Jews. Farrakhan is hated by the Jews. I am your last chance Jews. You can't say 'never again' to God, 'cause when he puts

you in an oven, you are in one indeed!" Such religious-sounding justifications for the nazi exterminators is classic Farrakhan. Anyone who listens to his "Final Call" radio broadcast can hear Farrakhan's long-winded religious harangues against the Jews. These are the same harangues which are used by Christian right-wing zealots and which have been used by reactionary bigots to justify the persecution of the Jews since the Inquisition.

But WWP's Sam Marcy has another apology. He doesn't deny Farrakhan's anti-semitism; he just says it is no big deal. Marcy argues that you shouldn't "make a mountain out of a molehill" out of Farrakhan's anti-semitic remarks. This, he says, only "divert[s] attention from the struggle against racism and imperialism." And Marcy concludes: "No organization, no movement, no class, however formidable and determined it may be in the struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression, can be completely free of the influence of bourgeois ideology."

Thus, according to this reformist scribbler, Farrakhan's racism against the Jews is only a minor blemish (molehill) on the healthy body of an organization representing the progressive class in its struggle against exploitation and oppression.

However, as we have already seen, it requires a broad stretching of the facts to describe the NOI leaders as fighters against racism and imperialism. And it is simply ludicrous to describe the NOI as being in struggle against capitalist exploitation. For over 50 years the religious ministers at the head of the Nation of Islam have been devoted to black capitalism. As such, they have always preached accommodation to the racism of the ruling white bourgeoisie — from acceptance of the Jim Crow of yesterday, to the Reaganite segregationist offensive today. And, along with this, they have always preached ideas of racial separatism, racial superiority and inferiority, and other backward racist ideas. Indeed, Farrakhan's anti-semitism is just the ideological puss on the surface of an organization that is devoted to black capitalism and living within the racist status quo.

Farrakhan and Malcolm X

The historic clash between the militant fighter for the black people Malcolm X and the NOI leadership is one of the sticky questions facing all those who would apologize for Farrakhan.

Malcolm X became a voice of the black people's revolt of the 1960's precisely because he broke with the backward doctrines of the NOI. He championed the mass struggle and advocated fighting back against the racist oppressors. He called for solidarity with the liberation struggles pounding at imperialism in Asia and Africa. And at the end of his life, he moved away from separatism towards ideas of a common struggle of the black and white exploited and oppressed masses against the capitalist rulers.

Farrakhan Declared "Such a man as Malcolm is worthy of death"

All of these things were, and are still today, anathema to the top ministers of the NOI. Elijah Muhammad branded Malcolm X as a traitor. And indeed he was a traitor to Elijah's backward political doctrines. In the pages of the December '64 issue of Muhammad Speaks, one of Elijah Muhammad's lieutenants by the name of Louis Farrakhan declared: "Such a man as Malcolm is worthy of death."

With such statements Farrakhan helped the U.S. government and other reactionaries persecute Malcolm. And indeed, two months after Farrakhan's statement Malcolm was gunned down. Malcolm's assassination had all the earmarks of a police operation, and the two NOI members who were convicted of Malcolm's murder may have been patsies. But even if that is so, that hardly erases Farrakhan's frenzied hatred of Malcolm and the shame of his wish for Malcolm's death.

Today, Louis Farrakhan is cynically claiming the legacy of Malcolm X. Farrakhan tries to cover up his own dirty role in the NOI's conflict with Malcolm by portraying Malcolm X as an outstanding disciple of Elijah Muhammad just like himself. Amazingly, the liquidators are helping Farrakhan cover his tracks. Sam Marcy takes this farther than the rest. And he adds a theoretical argument for reconciling Malcolm X to Farrakhan, an argument which sheds light on present liquidator thinking.

WWP Glorifies the NOI

Marcy paints the picture that, since its founding in the early 30's, the Black Muslim organization has been "a weapon in the struggle against racist oppression and for the right of self-determination." He uses the fact that at times the Black Muslims have gained a militant image among certain sections of the black community, in order to portray Elijah Muhammad as a glorious champion of the black people. (For example, Marcy devotes some six paragraphs assuring the reader that Elijah Muhammad's racism and his dealings with the American nazi leader George Lincoln Rockwell were only minor blemishes which were "purely incidental and totally out of character.")

Then, according to Marcy, the NOI's role was not so positive when the upsurge of the black people's struggle broke out in the 60's. Marcy explains that the "Black movement, especially the youth, soon left [the NOI] far behind." Why the masses would leave such a marvelous organization is left unanswered, apart from that the NOI "was unable on the basis of its ideological position to give leadership at a time when the masses were ... in a direct struggle with the racist capitalist establishment."

It was in these "new favorable objective conditions for the Black struggle to develop," Marcy goes on, "that the well-known split between Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X took place. The latter was ori-

enting in an anti-imperialist direction free of the theological trappings of Elijah Mohammad."

Finally, Marcy concludes his article with the observation that today is a period of reaction with "an ebb tide in the progressive, civil rights and working class struggle." And the dangers of such a period are given as presumably the clincher for why the movement should embrace Farrakhan today.

Put the pieces of Marcy's ramblings together and you get a picture of the liquidationism that has gripped our present-day would-be Marxists. According to the liquidator mentality, casting aside theological trappings and struggling for an anti-imperialist orientation were fine for the high-tide of struggle in the 1960's. But now, with the reactionary offensive, things are different. Now those who condemned Malcolm X for his militant struggle are just what's needed for this period of ebb. So, if you follow Marcy's liquidator logic, the black capitalism, narrow nationalism, and religious sectarianism of the NOI -- that the masses "left far behind" in the 1960's -- are well-suited for the black people's struggle in the 1980's.

The answer of the liquidators to the reactionary offensive is to hand over the anti-racist struggle to the black bourgeois misleaders. That is why they would like to apologize for Farrakhan, and why WWP

is so attracted to the advocates of stands which even it admits were proven useless in the anti-racist upsurge of the 1960's.

For Revolutionary Struggle!

The Marxist-Leninists, the revolutionaries, the anti-racist fighters have an opposite answer. This is no time to be painting up the Minister of the NOI as the Malcolm X of our day. On the contrary, this difficult period of the reactionary offensive demands work to find ways to keep alive among the masses the revolutionary spirit that gripped the best fighters of the anti-racist upsurge of the 1960's and early 70's. We must work to spread the lessons of this upsurge. This includes drawing out the irreconcilable gulf between the interests of the black workers and downtrodden and the black bourgeoisie and their spokesmen.

These are burning tasks for the present. Building up the revolutionary spirit and deepening the rupture with the bourgeois sellouts are essential for mounting the resistance to the present racist offensive. And in this way we can prepare for the most successful outcome of the coming resurgence of the black liberation struggle. <>

ORGANIZING SOLIDARITY WITH THE PRATT AND WHITNEY STRIKE

Recently the Pratt and Whitney workers in Connecticut waged a strike, the first at this company since a strike was broken there in 1960. The MLP went all out to organize solidarity for this strike among workers at GE plants which compete with the Pratt and Whitney plants.

Pratt and Whitney is an open shop where 30% of the workers are not in the union. The strike had many weaknesses. For example, the IAM made no effort to stop the scabs and, after the first day, had only token picketing at the plants which were on strike. As well, in 1967 the IAM had divided the local union, which used to encompass four related plants, into four separate locals; in this strike, they kept the largest local at work.

Nevertheless the strike was an advance for the Pratt and Whitney workers and created a more defiant spirit among them.

GE Workers Support Their Class Brothers

There was a great deal of interest among the militant workers at GE in the Pratt strike. Our Party encouraged this sentiment and organized solidarity for the strike. The comrades distributed to the Pratt and Whitney workers the following letter from the GE workers. It was signed by 158 GE workers.

To the Pratt and Whitney workers:

We, the undersigned workers in Lynn, Mass., support your strike. We recognize that you are fighting against wage freezes and lump sum payments, concessions on insurance and to protect your jobs from subcontracting, automation and job combination. These are the same issues we face daily at GE and the same attacks we rejected when 4,300 (68%) of us voted against the contract.

We have no interest in competing with each other to see who can give up the most, to see GE and Pratt and Whitney make millions while we go into debt.

Let us join together to build a serious fight against concessions.

In Solidarity,
158 signatures

IUE Bureaucrats at GE Sabotage Working Class Solidarity

Meanwhile the union bureaucrats at GE went out of their way to oppose the desire of the rank-and-file to support the Pratt and Whitney strikers. The militant workers at GE were clamoring that the union, which is controlled by "left" bureaucrats (who went to the conference of the "National Rank and File Against Concessions" -- see article on p. 13) do

something in support of the Pratt and Whitney strike. They wanted the local to make a big contribution to the strike fund. They also wanted to organize a contingent to go to the picket line.

The labor bureaucrats strung the workers along with promises that the Executive Board would meet and organize a big solidarity action. The revisionist liquidators spread the word among the militants that the workers should not do anything until the Executive Board organized them to.

Our Party, of course, agitated that the workers had to take things into their own hands to organize solidarity.

Finally the union's Executive Board met and took no action. The union president gave an interview in the *Boston Globe* in which he said that it would be very difficult to organize solidarity and they would have to proceed slowly. Meanwhile a number of stewards reported that the top hacks had told them that it would be good for the Pratt and Whitney workers to lose the strike. Then maybe the IUE could get in and replace the IAM. What scabs!

Thus the MLP leaflet and letter, which were forms of solidarity that the workers found very understandable, were the only forms of solidarity organized. Although the dirty work of the liquidators had some effect on keeping some workers from signing the letter, nevertheless solidarity was organized, a good deal of discussion was had on the need to organize independently of the union bureaucrats, and the influence of the Party as organizer of the class struggle was raised.

The letter of the GE workers was enthusiastically received at the Pratt and Whitney picket lines. The strikers applauded and raised fists when it was read. They put it up on the bulletin board at the strike headquarters.

In order to organize the letter of the GE workers and other solidarity with the Pratt and Whitney workers, the Boston Branch of the MLP produced the following leaflet on Dec. 11, 1985.

NO MORE CONCESSIONS! SUPPORT THE PRATT AND WHITNEY STRIKE!

On December 2, almost 7,000 workers walked off the job at Pratt and Whitney jet engine plants in Connecticut. They threw picket lines up, including one 2,000 strong this Monday. They are striking against a concessions contract similar to the one we voted down by a 68% margin here 6 months ago.

They are striking against lump sum payments instead of raises; against concessions in medical insurance; against job combination and automation; and against farm out which they estimate has cost them 8,500 jobs. Like GE, Pratt has a productivity campaign going on. They have started "experimenting" with "flow line manufacturing" where, in one department, all job classifications are merged into one.

The Pratt workers have taken a defiant action against the greedy concessions demand of the capi-

talists. They have joined a new movement that is breaking out across the country. From Maine to Detroit to California, meatcutters, meatpackers, ironworkers, cannery workers and workers in auto and steel have gone out on strike declaring: No More Concessions! Like all these workers, our brothers and sisters at Pratt deserve our wholehearted support.

We Must Unite, Not Compete, With the Pratt Workers

The GE and Pratt management try to set us against each other with their endless propaganda about "The Competition." They want us to compete to see who can work for the lowest pay under the worst conditions, while they compete to fill their bank vaults. On the Factory of the Future, GE used the blackmail of losing contracts to Pratt to ram through unheard of concessions. They tried it again with the contract, but our big No Vote in Lynn showed their propaganda is failing. Now the Pratt workers have stood up to identical threats from their capitalists: Either work for the pay and under the conditions we dictate or you'll lose your job altogether to the GE workers who get paid less.

Like GE, Pratt's parent company, United Technologies, is a huge multi-national corporation. It has 205,000 employees working in 300 plants and offices in 50 countries. In 1984, they reported record profits, their "best year ever."

"The Competition" hype has gotten a boost from the U.S. government policy of dual sourcing. The military wants to have two sources of war materiel in the event of war and long strikes. The Army gave GE a contract for the F110 to replace Pratt's F100, if needed. And the Navy gave Pratt GE's F404. It's unlikely the government is going to let either manufacturer go out of business. No, the government is helping the capitalists to pressure the workers of both companies to accept concessions.

All capitalists use this divide and conquer strategy. If it's not the workers in the farm out or satellite plants who will do your job for less money, it's the workers in the South or the workers in another country. It is true that as long as there is capitalism and unemployment the capitalists may in fact find someone somewhere who can do the job for less pay. But if we give into this pressure, we will be fighting a never ending battle to see who can work themselves into poverty quickest. No, our answer to their blackmail must be to wage a resolute struggle for unity and solidarity between all workers to defend our wages and conditions.

Organize Solidarity

For over six years, workers in industry after industry have been hit by the concessions drive of the capitalist billionaires. This offensive of take-backs, speed-up and layoffs for the workers has resulted in record profits for the rich. Reagan, and the Democrats, have thrown the laws and police

against any mass resistance. And the rich have been assisted every step of the way by the treachery of the top union officials. From UAW's Fraser giving concessions to Chrysler and GM, to IAM's Winpinger refusing to aid PATCO, to IUE's Bywater granting concessions to GE, the union officials have given into every demand of the capitalists.

In the Pratt strike too, the workers are prevented from exerting their full strength by the IAM's bureaucratic technicalities. They are divided into four different locals, each of which must get a 2/3 majority to strike. The largest local is not striking despite a 55% vote to go out and a combined vote of all the locals of an overwhelming majority.

The Pratt workers need our solidarity, yet the Local 201 officials refuse to organize joint action. And no wonder. They agree with the company's blackmail on job security. In the Nov. 22, 1985 issue of the local's paper, the article reporting on Mahar and Malloy's meeting with GE on the state of the

aircraft business repeats the company's threat: "If you can't make it cheaper than the other guy, you won't be making it. That is job security." In case you missed it, A.B.A. McManus elaborates it on the back. The workers are starving for information and ways to support the strike but the union bureaucrats want no part of it. To fight concessions and organize solidarity, we must do it ourselves.

The Pratt workers are not accepting the capitalist line of "give concessions or lose your jobs" and instead are standing up in defiance and fighting back. We should visit the Pratt lines and send messages of support and contributions to the strikers. The Pratt workers are fighting the concessions. We should follow their example and launch mass actions against the concessions drive.

[The leaflet concluded by pointing out that picket lines were at that time up at the plants in Southington, North Haven and Middleton.] <>

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**No greater love hath any man...
REVISIONISTS FIND SOMETHING GOOD
IN THE IMPERIALIST FOREIGN POLICY
OF THE AFL-CIO**

The Jan. 1 issue of the *Workers' Advocate* reported on the recent AFL-CIO convention of Oct. 28-31. (See the article "AFL-CIO convention: Class collaboration decked out in Madison Avenue hype".) The following article, by a member of the *Workers' Advocate* staff, deals on the comments on this convention by the revisionists, those loyal apologists of the reactionary union bureaucrats.

The love of the revisionists for the trade union bureaucracy is without limits. Although nothing but the policy of sellout could be found in the recent AFL-CIO convention, various revisionist groups searched this convention up and down until they discovered "unprecedented" progress in the union bosses' debate on international issues.

This is a truly amazing discovery since the AFL-CIO is well known to be a most important agency for the intrigues of U.S. imperialism in countries all over the world. Indeed the November 4 issue of *Business Week* pointed out that, "through affiliate institutes, the AFL-CIO is active in 83 countries. Its 1985 budget for these operations is \$43 million [nearly half of the AFL-CIO's total budget — ed.], 90% of which comes from U.S. government sources." The AFL-CIO is simply a bought and paid for flunkey of U.S. imperialism.

Nevertheless, the official pro-Soviet revision-

ists of the Communist Party USA, the reformist *Guardian* newspaper, and the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party all seized on the huffing and puffing of some bureaucrats from the National Labor Committee for Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador to claim that criticism of U.S. government policies has "grown substantially" within the AFL-CIO. Why even the jingoist Lane Kirkland received praise for handling the international debate even handedly.

As is not unusual, the revisionists have looked at a stink-hole and mistaken it for the kingdom of heaven. But let us take a look at the convention's discussion on international issues so our readers can decide for themselves whether it showed "unprecedented" progress or whether the revisionists are unprecedented liars.

An Echo of Reagan's Imperialist Warmongering

Now the first thing to understand is that there was no debate on any issue except Central America. The rest of the international resolution, entitled "Labor, National Security and the World", was approved by all and sundry, including hacks from the National Labor Committee. Yet this resolution was filled with flag-waving American chauvinism and imperialist warmongering from one end to the other.

It supported increased military spending for "a

strong national defense to protect America and her allies." (AFL-CIO News, Nov. 9, 1985. All further quotes are from this same source.)

It endorsed continued support for the NATO military alliance of Western imperialism and the ties "between the alliance and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions...."

It followed Reagan's lead and "condemned terrorism and the governments that sponsor it, and called on all democratic governments to adopt more effective security measures...." Just so that nobody would miss its meaning and think that the AFL-CIO was condemning the CIA and U.S.-backed governments, rather than supporting Reagan's warmongering policy, the resolution went on to praise the terrorist state of Israel as "the only democratic state in the Middle East", while demanding that "the Arab nations demonstrate 'unqualified acceptance of the state of Israel' and willingness to negotiate directly with Israel...."

And the list goes on. That these parts of the resolution went unquestioned is enough to end any thought that there was something progressive going on at the convention. But let us plunge ahead and look at the debate on Central America.

Continued Backing for U.S. Intervention in Central America

The second thing that should be understood is that even the debate on Central America was quite narrow. The hacks from the National Labor Committee gave some long-winded speeches against aid to the Nicaraguan contras. But they made sure to state their support for the final resolution on Central America, and they voted for it. So let us run through the high points of this resolution to see what all the hoopla was about.

The resolution "praised the democratic trade union movements in strife-torn Central America, pointing out that they have 'moved into the forefront of the coming struggle for political freedom and economic and social justice in their nations.'" What are these "democratic trade union movements" so highly praised?

In El Salvador the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) used to support the UPD trade union coalition, and it helped arrange a 'social pact' between Duarte and UPD for the 1984 elections. But when the UPD complained mildly that Duarte wasn't even carrying out his meaningless land reform measures, AIFLD dropped its support for the UPD and set up another rival union coalition -- the Democratic Workers' Confederation -- to continue supporting Duarte. Apparently a "democratic" union is one that obeys the commands of the AFL-CIO and U.S. imperialism.

In Nicaragua the AFL-CIO supports the CUS and CTN trade unions. These organizations are notorious for their active collaboration with the right-wing bourgeois parties and their support for the contras' war on the Nicaraguan toilers. Nevertheless the hacks

from the National Labor Committee, who claimed to oppose aid to the contras, supported a resolution that hails the right-wing unions which are allied with the self-same contras.

But more, the resolution "also reiterated the federation's insistence that military aid to El Salvador be conditioned on 'demonstratable progress in guaranteeing trade union rights, implementing land reform, ending the attacks and killings by right-wing "death squads," reforming the judicial system, and bringing to justice the murderers of AIFLD representatives Michael Hammer and Mark Pearlman and Salvadoran labor leader Jose Viera."

Now this is the same resolution that the AFL-CIO passed last year. It means that they are actually supporting military aid to the death-squad regime of Duarte. But they want the aid covered with the threadbare human rights certifications from the Reagan government. The fact that there's been no "demonstratable progress" from last year to this one has made no difference to the bureaucrats from the National Labor Committee. They voted for this resolution last year, and again this year they are supporting military aid to Duarte as long as there's talk about human rights promises.

Finally the resolution says that, "The AFL-CIO believes that a negotiated settlement, rather than a military victory, holds the best hope for the social, economic and political justice that the people of Nicaragua and El Salvador deserve."

This was the section of the resolution under dispute. Originally it mentioned only El Salvador. But a compromise that was worked out amended the resolution to include Nicaragua. But wait a minute. "Negotiated settlement" has long been a code word for forcing the Central American toilers to surrender by agreement what U.S. imperialism has been unable to win by force. Supported by the liberal Democrats, the Contadora group (of the bourgeois regimes of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama), and the European imperialist powers, the U.S. imperialists have tried to obtain a "negotiated settlement" that amounts to Nicaragua agreeing to further open the door to the bourgeois counter-revolution inside the country and surrendering to the demands of the contra mercenaries. It is not an alternative to Reagan's dirty war, but a complement for it.

That the AFL-CIO amended its resolution to include an appeal for a "negotiated settlement" in Nicaragua does not show a change in the AFL-CIO's policy of loyally serving the interests of U.S. imperialism. It only means that the AFL-CIO is agreeing to more crafty words to cover up its dirty work of backing the bourgeois counterrevolution against the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

Nevertheless, the revisionist groups claim this shows the growth of forces critical of U.S. government policy. Hogwash! What this shows is that the revisionists will grasp at anything to prettify the union bureaucrats and cover up their treacherous role against the workers in the U.S. and around the world.

**REFERENCE MATERIAL ON
"THE NATIONAL RANK AND FILE AGAINST CONCESSIONS"**

The Jan. 1 1986 issue of The Workers' Advocate reported on the formation of the "National Rank and File Against Concessions" (NRAFAC) in the article "A network of local union bureaucrats". It showed that this organization, far from being a true organ of the militancy of the rank-and-file, was in fact a network of local bureaucrats. It pointed out that to the extent that there are militants around this network, and to the extent that the organization actually wages any struggle, the Party must work with it. But it stressed that this work "must always and everywhere be subordinated to the work of building up real fighting organization which can carry out consistent agitation against the capitalists and the union bureaucracy which is assisting them, a strong organization which can mobilize the masses of workers into the mass struggle against the capitalists' concessions drive." Work with the NRAFAC must be oriented, not towards conciliation with the union bureaucracy, but towards driving a wedge between the militants and the apologists of the union bureaucracy.

Below are additional notes on the NRAFAC, compiled by a member of the Central Committee of the MLP.

In many cases the rank-and-file is getting fed up with the sellout union bureaucracy. To keep them in line we see emerging a "bureaucrat opposition" -- union leaders, especially on the local level, who claim they're against concessions, who posture that they want to fight, who are even gaining a reputation by being in the center of some of the ongoing strikes. It's this phenomena we want to look at.

This bureaucrat opposition is popping up in plant after plant in cities across the country. A section of them came together in Chicago on December 7-8 and founded the National Rank-And-File Against Concessions. So to get an idea of what the bureaucrat opposition is about, let's take a look at this phenomenon.

Three features that stand out:

a) it is the left-wing of "corporate campaigns". Although it has gained a reputation from strikes, actually it has quite reformist views, a most vacillating approach to concessions, and even opposes one form of concessions by advocating another form of concessions. Even in terms of struggle, their view is for corporate campaigns as an alternative to real mass struggle of the workers.

b) it is composed of local officials--i.e. middle level bureaucrats looking to become big bureaucrats

c) it is opposed, as a matter of policy, to fighting against the international union bureaucrats (keep things in the family).

Now I want to go into the origins of this organization and to its development to date so that it can

be seen why I say these are three outstanding features of this group.

Origins of the NRAFAC

Now as far as I can make out there are three main sources for the NRAFAC.

First, a section of bureaucrats organized around the Hormel local in Austin Minnesota. In fact the first meeting was held in Austin on June 28 as a support meeting for the Austin local. This meeting initiated the call for a national conference against concessions.

Second, some local officials from the shipyards who were trying to develop opposition to pre-contract concession bargaining.

Third, some other sundry union officials long known as trade union opposition, like Pete Kelly and Ron Weisen. All of these, in total 13 local union officials, attended the first meeting in June.

Let us look into these three sources to get an idea of the character of the NRAFAC.

A) The Hormel union local in Austin, Minnesota

In October '84 Hormel unilaterally cut wages from \$10.69 to \$8.25 an hour, after obtaining harsh concessions steadily from 1978 on.

The national leaders of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) agreed, saying it was time for cutting wages even further, in the name of "retrenchment", down to \$8 an hour.

1,500 workers at plant wanted to strike.

The local union leaders are caught between the militancy of rank-and-file and the "retrenchment" policy of the international hacks. Local P-9 union president, James Guyette, talked the rank-and-file out of striking (citing the no-strike clause from '78). Instead a "corporate campaign" is waged against First Bank in Minneapolis and Hormel. Top union leaders opposed even this mild campaign and worked to isolate the Austin workers.

Local P-9 leaders, then, as part of the publicity campaign, went looking for support from other bureaucrats in meatpacking locals and from UAW (auto-workers) and USWA (steelworkers) locals in Minnesota. Initially it found support from one UFCW local, #616 in Dorchester Ma (Brian Lang, chief steward), and from UAW local #879 in St Paul (Tom Laney, president) and USWA local #7263 in Minneapolis (David Foster, grievance chairman). This formed the basis for a coalition of support for Austin Hormel.

In June, a meeting was called in Austin to support the Hormel workers, and from this meeting the call was launched for a national conference against concessions.

Note the character of the struggle waged by the local bureaucrats:

1) it is based on the concept of the "corporate

campaign" as opposed to the direct mass strike by the rank-and-file;

2) it seeks help mainly from other local union bureaucrats;

3) and it arises out of an attempt to get out of the isolation imposed by international leaders -- but, while it is implicitly a fight against the top union hacks, the tactics revolve around never actually denouncing them.

Still a "Corporate Campaign"

Note further:

a) The Hormel strike broke out when the contract expired on Aug 17. Nevertheless, the Local P-9 leaders are still carrying out a corporate campaign as opposed to organizing mass actions in the strike. Therefore, they have only small picket lines at the plant gates, oppose "violence" on the picket lines, and allow scabs to cross at will (although there has been no mass scabbing yet). Instead, the mass events are pickets, marches, and car caravans to banks, the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board), etc.

There is nothing wrong with these things in-and-of themselves, and if they are used as forms to develop support for the strike they are fine. But the local union leaders are pushing these things as a substitute for a militant strike against the company, instead of as a means to develop support for such struggles. (There is a long, dirty history in the union movement of using such substitutes to divert the masses away from the actual, crucial struggles needed to win. Today this has gotten new name: the "corporate campaign.")

Replacing Direct Wage Cuts with Loss-Sharing

b) Also, while the Local P-9 leaders are opposing direct wage cuts in the hourly rate, they are proposing a profit-sharing plan instead. Indeed, in the name of a profit-sharing plan, they are promoting a loss-sharing plan which would reimburse Hormel if profits fell below their current high level and only moderately raise pay when profits rise from their current level. Thus instead of wage cuts -- the recent form of wage concessions in auto -- they are proposing a deceptive new form of concession. Their corporate campaign literature brags about the fact that they are proposing to replace wage cuts with this "profit-sharing" plan. Opposition to concessions thus becomes substituting one form of concessions for another form of concessions, and a particularly harmful form of concession at that as it is supposed to interest the workers in maintaining good balance-sheets for the capitalists.

Keeping the Workers Attached to the Top Union Bureaucrats

c) Note that the UFCW international (i.e. the top leadership) has finally, reluctantly agreed to the

strike. Local P-9 leaders are using this dubious fact to argue against any criticism of the union leadership and to tie up the rank and file workers in waiting on the top hacks. For example, the rank and file at the Austin plant and at other Hormel plants are arguing that pickets should be thrown up to shut down the other plants in solidarity with the Austin strike. The top bureaucrats said OK, but wait to see what happens in negotiations. The Local P-9 leaders tell the rank and file to wait because, they claim, its important to have the support of the international (i.e. of the top union leadership). So the workers at Austin are robbed of the support the workers at the other plants want to give and the whole strike is held back waiting on the UFCW leaders.

B) The second source is from the shipyards

Earlier this year, there were attempts to tear up the contracts and impose further concessions in shipyards in Seattle and Portland. Everyone knew this was the beginning for such actions throughout the West Coast and elsewhere. An outstanding fact was that this round of concessions was initiated by the union hacks approaching the shipyards capitalists.

The Seattle Branch of the MLP fought this, and at Todd Seattle the concessions were voted down. Our Party was not the only ones to leaflet. Some local hacks on the West Coast, who had apparently accepted concessions earlier, were opposed to these new concessions launched by another section of the hacks.

These local hacks came out with a newsletter entitled "Shipyards News/NO CONCESSIONS" opposing concessions in Seattle and Portland and reporting on the issues in other shipyards, including on the Bath Iron and Todd New Orleans strikes. A notable feature of newsletter was its statement of purpose, which says: **"In no way will this newsletter interfere in the internal affairs of any local or national union. The aim here is to unite all the scattered and isolated struggles around the country into one national movement against concessions in the shipyards."**

Among the "opposition" hacks, one central figure is Fred Neufeld, Executive Secretary of Local #9 of shipbuilders, Todd shipyards in Los Angeles (3,000 workers). Neufeld and Local #9 president, George Samanc, had a letter signed by them and calling for rejection of concessions distributed to workers in Todd Seattle. Along with them were Remigio Gonzales, business agent of Iron Workers Local #627 in San Diego; David Arian, president ILWU Local #13 in Los Angeles; Tony Algood, Executive Secretary of shipbuilder Local #18 in Mobile, Alabama. These local officials attend the June meeting in Austin.

By the August meeting it got the endorsement of two members, one from Local 6 and one from Local 7 of the shipbuilders, bargaining committees at Bath Iron; plus the local president of Local #16 of the shipbuilders in Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Sell-Out at Bath Iron

Note that the union leaders sold-out the Bath Iron strike. The vote was on Oct. 7, after 99 days of the strike. It was by secret ballot; the settlement was said to have been passed, but no vote tally was given. The contract provided for a wage freeze for its entire term; \$2,000 in bonuses (\$1,000 at ratification and \$500 Christmas bonus in 1986 and '87); a two-tier pay scale with new hires receiving \$3 an hour less than the present starting rate and taking three years to catch up (\$1 raise per year); \$200 bonus for each 6 months of perfect attendance; reduced medical insurance (with worker copayments for a portion of the benefits); and nothing mentioned on work rules. (See the AFL-CIO News, Oct. 12, 1985)

Note also that Tony Algood opened the August meeting and Fred Neufeld was elected secretary.

C) The 3rd source is sundry union "opposition"

Initially, at the first meeting in June, they drew in Ron Weisen, Pete Kelly, General Baker, and, from U.S. Steel's Gary works, Larry Regan.

Ron Weisen is president of USWA Local #1397 and leads the Network to Save the Mon-Ohio Valley, which works in coalition with the Denominational Ministry Strategy headed by Rev. D. Douglas Roth. (See the article "Condemn the repression against the unemployed movement in Mon Valley!" in the May 1, 1985 issue of **The Workers' Advocate** for information on the Network.) Note the Network/DMS's use of the "corporate campaign", which in this case is generally theatrical stunts. Now the "new" strategy employed by the Network/DMS is that of lobbying the Pennsylvania state senate.

Pete Kelly is president of UAW #160 in Detroit; he was a leader of the now defunct Locals Against Concessions (LOC). (On LOC, see "Liquidators on LOC/Riding the Tail of the UAW Bureaucrat Opposition" in the May 24, 1982 issue of **The Workers' Advocate**. Note the LOC wouldn't even organize mass action; it just maneuvered among the bureaucrats.) At the press conference after the June NRAFAC meeting, Kelly said: "If you so-called generals that are our international leaders aren't willing to lead the fight for organized labor, against concessions in this great country of ours; for God's sake step out of the way. Because there are leaders down here that are willing to lead the battle for organized labor." It sounds militant, but underneath it you see his mouth just watering to become the big bureaucrat himself.

By the August meeting, other prominent "opposition" hacks had been drawn in, such as:

--Jim Balanoff, retired director of USWA District 31 in Chicago;

--Alice Puerala, president of Local 65 USWA in Chicago;

--And from Detroit: Jim Coakley, General Dynamics Local in Detroit; former LOC leader Al Gard-

ner, tool and die Local 600, Detroit; Chuck Wooten, Local 600, Detroit; Marsha Mickens, president of Local 326 bakers, confectionary and tobacco union, Detroit.

So these three components -- the local union officials at Hormel, various local union officials in the shipyards, and various trade union officials of the "opposition" -- are the origins of the NRAFAC.

What Has the NRAFAC Done?

Now let's take a quick look at what NRAFAC's done.

Well, they've actually done nothing so far but to hold meetings.

The first meeting was in June. It launched the call to other bureaucrats for a national conference against concessions.

The August Meeting

This led to a second meeting in August to plan for the conference. About 165 people attended. Two things stand out at this 2nd meeting:

1) **First they established their "Statement of Purpose".**

"The National Rank-and-File Against Concessions has as its sole purpose aiding the struggle of local and international unions to stop the process of Concessions' Bargaining rampant today in the American labor movement.

"It is not our intention to organize a new union movement, nor to single out particular leaders or international unions. Nor is it our purpose to set bargaining strategy for individual unions. That has been and remains the responsibility for each local and its international."

2) **Second, what they decided to not consider--** they decided they would absolutely not discuss a national strike; nor would they discuss political action against the capitalist parties; nor would they discuss organizing the unemployed; nor would they deal with organizing the unorganized. There was a very narrow focus.

This meeting also elected an interim steering committee composed of chair, secretary, treasurer and 11 regional representatives. Chair: David Foster, grievance committee, USWA Local #7263, Minneapolis; Secretary: Fred Neufeld, executive secretary of shipbuilders Local #9 in Los Angeles; Treasurer: Kevin O'Keefe, GCIU Local #299, St. Paul Minn. The task of the steering committee was to organize date, place, and agenda for national conference in the fall.

The December Conference

So the August meeting led to the December conference where they actually founded the NRAFAC. About 490 people attended this conference, and it was filled with extremely militant phrases against con-

cessions, including some stinging denunciations of the international union misleaders. But let's look at the actual practical work of this conference, what this conference actually did.

The By-Laws of NRAFAC

1) First, the main thing done was to establish the by-laws of the organization.

a) The by-laws restated the statement of purpose to the effect that they won't criticize other bureaucrats.

b) The by-laws also set membership. They gave two voting delegates for each local union that affiliates. An amendment was put up that suggested that, at locals which do not affiliate, the organization should give voting delegate status to a rank-and-file organization from that local and also that unemployed groups should get delegate status. This amendment was vigorously opposed and defeated on the grounds that allowing in the rank and file would bring down the ire of the international union leadership -- and that you don't know, a rank-and-file group could be anyone while the base of NRAFAC should really be local union officials. Thus the NRAFAC decided not only to not oppose other hacks, but that its composition should be limited to local bureaucrats. And NRAFAC upheld the August decision to have nothing to do with organizing the unemployed and the unorganized.

Workshops and Resolutions

2) There were also workshops that held discussion, but no decisions. For example, concerning strike strategy -- there were many wild statements, but the main outcome was for corporate campaigns. Also the auto workshop discussed preparations for the UAW convention next year.

Note that other resolutions, including on political issues like South Africa and Central America, were barred.

Future Plans

3) As to future plans: they were mainly left up to the leadership. Only two things were clear. i) support for Hormel through the "adopt a family" plan. ii) A further meeting of UAW locals to be held to plan maneuvers among top bureaucrats at the UAW convention. The leadership has also announced that it may put out a newspaper.

So this is all conference did:

- a) it advocated, at best, a vacillating, reformist opposition to concessions;
- b) it established its bureaucrat composition;
- c) and it decided against criticism of even the top sellout bureaucrats.

Two other events at the conference give an idea of this organization.

The Picket at the Chicago Tribune

About 300 participants from the conference went down to the picket line at the Chicago Tribune. They were fairly militant with slogan shouting and taunting of the police. When a scab truck came, it was blocked. The conference leadership called off the blocking of the truck. But other conference participants continued to block the truck. There was apparently a scuffle with the police and two participants got arrested. The conference leaders brought in a Chicago Tribune union hack to tell people to stop blocking trucks. The leaders negotiated with the police, and they got those arrested released. The leaders called on everyone to go back to the conference.

The Literature Table Incident

The NRAFAC leadership allowed no left literature tables in the conference nor distribution of leaflets inside the conference hall. Distribution took place in the hallway outside. The Illinois Labor History Society (largely IWW) got permission for a literature table, on which they displayed books on labor history. But when the NRAFAC leaders arrived, they told them to get out; they called the police; and they had them arrested. This took place during registration, and many conference participants opposed this blatant suppression. The NRAFAC leaders backed down and got the Illinois Labor History Society people released from the police.

These two events show some resistance to the leaders, some disgruntlement with what was going on.

Our Party went to the meeting, although not as official delegates. Among other things, we distributed resolutions -- supporting strikes against concessions; denouncing Reagan and capitalist offensive; criticizing the union bureaucrats; calling for organizing independently of the labor bureaucracy; calling for organizing the unorganized; and calling for organizing the unemployed. We could not get these resolutions to the floor. As well, the Party delegation distributed The Workers' Advocate and made various contacts. <>

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SPEECH

Continued from the front page

ers' movement as well.

Because the phenomenon of nationality organization appears and reappears in the course of the class struggle, and because at times it plays an important role in that struggle, it is necessary to discuss the Marxist-Leninist approach to the question of nationality organization.

In 1979 the National Committee of the COUSML, the predecessor of the MLP in discussing the CPSG, concluded that **"The organizations of the workers' movement, including the Party itself, must be unitary. Nationality organization, in general terms, has an auxiliary role to the unitary organizations of the workers' movement."** A half decade of work and study since that time permit us to state in somewhat greater depth the issues and factors at stake in this question.

It should be stated from the outset that, while the ideas to be presented in this speech do provide a general orientation for this question, they do not provide a formula or ready-made solution for any particular case. When we speak of nationality organization we are speaking of a wide range of different organizations, embodying various social phenomena, with varying programs, coming up under varied historical conditions, and therefore playing different roles. The UNIA, the BPP, the LRBW, the CPSG, and Karenga's United Slaves (US) are all very different organizations, and represent different social phenomena. Each case of nationality organization has to be examined on its own merits. The starting point for such an examination is the questions of content, that is, what social phenomenon it embodies and what program it carries out.

As well, since we hold that nationality organization should play an auxiliary role to that of the principal, unitary organizations of the workers, it is necessary to examine the form of nationality organization in each particular case. It is necessary to look at the relationship of this form to the content embodied by an organization and to determine the role of this form. In short, it needs to be seen what it means for a particular phenomenon to have taken on the form of a nationality organization in its specific historical context.

The Key Issues At Stake

Here are the basic ideas which this speech will deal with.

Marxism-Leninism strongly stresses the unitary organization of the working class. The interests of the socialist revolution and of the day-to-day struggle require that the workers of all nationalities be united in the organizations of the working class. The Party, as the class conscious organized advanced detachment of the class, must unite all the Marxist-Leninists irrespective of nationality. The other principal organizations of the working class,

such as the trade unions, must also unite all the workers irrespective of nationality.

The struggle against racism and national oppression is an important front of struggle against the bourgeoisie. This struggle also has particular importance for uniting the workers of different nationalities. This struggle must be taken up by the whole working class. The principal unitary organizations of the class, in the first place the Party, must take an active part in this struggle. As well on this front, just as on others, the masses must be encompassed with a variety of organizational forms in order to extend the organization of the masses and of the struggle as widely as possible. There is thus a role for anti-racist organization, and this too should be unitary organization.

Marxism-Leninism thus lays great stress on the unitary organization of the working class, and this is a basic orientation of the Marxist-Leninists at all times.

Marxism-Leninism also teaches us the need for sensitivity to the national sentiments of the oppressed nationalities. The existence of national divisions, above all the existence of national oppression, tends to foster national sentiments among the workers of oppressed nationalities, including national distrust toward the workers of the oppressor nationality. The Marxist-Leninists work constantly for a proletarian internationalist stand among all the workers, combating both national chauvinism among workers of the oppressor nationality and bourgeois nationalism among the workers of the oppressed nationalities.

But if this work is to be effective among the workers of the oppressed nationalities, it must take

ON NATIONALITY ORGANIZATION

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account of their national sentiments and not ride roughshod over them. It is in this regard that a possibility arises of the Marxist-Leninists, at particular times, and in particular circumstances, acceding to the formation of nationality organization. This is, in a sense, a compromise, a compromise with the historical conditions which give rise to national sentiments. But the aim is not to maintain or reinforce division of the workers into different nationalities by keeping them organized separately. Rather the aim is to facilitate drawing the workers of oppressed nationalities into the struggle, to be able to bring them into a united struggle, and eventually into unitary organization of the class.

Now from this it follows that the role of nationality organization must be auxiliary to that of the role of the principal organizations of the class. It cannot be substituted for them. For nationality organization to fulfill this role requires, among other things, that it correctly combine work against national oppression with attention to the general class struggle. Whether nationality organization can fulfill this role, whether it facilitates or hinders the drawing of workers of an oppressed nationality into unitary struggle and the unitary organizations, also depends on the particular circumstances under which it arises, especially upon the state and direction of motion among the masses. Therefore whether the Marxist-Leninists agree to the formation of nationality organization in any particular case depends greatly upon the particular circumstances.

Objective factors bring nationality organizations into existence independently of the views and influence of the Marxist-Leninists. The Marxist-Leninists may work in such organizations, just as they work in other mass organizations. And in this work they will combat reformism and bourgeois nationalism, just as they do in other organizations.

Politics must be put to the fore in this work. The Marxist-Leninists must fight for, and defend, a progressive program in such organizations. In connection with this, the Marxist-Leninists must promote the general class struggle and must find concrete ways to encourage proletarian internationalism. The struggle against bourgeois nationalism, and especially the fight for the idea of unitary organization, must be intimately linked with, and not counterposed to, the fight on the questions of program.

These are the basic points which I'm going to go on to elaborate at some length.

Marxism-Leninism Stresses the Unitary Organization of the Working Class

First, Marxism-Leninism stresses the unitary organization of the class. This is true in terms of the party. It is true in terms of the other principal organizations of the class, for example, the

trade unions. In fact, Marxism-Leninism emphasizes extending unitary organization as far as possible, in every sphere. This is necessary from the standpoint of the social revolution, which is a unitary struggle of the working class. It is necessary even from the standpoint of the day-to-day struggles, because the day-to-day struggle, as waged by the workers in a particular factory, or in a particular industry, or in a particular locality, requires the participation of workers of different nationalities. The division of that struggle along national lines spells sure death for it.

Unitary organization has another significance as well. The participation of the workers of different nationalities in united struggle and in unitary organization helps to break down the national barriers which class society erects among them. It helps to forge the unity of the class.

In the 1960's and 1970's in the U.S. various alternatives were put forward to the idea of unitary organization among the workers in the U.S. These "brilliant new ideas" prove, upon examination, to be the same ideas advocated in the first decade of the twentieth century by the Austrian Social-Democrats and by the Bund in Russia. Namely, this was the organization of the working class along national lines.

Experience in Austria and Russia

In the pre-World War I period in Austria, where there were several different nationalities living interspersed with one another, the Austrian Social-Democrats attempted to build the party, and other organizations of the working class, along national lines. Internally, the party was divided among national sections. An attempt was made to do the same thing to other working class organizations as well. This was not the original line of organization of the workers' political party, but something introduced later, at a time when the party was growing and becoming an important factor in the working class movement in Austria.

The results were devastating. The party lost many members, and many of the organizations around it folded up their tents. This was because, in effect, the party went to the class conscious workers and said, "Why should you be united across national lines? What's so wrong with petty-bourgeois nationalism?" And the workers said "Well, in that case, why should I be in the party, if I'm a petty-bourgeois nationalist?" Now this is oversimplifying it, but one important point here is that not only does the idea of nationality organization come up in close connection to petty-bourgeois nationalism, but the very fact of being organized along nationality lines — that fact itself — will tend to give rise to petty-bourgeois nationalist thinking.

In Russia the Bund advocated a separate party for the Jewish workers. Here too the Jewish population was interspersed with the Russian population and the

population of other nationalities in the big cities. This raises an interesting question. How is any struggle going to proceed, let alone how is the revolution going to proceed, on the basis of having the workers of different nationalities organized into different parties? It means either advocating a separate Jewish revolution or arguing that some kind of coordination between the nationalities can be worked out on the basis of good will.

Experience in the U.S. in the 1960's and 70's

This was a popular theory in the U.S. in the 60's and the early 70's, when the idea of a black revolution was widespread. You'll all be organized separately, but somehow you'll be able to coordinate. Somehow! And the somehow never materializes. When you start this way, you're never going to have monolithic organization. In fact you're not going to make a revolution by coordination. Among other problems that will arise in carrying out this plan, divergent tendencies are going to arise in the different nationality parties. And in fact, interlaced with those divergent tendencies, will be petty-bourgeois nationalist tendencies, because you've been organized along national lines. And the final thing is you are not going to organize the workers on that basis. I mean, you can just see the basic units in the factories -- "Sorry, I can't organize you, you're the wrong nationality."

There was a further variation of this theory which arose in 1973. By 1973 there was a proliferation of nationality organizations in the U.S. which called themselves Marxist-Leninist. At that time you had the Black Workers Congress (BWC), which called itself the Black Marxist-Leninists; you had the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRRWO), which was the remnants of the Young Lords, who called themselves the Puerto Rican Marxist-Leninists; you had the August Twenty-Ninth Movement (ATM), which called itself the Chicano Marxist-Leninists; and you had the I Wor Kuen (IWK), which regarded itself as the Chinese Marxist-Leninists. And they formed a coordinating committee together with the Revolutionary Union (RU) to carry on unity negotiations.

In this coordinating committee the IWK advocated, straight up, that there was no need to unite the Marxist-Leninists of different nationalities in a single party. Meanwhile the PRRWO, BWC and, I believe, ATM argued that, yes, there was need for a united party ultimately, but in order to bring that about a long period of transition was needed because of the existence of national distrust; i.e., "We don't trust you." So they envisioned an entire period leading up to the formation of a united party and then the socialist revolution, during which they would perpetuate separate nationality organization among the Marxist-Leninists and among the other workers organizations.

This, by the way, is an example of a compromise position; it's a compromise position which we re-

ject. It doesn't lead to unity; it leads to disunity. (In passing, we may note however that this position of separate "nationality Marxist-Leninist groups" was so impractical that within a few years even these groups, every one of them, had withdrawn the nationality clauses from their organizational rules and had opened their doors to admissions from activists of other nationalities. At the same time, this did not mean to an end to the promotion of national separatist concepts in these circles.)

We Stand for Unitary Organization of the Working Class

We are hostile to any idea of organizing the Marxist-Leninists along the lines of nationality. It is obligatory that the Marxist-Leninists, as the class conscious vanguard of the class, should be exemplary in this regard. The party should unite all the Marxist-Leninists irrespective of nationality, and within the party there should be no sort of national divisions.

We similarly reject the idea of organizing trade unions along the line of nationality. We hold that on such a mass level it is necessary to unite the workers irrespective of nationality. Every episode in the history of the trade union movement in the U.S. shows that every proposal to organize trade unions along the line of nationality is doomed to failure, that any division of the workers along national lines simply leads to playing off one section against another.

Historically separate nationality trade unions have come up chiefly under two circumstances:

Firstly and mainly, they arose with racism, with the organization of segregated locals for the black and Mexican nationality workers. In that case the Marxist-Leninist position was very simple. The Marxist-Leninists fought against segregation and demanded unitary trade unions. Where they lost those fights, the Marxist-Leninists went ahead to form separate union locals of the oppressed nationalities, but only to ensure that the nationality workers were organized and could continue to fight even more forcefully for unitary unions.

The other main circumstance under which this idea has come up with any sort of relevance is in certain very limited cases in the 1960s when a tendency emerged towards black syndicalism. That phenomenon I'll go into later in this speech.

So the first point is that the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, the interests of socialism, the interests of the day-to-day struggle, require unitary organization of the working class.

Workers of All Nationalities Must Be Mobilized in the Struggle Against Racism and National Oppression

The second point is that the anti-racist struggle must also be a united struggle.

We do not agree that the struggle against racism

and national oppression is a struggle simply for, or mainly for, the workers of the oppressed nationalities, even if at certain times in history that is mainly who was engaged in that struggle. When the workers from oppressed nationalities fight racism they are carrying with them the interests of the whole working class. And experience has shown that whenever the anti-racist struggle has taken place over a period of time in a big way it has not been fought by the oppressed nationalities alone.

From the standpoint of the socialist revolution, the anti-racist struggle is a matter of concern to the entire working class. The anti-racist struggle is a front of struggle against the bourgeoisie. As well, the anti-racist movement has particular significance for uniting the workers of different nationalities. The participation of the workers of different nationalities in united struggle against racism is one of the most powerful factors possible for overcoming national distrust and bringing about unity of the workers of different nationalities. In point of fact, any development of the anti-racist struggle, even at a time when the anti-racist struggle is mainly being carried by oppressed nationalities themselves, is a favorable factor for the unity of the working class.

Anti-racist Organization Should Combine Workers of All Nationalities

Now the general Marxist-Leninist approach to the question of organizing the class includes, as one of its points, the idea of embracing the class with various forms of mass organization, with a variety of different organization, in order to extend the organization of the class as far as possible. This includes building up organizations on different fronts of the mass struggle, and the anti-racist struggle is one such front. We hold that anti-racist organization too should be unitary organization; that even if at a given time it is largely the national minority workers who are carrying the anti-racist fight it is still by far preferable to build unitary anti-racist organization, and to fight for the mobilization of the white workers into it.

This raises a very important point, namely, that anti-racist organization and nationality organization are two different categories. Anti-racist organization is organization for the anti-racist struggle. It may be unitary organization or it may be nationality organization. Nationality organization in the narrowest sense of the word is simply any organization composed of a particular oppressed nationality.

In point of fact nationality organization may or may not be anti-racist. There are examples of all-black organizations whose programs have revolved around the anti-racist struggle, but not necessarily from a consistent point of view; of those who combine the anti-racist struggle with various other things; and of those whose whole point is to detract from the anti-racist struggle. For example, it

takes a great stretching of the facts to portray Ron Karenga's US as an anti-racist organization. So anti-racist organization and nationality organization are two distinct categories.

For the anti-racist struggle, we want to work for two things.

Firstly, we want the unitary organizations of the class to take part in the anti-racist struggle. Above all, the Party must play an active role in this struggle. And we also work to encourage other organizations of the workers, including the trade unions, to participate in the anti-racist struggle. In reality this is a serious problem since the trade unions are dominated by the aristocracy of labor and are imbued with all of the consequent filth and corruption. Part of the fight against the corrupt union bureaucracy is to expose its betrayal of the oppressed nationalities and to rally the rank-and-file workers to the anti-racist struggle.

Secondly, Marxist-Leninists also favor the development, given conditions which make this possible, of unitary anti-racist organization -- organization, on the front of the anti-racist struggle, that is unitary in composition. This gives another means of drawing masses into the struggle and organizing them.

Nationality Organizations May Play A Progressive Auxiliary Role

Another point must be made. Objective factors give rise to the formation of nationality organizations. There are reasons why they keep showing up on the stage of history.

The existence of national divisions, due to differences in language, culture and so forth are a factor in this. But a hundred times more important is the fact that, in class society, the existence of different nationalities means the existence of national oppression, including the specially heavy exploitation of the workers of the oppressed nationalities, the chauvinist attacks and racism against them, and segregation, including their exclusion from common organizations. And the weight of that oppression is an important factor in the coming into being of nationality organizations.

Another factor is the flaring up of deep-felt national sentiments among the oppressed nationalities, especially at times of upsurge in the struggle against national oppression.

Another factor still: the attempts of the bourgeoisie, and those petty bourgeoisie aspiring to be bourgeois, of the nationalities to organize the masses of those nationalities under their banner.

All of these factors can give rise at times to the formation of nationality organization, especially when the general proletarian movement is weak or under chauvinist or social-chauvinist influence. Nationality organization can at times play a progressive role auxiliary to that of the unitary organization of the working class. This is possible given a number of specific conditions.

An Example from the History of the CPUSA

I would like to go into an example which shows both the limitations of nationality organization and the possibility for it to play a progressive role.

At the time of the founding of the Communist Party U.S.A. the majority of its membership was immigrant workers organized into separate language federations. This was a heritage from the old Socialist Party. In the Socialist Party the immigrant workers were mainly organized along nationality lines into autonomous federations. This was a product to a small extent of the real existing divisions, the fact that immigrants came here speaking different languages, living initially in communities mainly of their own nationality, and working in work places or sections of work places consisting mainly of their own nationality, being unfamiliar with the specific features of the overall class struggle in the U.S. and so forth.

However, the creation of these autonomous nationality organizations had much more to do with the fact that the leadership of the Socialist Party was disinterested in organizing the immigrant workers. The earliest of the language federations, such as the Italian federation, were actually organized independently of the Socialist Party because it was simply not organizing the immigrants in quite a few places. As a consequence, when the immigrant workers came to socialism, as a great many of them did, they were organized separately, into autonomous federations within the party.

The question of how to deal with the language federations was a matter of debate for years in the Communist Party. In the earliest years it was a matter of debate between [the two parties that were originally formed before the communists united into a single party] the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party. Later the debate took place within the united party over such questions as defining the degree of autonomy of the federations, defining their relationship to the party, and so forth. Ultimately the debate turned to the question of the existence of the language federations.

The Reorganization of the Party

In 1925 the Fourth Convention of the Workers' Communist Party decided to abolish the position of the language federations as basic organizations of the party. It held that, **"The foreign language branch tends greatly to isolate the activity of the party members belonging to them into the channel of propaganda only among workers of their own nationality, and to deflect them away from active participation in the general class struggle."** Therefore, the foreign language branches were no longer to be basic organizations of the party. And all the party members were to be organized into basic organization in the factories or into basic organization based in the neighborhoods but not based upon lines of na-

tionality.

The foreign language press -- at this time the party had newspapers in some 19 different languages -- was preserved. But these papers were oriented toward giving greater weight to the class struggle in the U.S. Prior to this time the different papers showed a great unevenness in their coverage of the U.S. workers struggle.

The former language federation branches were not dissolved. They were no longer to be basic organizations of the party. Instead they were reconstructed as workers' clubs, admitting to membership not only party members, but also nonparty workers of the same nationality who accepted the platform of the class struggle.

So what we see here is two things.

First, the language federations, as basic organizations of the party, played a limiting role. They tended to hold back the party members organized into them from participating in the mainstream of the party's work in the working class, from actively being involved in those politics. There were literally cases where in a given work place there would be three different party members, each belonging to three different language federations, and no party work in the workplace. Therefore it was necessary to reorganize the party along unitary lines.

The reorganization of the party along unitary lines was an important step in the Bolshevization of the party, and in drawing the whole party membership into the mainstream of the party work.

Second, however, the fact remained that there were millions of immigrant workers, a large number of whom were still fluent primarily in their native tongues, a large number of whom were more oriented still to the class struggle in the homeland than in the U.S. Moreover the practical fact of the matter remained that the language federations had not only had as their membership the party members; they also had a certain following in the communities. Therefore two things were done.

First, reorganization of the party itself along unitary lines.

Second, the preservation of certain forms of work along nationality lines. The foreign language press was continued but a greater emphasis was given to the class struggle in the U.S. And the basis of the foreign language workers' clubs, according to the 1925 convention, was to be the platform of class struggle. In other words these were ways and means to draw the immigrant workers into the class struggle in the U.S.

The results, the ways in which this was carried out, were not perfect. There were many problems in actually reorganizing the party along unitary lines. And there were also numbers of problems with the foreign language press and with the foreign language workers' clubs, which often became new forms for the old bad habits.

But the reorganization did bring thousands of former language federation members into the mainstream of party work, many of whom subsequently made

important contributions in the party's work in auto, in steel, among the ironworkers, and in a whole series of other industries.

And the foreign language forms which were preserved did to some extent help to further draw immigrant workers into the mainstream of the class struggle.

To sum up, the foreign language federations, as they were originally constituted, came into existence in part because of the objective factor of the existence of millions upon millions of immigrant workers with different languages who were not yet well oriented in the class struggle in the U.S. and so forth. But, more importantly, they came into existence because of the social-chauvinism of the leaders of the SP.

The language federations in content were quite progressive. They were formed by immigrant workers who wanted to become communists and to make socialist revolution in the U.S. But the form of nationality organization limited them. It cut against the communist sentiment. It actually held back its membership from these aspirations. Therefore it was replaced with the reorganization of the party along unitary lines. There continued, however, to be a role for some type of forms to draw immigrant workers into the general class struggle. And the forms which were used were nationality forms.

This example provides an indication of the idea of a nationality organization which has an auxiliary role to that of the main organizations of the working class.

Some Issues in Organizing the Immigrant Workers Today

In organizing the immigrant workers today we continue to face a number of the same questions as the language federations faced earlier. And it is essential to find the way to draw the immigrant workers into the general class struggle here in the U.S.

Historically our Party has followed an essentially three-point orientation in its work among the immigrants. Although this has been formulated in various ways, it comes down to the following. **First, solidarity with the struggle in the homeland. Second, advancing the fight of the immigrant workers against the discrimination and other oppression which they face. And third, their participation in the class struggle in the U.S.**

This orientation turns out to be close in spirit to the orientation followed in the foreign language work in the 1920's. This is the content of the work. The form for this work may or may not be nationality organization. In the case where it takes the form of nationality organization the work to orient the immigrants toward the class struggle in the U.S. becomes all the more important to ensure that the organization actually plays a progressive role. In our recent experience we find two contrasting examples on this question.

The first is the example of the Caribbean Progressive Study Group. One of the key points to the historical development of the CPSG is that it did take up, encouraged by the work of the Party, an orientation toward the class struggle in the U.S. In fact the development and consolidation of the CPSG on a progressive basis hinged upon this. The orienting of the CPSG towards the class struggle in the U.S. had a tremendous impact on its orientation toward the anti-racist struggle, toward other issues in the West Indian community, and toward its approach to building up the solidarity movement.

[Here the speech went on to discuss a negative example from the work of an organization in another immigrant community in the U.S. This organization held that the immigrant community should orient itself exclusively with respect to the struggle in the homeland and should build branches of the party in the homeland. Although it briefly claimed to be concerned with the revolutionary movement in the U.S., to want to take part in building a party in the U.S. and even to accept the three-point orientation set forward by our Party for work in the immigrant communities, in fact it failed to orient itself to the class struggle in the U.S. This was one of the main factors resulting in its inability to build solid organization or to sustain serious revolutionary work. Failure to regard itself as part of the general revolutionary movement in the U.S. and to take up the tasks of party-building in the U.S., far from increasing the support this organization was able to render to the struggle in the homeland, helped lead to the collapse of all its work.]

So these are examples of the question of nationality organization, examples involving immigrants.

Nationality Organization and the Black Workers

I would like to turn to another case -- the question of the development of nationality organization among the black workers. This was a very strong phenomenon in the late 1960's.

During the mid and late 1960's there was a tremendous outpouring of struggle by the black people, and, as well, there was an outpouring of strong national sentiment. One of the results of this was the formation of nationality organizations. Not only did such organizations flourish at that time, but it was widely regarded as a principle that blacks should organize themselves separately, based on ideas that tended in general to negate the existence of the working class and in particular to negate the existence of class divisions among blacks.

In the 1960's the formation of black nationality organization was directly tied to the upsurge in national sentiments. I mean it was not a case of black people arriving here within the past generation. There is not a significant language barrier. And in fact the black workers in many cases tend to be very much in the heart of the working class. Thus this is not quite the same question that we

often face with the immigrant workers.

Moreover, the launching of all-black organization was associated not only with the upsurge of black struggle and the sentiments which it unleashed, but also with attempts of the black bourgeoisie and aspiring petty bourgeoisie to organize the masses under their leadership, as a means of developing their political and economic strength. In fact, in the history of the struggle, prior to the 1960's, all-black organization was an unusual phenomenon, usually a direct product of Jim Crow. There was actually a strong line among blacks against all black organization.

During the late 1960's and early 1970's there was tremendous mass sentiment for forming nationality organizations. Since that time, this tremendous sentiment no longer exists in the same way. But it does still exist as a norm. There are various types of black organization around. And it is now a basic point of black bourgeois politics that you should have black organization of all types. For example, the Family Leadership Plan of the Black Congressional Caucus hinges upon the idea of having black churches, black educational organizations in schools, black political organization, all-black organization in every sphere of life.

We have discussed, in fact we have discussed repeatedly, the theoretical question of whether, in a time of upsurge of national sentiment, the Marxist-Leninists might launch all-black organization? If the situation was such that the national sentiments and the national distrust were so strong that your choice was to have unitary organization in name which included no blacks, or to actually, by compromising on this point, be able to mobilize and organize a section of the black workers, and through careful work and experience, win them over to proletarian internationalist stands, to the ideas of united organization and a united struggle -- the answer is maybe. A definite maybe. But in general our slant is against forming separate black organization and toward building unitary organization.

Unfortunately, the Party didn't exist in the 1960's and it is difficult to engage in historical hindsight on what we would have done back then. But it would seem, since the orientation of the Marxist-Leninists is toward unitary organization, we would strive with might and main to develop unitary organization. If this were not possible, if for instance during the wildcat movements in the late '60's it was not possible to develop unitary organization among the workers, the Party would then be faced with a tactical choice. We would have to decide if we should take a loss in influence at that time and to work for further development of the movement which would win a section of the workers over to unitary organization, or if we should take the step of developing some type of nationality organization with the aim of facilitating bringing the more conscious section of the workers to conclusions in favor of unitary organization.

This hypothetical example shows quite clearly

that what we are talking about is something along the lines of a compromise. And the complexity of the question largely centers around this. Whether such a compromise is a good compromise or a bad one hinges both on the conditions under which it is made and on the content of the program and work of such an organization.

If the formation of a black organization is a means by which you're able to draw workers, who might otherwise be abandoned, into struggle and toward the idea of united struggle and unitary organization, then it may be a positive step and a compromise worth taking. If it is a compromise which sets back the motion of the workers towards unitary struggle and organization, which in some way limits or hinders that motion, then it is a bad compromise.

With regard to the content, one essential issue is to orient the organization toward the general class struggle.

Another basic issue is that nationality organization cannot be substituted for the unitary organization of the class. It must exist side by side with unitary organization.

Still another basic issue is that it is obligatory for the Marxist-Leninists, under any conditions, to work for proletarian internationalism, and to find the ways and means of doing so. In fact to enter into such a compromise has to mean that you are creating a field in which you are going to carry out work for proletarian internationalism and not that such work is allowed to go by the boards because you've formed nationality organization.

These are some of the basic issues at stake.

When Nationality Organization Arises Independently of the Party

In fact, most nationality organizations arise independently of the influence of the Party. And this will tend to continue to be the case. Therefore our tactics in this situation become very important.

Our tactics in this work are closely linked to how we evaluate such organizations. The point which must be stressed here is the point of content. The Marxist-Leninists, if they have the ability to do so, will work in a wide variety of different organizations, but we distinguish among them. If our Party had 500,000 members, we might have work in the PTA's. But we also consider the difference between the PTAs and, for example, the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

In evaluating an organization we look, in the first place, at what social phenomenon it embodies. This was very clearly highlighted in the earlier speech at this Conference on the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. At a certain time in the 1960's you had the emergence of a black workers' movement which had important revolutionary features as well as certain backward features. The League was significant because it embodied a section of

this black workers' movement, even though it interlaced the black workers with petty bourgeois nationalists. This example shows something of the importance of judging the social phenomena that an organization represents.

The question of what program an organization carries out is also important. If the Party's influence is predominant in the formation of organization, there will be a close correlation between the social phenomenon it represents and its program. If you look, on the other hand, at the example of the League, you find that the League's program embodied both various of the demands of the black workers (not always expressed in the best way or in the best direction) and various demands of the black bourgeoisie.

You also have to look at the political trends which exist in an organization, and particularly those which dominate it. And you do have to look at the question of it being nationality organization.

Let us consider what tactics we might have followed towards the League. Here we have an organization of black workers which are headed in a revolutionary direction. At the same time it is dominated by petty bourgeois nationalists. Although the Party would not have agreed that the League should have excluded other nationalities and would have preferred that it was an organization of all militant workers, there is a good chance we would have decided to work in it. In such work we probably would not have begun by fighting on the national composition of the organization. Instead we would probably have stressed the question of politics, of leading the workers forward in the struggles they were waging and fighting for a revolutionary stand on the multitude of questions that confronted the League members daily. On this basis we would have developed the struggle against the reformism and petty bourgeois nationalism manifested among the leadership.

If comrades recall some of the particulars from the talk on the League, every day in the life of the League there were issues as to what direction the organization would take, what stand to take and so forth. And it is precisely these fronts which would have to be put in the fore in work inside the League and where an effective fight could take place with the inconsistency and reformism of the leadership of the League. One of these fronts was the question of the mobilization of the white workers into the League. But such a question should generally have been dealt with in close connection with the other questions of political direction of the League, in close connection with accomplishing the revolutionary objectives of the rank-and-file of the League. This would have been the way to develop the struggle for Marxism-Leninism among the League membership. Either one walks into a League meeting and says "What's wrong with you damn petty-bourgeois nationalists", or one fights on the question of how the League was going to organize and lead the struggles it was in, such as "Why in hell is the League tell-

ing the white workers to ignore the picket line and go in to work when you are trying to win a wildcat strike." A very concrete question.

It is generally the case in our work in mass organizations that we put the fight over the political issues of the day in the center. And it is probably true that most often in a progressive nationally-exclusive organization we would not necessarily put our disagreements with its composition in the fore. But this should not be taken as an absolute. There are indeed occasions where we may want to wage a sharp fight against an organization limiting its composition along national lines. This may come up, for example, when an organization is just being initiated. And in those instances there could very well be situations where it may even be relatively easy to win such a fight, such as when the idea for a nationally exclusive composition may be embraced less by determined choice than by a somewhat unthinking going along with the prevalent norms. Of course, in all circumstances our tactics would be determined by analysis of the particular conditions.

In Conclusion

To conclude, I would like to return to the beginning.

The first point is that Marxist-Leninism strongly stresses the unitary organization of the workers, and this is our basic orientation.

Second, Marxism-Leninism also teaches us to take into account the national sentiments of the workers of the oppressed nationalities; this does not mean to conciliate petty-bourgeois nationalism, but it is necessary to understand why such phenomena as national distrust arises, and to find concrete ways to overcome them.

It is in this context that the possibility of our acceding to the formation of nationality organization arises. It arises in a sense as a compromise. It should not be a substitute for unitary organization of the class, but a means under very particular circumstances for drawing the workers of an oppressed nationality into struggle, for creating conditions for them to take up the general orientation toward the class struggle and proletarian internationalism, and for bringing them to conclusions for a united struggle and also for unitary organization.

In most cases we will be dealing with nationality organizations which the Party has not launched and in which the Party does not have predominant influence. Nevertheless, it is necessary to work to implement the above orientation. One must find concrete ways of approaching activists, issues that are comprehensible to the activists, to show the need for an orientation towards the class struggle and for proletarian internationalism, and this generally involves putting the questions of overall politics to the fore.

These are the basic points which we wanted to stress on this front. <>