



REVOLUTION

Organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

25c

Vol. 3, No. 3

December 1977

Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade Founded!

On November 19 and 20 a new organization was born in the small university town of Champaign, Illinois—the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade. More than 600 young men and women plus several dozen observers registered and took part in the convention, despite the fact that it had to be postponed and moved several times after authorities had banned it from the Kent State campus and Ohio generally.

They came from the neighborhoods of more than fifteen cities and from almost 70 campuses from New England to Hawaii. Most had been members of the Revolutionary Student Brigade or of one of the local Youth In Action and other youth groups. Others had recently come forward and been working with these organizations in such battles as Kent State. For some, advance organizing for the convention itself had been their first contact. But over the weekend something new and greater than the sum of its parts was created—a national organization with its roots in the most important struggles of youth today, an organization whose communist character had been greatly deepened and consolidated in the course of the weekend.

The convention to form a communist youth organization began dramatically. The members of the Presidium which had overseen the building of the convention mounted the stage as a massive twenty by thirty foot banner descended majestically behind them. Above a bold graphic of hundreds of people in struggle, it proclaimed the theme of the convention, "The Fu-
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On the weekend of November 19, over 600 youths from around the country enthusiastically undertook the historic step of creating a national young communist organization.

5000 Battle SAVAK, Cops

Anger Explodes As Shah Visits Carter

On November 15th and 16th, 5000 Iranians, other foreign students and Americans demonstrated outside the White House to denounce the Shah of Iran and his latest visit to the U.S. In the largest and most violent demonstration in Washington, D.C. since the height of the Vietnam War, a mercenary group of pro-Shah demonstrators was routed, and fighting broke out on the White House lawn itself. Millions of TV viewers across the country and the world, including Iran, were treated to the sight of Jimmy Carter and the Shah standing side by side, weeping and rubbing their eyes as tear gas originally thrown by the police to try to stop the protestors came back across the White House lawn.

In San Francisco, 1500 people marched against the

Shah from the Federal Building to the Iranian Consulate.

These massive demonstrations turned the Shah's U.S. visit into just exactly the opposite of what he and the U.S. capitalist ruling class had wanted it to be. Carter and the Shah had planned their public meeting in order to increase the Shah's prestige in Iran and create public opinion in the U.S. favorable to the deals that these masters of these two countries are cooking up.

The Shah and the U.S. government had tried to obstruct the anti-Shah protests, and failing that, to stage a pro-Shah rally that would allow the bourgeoisie to hide the fact that the outcry against the Shah represented the feelings of the vast majority of people in Iran.

But by the time the two days of demonstrations were over, the words "Shah" and "dictator" were synonymous for an enormous number of Americans who had known practically nothing about Iran before.

Jimmy "human rights" Carter had been seen by millions shaking hands with the Shah while the words "Shah is a fascist butcher, down with the Shah" were heard in the background. All this helped to bring the ties between the U.S. ruling class and the Shah and the whole question of what the U.S. is doing in the world much more sharply before the American people.

In fact, underscoring the point that the Shah is the despised enemy of the Iranian people, on November 16, 4000 students went up against the cops and troops in Teheran, the capital of Iran, protesting the arrests of anti-Shah activists and supporting the demonstrations going on at that moment in Washington.

The Shah has come to Washington to visit every American president since 1953, when the CIA toppled an Iranian government that had nationalized the U.S. oil companies' holdings there. But this was clearly no routine trip. It was crucial both for the Shah (who faces growing opposition in Iran) and for the U.S. ruling class (for whom Iran's oil and strategic Middle East location on the Gulf is becoming more important than ever). This situation is the context for the political battle that took place around the Shah's visit.

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In the face of the Iranian Student Association and its supporters (above), the Shah's expensive "support demonstration" vanished in minutes.

Revolutionary Potential

Veterans a Key Force in Class War

On Federal Veterans Day, October 24, President Carter attended a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. Amid waving flags and military officials he said that the American people owed a "debt of gratitude" to the Vietnam era veterans because they served in an "unpopular war," and that Vietnam veterans "have not been appreciated enough."

To listen to Carter the main problem facing veterans is that the war in Vietnam was unpopular. This is simply turning the truth upside down and blaming the American people for problems the bourgeoisie creates.

Veterans are an important force in society—a fact recognized by the bourgeoisie as well. Especially the 8.1 million Vietnam era veterans. These vets, and many others, have experienced a part of the imperialist system that others have not—being dragged off to fight and die to protect the empire of the capitalists. The bulk of veterans are from the working class and return to the working class when they get home, and they play an important role—either positive or negative—in shaping the attitudes of the workers and masses generally around questions of war, foreign policy and even the overall nature of the society. The bourgeoisie seeks to organize veterans around the flag and into troops of reaction under the leadership of organizations like the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. But being forced to do the dirty work of the imperialists, as in Vietnam, coupled with being cast aside on return makes veterans more capable of being organized as an important force on the working class side of the struggle.

Decaying Conditions

Recent Labor Department statistics quote the unemployment rate for younger Vietnam era veterans (age 20-24) at nearly 18%. For Black veterans the figures near 40%. The overall rate is officially slightly over the national average of 7% but these figures are misleading because they do not take into account the thousands of veterans and other workers who are not included in the statistics because they no longer are eligible for unemployment compensation. Government job training programs for vets have been a sham—low paying, dead-end jobs—with a high turnover as companies fired the vet to hire another vet in order to continue receiving wage subsidies.

With the employment situation so bad it's no wonder that veterans apply for benefits in one form or another, whether on the GI Bill, home loans or disability payments. And here wide-ranging cuts have come down. In May of 1976, the Cold War GI Bill ended without extension—stranding over 400,000 veterans in schools with no more educational benefits. In January of 1977, the GI Bill was radically altered for new military recruits. Those wanting the GI Bill upon discharge will have to pay between \$50 and \$75 a month from their military salary towards future use of the Bill. The Veterans Administration (VA) is hoping that not many will apply.

Along with each attack a small increase has been made, bringing the monthly amount a veteran with a wife and two kids may receive to about \$420. (The average Vietnam era veteran is between 28-29 years of age and has a wife and two children.) The Vietnam era GI Bill has 33% of the buying power of the GI Bill after World War 2, which paid all tuition, books and supplies, and gave a monthly living allowance. The Vietnam era GI Bill only gives the flat monthly sum to cover all costs. The reason for the difference is to be found in the position of U.S. imperialism—after WW2 it was the world's number one imperialist power and had need for skilled and college trained technicians and was in a position to pay for them, today it is recoiling from its defeat in Vietnam and is sinking deeper into economic crisis.

Restrictions on the GI Bill have been increasing. Veterans must maintain a "C" average in their majors and meet strict attendance requirements or be counseled into other courses or be dropped from the Bill's coverage.

Disability pensions for veterans are systematically being reviewed and reduced. Many veterans inflicted with service-connected disabilities affecting their ability to work are being cut to nothing or to 10% disability rating that amounts to \$41 a month. Hospitals and healthcare are being cut too. Hospital staffs are reduced, endangering patients. In one notorious case in Chicago, a man was "lost" in an elevator for 26 hours and died several days later. There are even plans in Washington, D.C. to do away with veterans hospitals altogether.

And there is question of the nearly 600,000 veterans with less than honorable discharges, who receive nothing

in most cases, no VA benefits at all. Most of these bad discharges were the result of resisting the military or the war in some form or another.

"Healing the Wounds"

When bourgeois politicians speak about "healing the wounds" of the Vietnam War, they mean only ending the struggle and consciousness directed against their class stemming from the war. They mean for the masses of people to forget lessons that were learned about their imperialist system and reunite under their rule, so that they can "continue to function for the national interest," meaning their imperialist interests around the world and especially in preparing for another world war.



The VVAW contingent stole the show at the San Francisco Veterans Day Parade, to the delight of the spectators and the dismay of the brass and politicians at the reviewing stand.

VVAW Actions: To Hell With Your Nat'l Honor!

Veterans Day has always been a day for the U.S. ruling class to try to pump up national chauvinism and build public opinion for their policies of aggression and war. In most cities, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars or other traditional veterans groups, who function as faithful mouthpieces for the rich, went out on Main Street. Even the fact that these reactionary hack leaders claim to speak for all vets creates an angry response from veterans.

But this year these organizations did not have the whole show to themselves. The Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) in eight major cities used Veterans Day as an opportunity to fly directly in the face of the reactionaries. The high degree of support these demonstrations received from people who saw them brought out clearly the powerful force organized veterans can be in combatting the bourgeoisie, especially their chauvinist war propaganda.

VVAW organized demonstrations under the slogan, "To Hell With Your National Honor, We Won't Be Used Again." This slogan goes directly up against the efforts of the capitalists to use veterans to support imperialist

In May 1975, Schlesinger, then Defense Secretary, reviewing U.S. world military posture *vis-a-vis* the Soviet Union, gave as his main concern not Soviet converted forces strength or equal nuclear power but the willingness of the American people to "rouse themselves for a national effort" to stop the Soviet Union and not "allow the international situation to deteriorate" further.

The U.S. ruling class needs to put the Vietnam war behind them because many political lessons about the nature of the imperialist system and of the class struggle can be summed up from the perceptual experiences of that period: the "credibility gap"; the daily revelations of governmental lies and tricks; the gestapo fashion in which this anti-people's war was fought by the U.S. side; the body counts; the burning down of villages; the relocating of whole districts into "strategic hamlets"; the destruction of food producing capacity in the defoliation operations; the atrocities, bombings and hundreds of thousands of casualties caused by the imperialists.

And then there were the confrontations and divisions that it brought to the "homefront"—the shooting down of students at Kent State and Jackson State, the police attacks at every major demonstration, and the millions that this war brought into the streets in political struggle.

And we cannot forget the break in "discipline" that the war brought into the military machine itself—troops refusing to go on patrol, the "fragging" of officers, the sabotage on U.S. warships (the aircraft carrier *USS Con-*

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war preparations and reaction right down the line. VVAW raised the need for jobs and decent benefits, but the main thrust of their agitation was directed against the principal way Veterans Day was being used. VVAW stressed their slogan, "Fight the Rich, Not Their Wars," and countered the Legion's position of "Keep Our Canal in Panama" with the line "U.S. Out of Panama." In some cities VVAW was particularly successful in raising the whole question of the third world war in the making between the U.S. and the social-imperialist USSR.

The biggest action was the one in San Francisco, an account of which is reprinted below, courtesy of the *Veteran*, newspaper of VVAW. Some of the other highlights included:

—A 68 year old widow who threw her husband's honorable World War 2 discharge papers into a reflecting pool as part of the Milwaukee VVAW chapters action during an American Legion ceremony.

—In New York, VVAW united with 50 veterans staging a demonstration spontaneously at the Veterans Administration to rename the building the "Tomb of the Unknown Veteran."

—In Chicago vets came from far ends of the city, dressed in military uniforms, when they heard on the radio that VVAW was planning to burn discharge papers in Chicago's "Eternal Flame," and challenge the American Legion ceremony.

From the *Veteran*:

Just the other day we talked to a couple of Vietnam combat vets. They were mad because we'd all been through Hell over there for the rich man, and now we were getting screwed by the rich man's system. Now, we were about to pass in front of the Reviewing Stand of the Veterans Day Parade. We were organized and disciplined, and angry at the way they try to use vets on Veterans Day to glorify war. We carried our banner proclaiming: "To Hell With Their National Honor—We Won't Be Used Again!"

Suddenly the crowd burst into applause, then into cheering! A group of kids raised their fists, chanting: "Hell No, We Won't Go!" A photographer ran to tell

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Miners Struggle At a Crossroads

Struggle has raged sharply in the coalfields, particularly in Appalachia, for ten years. The stakes have risen steadily as the company owners and the coal miners have fought toe-to-toe. The capitalists are desperately hunting ways to crush the miners wildcat strike movement. To them, it is the major obstacle in their coalfield push for higher profits. And the miners, who have held their own for years, persisting in their strike movement to beat back company attacks, are looking for ways to strengthen their struggle and are searching for new understanding to counter these constant attacks. This war between the coal owners and miners is now focusing around the contract which expires December 6.

This struggle has great importance outside the coalfields. Many workers have watched the miners' strikes carefully. The upsurge gives inspiration and hope to many. And it has taught important lessons on how to fight, on who are our friends and who are our enemies.

The active forces of the working class have built new organizations to carry forward this fight. With the formation of organizations like the Miners' Right To Strike Committee (MRTSC) and the National United Workers Organization (NUWO), our class can more consciously set about rallying its forces, spreading the news and fanning the sparks of struggle. The NUWO has taken up a campaign of class-wide support for the miners in their contract battle.

The capitalists, out to survive a major crisis, need to wring even more wealth out of the working class, and they desperately need a stable and loyal workforce. They can't afford to have their "Energy Program" disrupted in a key industry. But there is more than just dollars and cents involved. The miners' struggle is a political danger to the capitalists. Their "domino theory" has truth to it. They can't allow thousands of workers to fight back, breaking loose from the chains of the union misleaders. The capitalists hate to see their courts defied, or workers freed from jail by massive strikes.

Not only is the struggle a terrible obstacle in their coalfield plans, it is echoing throughout the working class, and threatening to spark new struggles elsewhere. So crushing the miners is high on the agenda of the whole capitalists class. And likewise it is important for all workers to defend this movement, to learn from it, to help it develop and advance as part of developing and advancing the class struggle overall. The miners are on the front lines at this point, exchanging some of the heaviest fire back and forth with the capitalists. But it is the same battle against the same class enemy confronted by every worker in every industry. The working class cannot allow this battle being waged by the miners to be isolated or crushed.

The Upsurge and Its Background

Many people ask, "How did the upsurge break out? Where did it come from?" and "What are the lessons that that can be learned and applied by workers elsewhere?"

First off, the miners' strike movement did not develop because of some mysterious quality possessed only by coal miners. Bourgeois romantics try hard to picture miners as a "breed apart." But in fact, the struggle grew out of the oppression which coal miners share in common with all workers under the thumb of the rich. The working class is driven down, ripped off and sold out. And it is inevitable that people will not put up with this without fighting back. The miners' wildcats broke out with fury in the late sixties.

However, it is true that the struggle in the mines has been particularly fierce and has grown over the past ten years—now meeting setbacks, now surging forward again. The reasons for this lie in some of the particulars of the coal fields.

The class nature of American society has always stood particularly exposed in the coal camps. Coal is not mined in cities, in centers of commerce and population. Taking advantage of this, the capitalists built the coal camps, consciously to be able to squeeze every drop of labor and profit out of the workers they ruled. Everywhere in the U.S., capitalists are the rulers of society, but in the mountain coal camps—they just never bothered much to hide that fact. In the coal camps, just like the famous song "Which Side Are You On?" lays it out, you are either a company man or a union man.

And the masses of workers remember well the times when the mine owner was not just employer, but also the loan shark, the gouging merchant and the landlord. He didn't just own the mines, but also the cops and the gun thugs. The companies ran the political parties openly; they picked the preachers and the teachers.

Through struggle these coal camps have changed some in the last decades—but it is still obvious to many workers that the nature of the coal companies has not changed.

Joe Brennan, the head of the Bituminous Coal Operator's Association (BCOA) and Arnold Miller, president of the United Mine Workers (UMWA), have announced a "New Era," a time to "forget the hostilities of the past."

But the memories and lessons are very much alive and rekindled daily. Unionization in the coalfields was a particularly bitter and bloody struggle. For more than a century, rank and file miners organized in secret and rose up, over and over again. The unions were formed, smashed and then reestablished repeatedly.

These experiences have not been dulled by diffusion. Because there is hardly any other industry around, each generation of workers follows their fathers into the mines.

No New Era

There is no "New Era." And a great lesson lives on among miners: if workers don't stick together life is a living hell. In the unsafe conditions underground, the strength of the men literally can mean the difference between life and death. "If we ever let our strength slip away, they'll drive us back down to the way it was."

In the coalfields, the fifties were not a decade of relative prosperity and occasional boom. The fifties were a time of extreme hardship and economic slump as coal lost huge markets to oil and natural gas. In this situation, with miners laid off and strikes to stop production not so powerful again, the miners' struggle

went into a deep lull as the tight dictatorship within the UMWA quelled rank and file resistance to the attacks.

The union leadership joined with the larger capitalist owners in wiping out the smaller coal companies and firmly establishing monopoly control over coal production and distribution. Grinding attacks of mechanization and layoffs hit the mines. From 1950 to 1960 approximately 300,000 miners (more than 2/3 of the workforce!) were driven out of the mines and into northern cities. This included a great number of the Black miners.

The outrages mounted. Pensioners lived at starvation levels on checks that had barely risen in twenty years. Widows and the disabled miners were thrown away like garbage, often with no benefits at all. Mechanized mining led to increased Black Lung and injuries as the push for production ground on.

The '60s were a time of turmoil throughout the imperialist system. It was the time of the Vietnam war, the rising Black Liberation struggle, and the mounting attacks on the people. Struggle was breaking out in many places, on campuses, in the ghettos and in the factories. It was a time when the rulers of this country were more exposed than they had been in decades.

In the newly mechanized coalfields, the new cheap cost of producing coal relative to other sources of energy caused the industry to pick up. Demand and production and investment increased; but there was no trickle-down effect for miners. In fact things kept getting worse. But the rise brought thousands of new miners into the pits. Many were Vietnam vets who, having seen another ugly side of capitalism's face, brought their broader experience and anger with them.

With coal again in demand, the feeling grew that miners, again, had real power in stopping production. Anger fused with the powerful solidarity among miners: it broke through many of the chains held by the hacks. It gave birth to revolt.

The Movement Grew Spontaneously

This movement was spontaneous. Miners united and fought because they were being attacked and betrayed. But the movement was born with deep-seated illusions. Even with their obvious hatred for the coal company owners, workers are just starting to understand what they are up against. And there is another

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Miners Committee Responds To Redbaiting Attacks

Toward the end of November, as the December 6 United Mineworkers (UMWA) contract deadline was approaching, the capitalists were continuing their attempts to weaken the miners' struggle.

Talk has been circulated by some coal executives, floating various promises of sweet sounding economic packages in exchange for miners surrendering job rights on a large scale and giving up the right to strike demand. In addition there have been threats attributed in the press to Barbara Maldaur, a spokesman for the Health and Retirement Fund, that if the miners do strike, all funds for medical benefits will be gone by the first week and benefits for pensioners by the third week, until the end of the strike.

To go along with these attempts to weaken the miners, and especially to hit at the rank and file organization which is crucial to carrying out a real contract battle, the West Virginia press unleashed an orgy of red-baiting. Beginning with an article in a Huntington West Virginia paper, which quickly spread to papers all over the area, the Miners Right to Strike Committee was labelled as being communist and, specifically, "revelations" were printed tying it to the Revolutionary Communist Party.

On November 21, the Committee released the following statement to the press:

"This is in response to a recent chain of stupid and irresponsible bull which has been given great play in the press. First we would like to make very clear that the Miners Right to Strike Committee is not a communist organization. The Committee is open to all rank and file miners who unite with the purpose of the Committee, that is it is open to all rank and file miners who want to build a fighting organization in the interest of workers and against the companies.

"But this has been made clear before and all the hysterical charges have been made clear before: Why all the fuss in the press now? Because the coal companies who are backed up by the so-called free press are desperate to cram a rotten contract down the throats of the miners. They are doing everything they can to railroad us and tie us down and are trying to

knock any obstacle out of the way. The rank and file is getting organized and the Miners Right to Strike Committee in particular is just that kind of obstacle and to get it out of the way they bought and paid for news media is bringing out the old red scare, to stop miners from uniting to fight.

But what about this red scare, this menace, that some penny ante reporter uncovered? The fact that there are communists on the Right to Strike Committee has been widely known among the rank and file for years. That doesn't make the Committee communist and it doesn't make all of its members communist. Like we said, some members are communists. This is no sinister secret. It is common knowledge. If some chump from Huntington gets so damn excited at uncovering communists in the Miners Right to Strike Committee we'd hate to see how hysterical he gets upon discovering his own nose.

"The companies, their press, and Arnold Miller try to make it look like the MRTSC is to blame for all the trouble in the coalfields. That's like being robbed and then being arrested by the thief. The companies are responsible for our troubles. The companies are the ones who cut the black lung benefits to near zero. The companies are the ones who cut our medical benefits. The companies are the ones who tried to tie the hands of the rank and file with court injunctions and outrageous fines. It was the companies who violated our job rights, safety rights, seniority rights. And it is the companies along with the help of Arnold Miller and other big shots at the top of our union that would tie us down with the arbitration review board decision 108, which would gag us and try to stop any continuing organization on the part of the rank and file.

"It's the companies drive for more and more profit behind all of these things. And that goes on all the time, communists or no communists, Right to Strike Committee or no Right to Strike Committee, and the rank and file has got to fight these attacks. The big red scare cannot stop us. Now is the time to overcome these stupid divisions that the companies try to break us with and unite to fight for no sellout in 1977."

(Signed) Miners Right to Strike Committee

"Bloody Ludlow"

Miner Cuts Song Of Workers' Struggle

One Spark Music has published a Country and Western (C&W) single and it is excellent, in every way that counts! The song is "Bloody Ludlow," written and sung by O. V. Hirsch, a West Virginia coal miner.

All we've got to say is, "Merle Haggard, eat your heart out!"

Merle Haggard is best known to our readers for his reactionary songs, "Walking on the Fighting Side of Me" and "Okie from Muskogee." But before he cut these records (during the high tide of the 1960s antiwar movement) and since then, he has been known by C&W fans for some fairly progressive songs like "Mama's Hungry Eyes," "Irma Jackson" and many more. Most recently he treated us to a little "slice of life" song called "A Working Man Can't Get Nowhere Today."

Like Merle Haggard, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton and Johnny Cash owe their popularity not only to their great voices, but to the content of some of their songs, like "Coal Miner's Daughter," "Coat of Many Colors," "Folsom Prison Blues," and "Oney," all songs about working and poor people, proud of what they are, not ashamed. In fact, there has never been a great C&W singer who hasn't done at least one song like this, except maybe Hank Williams.

But O. V. Hirsch, with "Bloody Ludlow," shows them all up. The reason is simple. The song is about workers fighting back and winning. It stands with the working class 100% and doesn't shilly-shally around.

There have been over 10 mine wars in the last 100 years history of this country, and one of the fiercest of them all was at Ludlow, Colorado on April 20, 1914, Easter Sunday. On that day a tent colony of evicted striking miners, members of the United Mine Workers of America, and their wives and their children, were murdered, massacred, at the hands of J. D. Rockefeller the First's gun thugs and his state militia. A monument erected by the Ludlow miners is still maintained today. Carved in stone are the figures of a miner and his wife and at their feet lies their slain child. The inscription reads, "Erected by the United Mine Workers of America, to the memory of the men, women and little children who died in freedom's cause, April 20, 1914."

The song is a ballad, a tribute to these working class heroes. But it is more than a simple slice of life. There is no self-pity in the song, and no begging the master for better treatment. The song says that the workers, the survivors of the massacre, were undaunted. It says that they got themselves guns and fought back. It says that J. D. Rockefeller was a coward, a rich bastard, with fancy clothes and fair hands and that his wealth and power were based on the exploitation of the miners. It says he not only owned the mines and land, but ran the government of Colorado as well. And it says that no matter what he threw at the miners, theirs was the final victory. Over 60 years later, there is a song that says, "We'll remember Bloody Ludlow as a miners' victory 'cause they fought back."

O. V. Hirsch sings his song with all the feeling, the anger, determination and working class optimism that the subject deserves. His distinct style is like nothing else in C&W music, yet it is firmly based on this form that was developed, as he says, "by working people just plunkin' around." The music was developed to communicate the meaning of the song, and likewise with his style of singing. And the synthesis is a simple and straightforward and yet very profound, meaningful style.

Furthermore, this song should prove once and for all that the music the masses themselves create like C&W, soul, rock 'n' roll, etc., can be infused with revolutionary content. Specifically, there is nothing inherently reactionary in C&W music, as a number of so-called experts, like the *Guardian's* Irwin Silber, have maintained in the past.

There have been many great songs come down the pike from the struggles of the working class and oppressed people in this country. "Bloody Ludlow" is right

up there with the best of them, like "Joe Hill." It builds on that fine tradition, but is at the same time completely new.

It is an example of working class culture that stands as an exposure of the insipid character of even the best of current music on the airwaves, Merle and company included. It is a song that is an inspiration to fight against oppression.

Part of the Battle

As such, it couldn't have been released at a better time! Following closely on the heels of the 10-11 week strike by 80,000 coal miners last summer against cutbacks in medical benefits, negotiations are on between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Associa-



"And we'll remember Bloody Ludlow
As a miners' victory,
'Cause they fought back!"

The Traitor Sadat Crawls To Israel

In the *Inferno*, the famous Italian poet Dante reserves the lowest circles of hell for traitors. With his recent trip to Israel, Egyptian President Mohammed Anwar el-Sadat has confirmed his reservation.

The visit itself was a betrayal of the people and the nations of the Middle East and first and foremost of the Palestinian people, whose rights and just struggle Sadat had repeatedly pledged himself to uphold. In fact, at the very time Sadat was angling for his invitation in an interview with Walter Cronkite, the bodies of over 100 men, women and children were being dug out of the rubble of villages and Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon which had been subjected to bomb and rocket attacks by Israeli planes.

Sadat's deeds were matched only by his shameful words. He said to the rulers of the Zionist settler state which is built on land stolen by force of arms from the Palestinian people, "We really and truly welcome you to live among us in peace and security." He called for justice for the Palestinian people, a goal which can be accomplished only by the creation of a single, secular (non-religious) state in Palestine controlled by the masses, of all faiths. Not only did Sadat ignore this goal, he also failed to mention the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the recognized representatives of the Palestinian people and a force bitterly hated by the Zionists.

Sadat's move was in large part a grandstand play designed to strengthen his own role in future Mideast negotiations. The widespread antagonism it has aroused not only among the masses but the rulers of other Arab nations suggests that it may well turn out to be a nail in his coffin. It was also aimed for home con-

tion, with the contract expiring December 6, and a show-down brewing. (See *Revolution*, November 1977 and this issue, p. 3)

During the last contract, Loretta Lynn, much loved by miners for her song "Coal Miner's Daughter," put out a reactionary anti-coal miner song, "They Don't Make Men Like My Daddy Anymore." The message was that in the old days the men worked hard and were happy being poor and now they want too much. This was a direct attack on the struggle, and enraged coal miners. The West Virginia bourgeoisie is already all over the TV trying to create public opinion against the coal miners and even played a jingle, "Keep West Virginia Working" at a University of West Virginia football game recently. The more this record gets out to the people in all possible ways, the less the powers that be are going to like it for it stands in opposition to this message directly, and creates public opinion in favor of the miners.

Singers, artists, and others in cultural circles in the country have contributed in one way or another to the production and distribution of the record. In different cities, plans are underway to get the record into record stores, on the radio stations, and so on.

Local chapters of the National United Workers Organization will be selling the record in the shops as part of their work to build solidarity with the miners, one of their national campaigns. The record is also a fund raiser for the Miners' Right to Strike Committee, as O. V. Hirsch has donated his share of the proceeds of the sales on the record nationwide to them. The rest goes to One Spark Music and the distributors, which support groups like this in putting out working class music like this in the future.

Getting this record out broadly is not going to be easy. But increasingly there are people determined to fight the bourgeoisie on this front, the cultural front, too. This record, as a salvo on this front, shows the tremendous potential of the working class to revolutionize all of society, including its superstructure. ■

BLOODY LUDLOW, a 7" 33 1/3 rpm record by O. V. Hirsch, a coal miner.

Flip Side: "Blood on the Tracks" by the Chi-Town Fightin' Machine

Now available from
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P.O. Box 41722S
Chicago, IL 60641

\$2.00 post paid
\$2.50 overseas

Editorial

sumption. Egypt is in economic chaos with the masses desperately poor and increasingly discontented. Sadat hopes that his "world statesman" image and a false "peace" with perhaps a few small concessions the Israelis may toss him for his huge one will help him keep the lid on at home.

One other reason for this step was service to U.S. imperialism, which has a huge stake in the continuation of Mideast peace talks (aimed at a settlement burying Palestine once and for all) as the best way to preserve Israel as its staunchest outpost while extending its influence and control over the Arab countries. Sadat showed his stand when Cronkite asked him how he could get an invitation from Israeli Premier Begin and Sadat answered, "Why not through our mutual friend, the Americans?" Jimmy Carter added an interesting footnote during the Shah's visit when he mentioned that Sadat calls him on the phone almost daily!

Both Sadat and Begin pushed for the convening of a Geneva conference on the Mideast, a conference in which Palestinian interests will be given short shrift as they have already been largely bartered away in the preliminary wheeling and dealing. The rulers of the Soviet Union, who have been trying to score some cheap points in the Arab world by trashing Sadat's visit, have been very careful not to say anything to jeopardize Geneva. They just as much as the U.S. want such a conference where the superpowers can throw their weight around in efforts to strengthen their control over the nations of the area.

But a superpower-dominated Geneva conference, like Sadat's treacherous capitulation in Israel, will not and cannot bring peace to the Middle East. The masses of people there are determined to struggle not only until the land stolen by Israel in the 1967 war is returned but until the Palestinian people win their fight to regain their homeland, and until revolutionary victory over all forces of reaction. ■

Revolution

Revolution is the organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA (RCP, USA). It is published monthly. All correspondence to the Party should be sent to RCP, USA, PO Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654.



This New York City demonstration, like others which took place in Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago and Birmingham at the end of October and in early November, hit the government's offensive around unemployment and built for the "State of the Union" demonstration this winter.

Jobs Campaign Moves Forward

NUWO Leaders Meet To Plan Strategy

At its founding convention, the National United Workers Organization (NUWO) voted to take up, as its first major campaign, the fight initiated by the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee (UWOC) to expose and beat back the present offensive the bourgeoisie is mounting on unemployment insurance and around unemployment in general. As part of this fight, the NUWO and UWOC held regional building demonstrations on October 29 in Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago and New York to get the word out about this attack and build for a national demonstration in Washington, D.C. at the time of Carter's State of the Union address. In November, at the first meeting of the National Steering Committee (NSC) of the NUWO since the organization's formation, the question of how to further build this campaign was one of the main topics of discussion.

The NSC united that, faced with a major crisis, the capitalists and their government with Carter as President are developing policies in regard to unemployment that are an attempt to divide the working class, employed from unemployed, in order to lower wages and break unions and worsen working conditions and the standard of living in general.

Exposing Carter

The NSC summed up that at this point most workers do not yet perceive that a general attack is being launched on them by the capitalists. For example many people think that Carter stinks, but often they feel that he is simply inept or too new at the office and that he hasn't done enough or had the time to. In this situation the NSC set out as one of the tasks of the campaign the broad exposure of Carter's policies, his offensive on unemployment. They agreed that it is not that Carter has done too little or that he is inept or new in office, but that he is, behind this cover, acting swiftly and purposefully to implement policies in the interests of the capitalists in order to drive down wages and thereby to increase their profits at the expense of the working class. Through the campaign the general nature of this offensive must be brought out.

The Steering Committee discussed the need to build a center of opposition to the general attack coming down, and emphasized the need to focus this on Carter's particular policies at this time: 1) cuts in unemployment benefits and 2) workfare plans for welfare recipients and the unemployed.

Carter, since coming into office, has already cut unemployment benefits by 26 weeks to the present maximum of 39 weeks (although in most states the most that can presently be drawn is 26 weeks). Although there are no specific plans to cut benefits further, Secretary of Labor Marshall has been campaigning for only 16 weeks of unemployment benefits. Also most states are moving to further restrict and attack unemployment compensation. The policies Carter is implementing represent a systematic attempt by the bourgeoisie to dismantle the unemployment insurance system. The demand "Stop All Attacks on the Unemployment Insurance System" hits at this aspect of their attack.

Carter's "welfare reform" bill hasn't been passed yet, and even if it is passed won't be implemented until 1981. But in essence this is the same policy which Carter and Congress wrote into law last March as part of the bill cutting unemployment benefits. This provision forces the unemployed to accept any job offered them that pays more than what they are making on unemployment or lose their benefits. The heart of these "re-

forms" is to make welfare recipients and the unemployed work for their checks at minimum wages. This policy will give employers in both the public and private sectors the option of replacing union workers earning union wages with nonunion unemployed and welfare recipients forced to work at nonunion wages.

The second demand of the campaign puts forward the demand of the masses for jobs, but exposes the way the bourgeoisie is trying to twist this in their favor, "We Demand Jobs—Union Jobs at Union Wages."

Gearing Up for D.C. Demo

In relation to this campaign, the second major point discussed by the Steering Committee was around gearing up for the Washington, D.C. demonstration on January 21. As the discussion brought out, the campaign against Carter's offensive needs to be a protracted struggle, but within this struggle there are particular focal points, and in January, Carter's State of the Union address is a sharp focus.

The whole purpose of the State of the Union message will be for Carter to sum up his first year in office and to map out his programs for the coming year. He will be laying out what has been achieved and what hasn't, trying to mask his attacks on the masses of people behind the image that he is a friend of working people. Also at this time, George Meany and his like will be playing the role of loyal opposition, and while claiming to speak for workers, criticize Carter for "not doing enough" and urging him to do more, despite the fact the AFL-CIO refused, for example, to oppose Carter's unemployment bill last March. As the discussion brought out, a national demonstration around this

New Humphrey-Hawkins Bill Worse Than Nothing

Mid-November saw a compromise between the House, Senate and the Carter administration on the Humphrey-Hawkins "Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act." This compromise probably clears the way for the bill's passage next year, although there is still opposition from some sections of the bourgeoisie.

The bill has been changed since it was first proposed last year, when its contents were made a plank of the Democratic Party election year platform. Specific provisions for jobs, including one explicitly making the federal government an "employer of last resort" at "the prevailing wage," have been cut entirely. What remains of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill is a bag of

speech presents a big opportunity to expose what Carter's actual program has been, rip the cover off the AFL-CIO leadership's phony "opposition," while mobilizing real opposition to his plans.

Two-Headed Monster

The NSC united around the position that the campaign must be directed against the "two-headed monster"—the capitalist class represented by Carter and the top union officials who handcuff the struggle of the rank and file. With respect to the AFL-CIO Executive Board, the campaign and demonstration should bring out how they objectively side with the capitalists in their attack and help cover for them. (See article on the Humphrey-Hawkins bill on this page.) A general resolution to be taken up and discussed in union meetings was adopted containing three general points: 1) that the local go on record against Carter's offensive; 2) that the local vote to support and build for the January 21 demonstration; and 3) that the local take a stand against and fight the AFL-CIO hierarchy on this question.

The entire NSC united in emphasizing the importance of making the unions an important arena of struggle in this campaign. But within this it stressed that its goal in taking the struggle into the unions should not just be to get a resolution passed at a local meeting (although this is important). The goal of getting the resolution passed is not to have the local go on "record," but to use this resolution to mainly further mobilize the rank and file and to generate more interest and activity around the campaign.

To highlight the importance of this demonstration and campaign, the NSC decided to put out a national poster and button with Washington, D.C. as the focus. It also decided that every chapter of the NUWO should take up this campaign as an important battle in the coming period.

CP(ML) Activity

At the present time with people's perception of Carter as a "do nothing" growing as his popularity sinks, this campaign by the UWOC and NUWO can be an important step in exposing what Carter's specific policies have been and helping workers make breakthroughs in their understanding of the class interests that Carter serves.

In contrast, the campaign by the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) (CP[ML]) and the National Fight Back Organization, which is planning a march in Washington in February for "Jobs or Income" will serve the capitalists by further covering over what their specific policies for unemployment are. The demand of the masses for jobs should and must be taken up and built as well as the demand for income for all periods of unemployment. But *just* to raise the demand "Jobs or Income" in the present situation while failing to draw the line on what the capitalists are trying to do around unemployment can only lead people unarmed into their ambush.

The bourgeoisie is trying to twist the demand of the masses for jobs into its opposite, into an attack on the masses. Carter *says* he is for jobs, even calling his welfare reform bill "Better Jobs and Income," exactly so he can promote his forced slave labor programs. This is why the present focus of the struggle around unemployment must be "Stop the Attacks on Unemployment Insurance!" and "We Demand Jobs—Union Jobs at Union Wages!" ■

promises: for "full employment," "balanced growth," "price stability," etc., etc. It's a wonderful lot of smoke but no fire—there is not a single job created or a dollar to be spent in the whole damn thing.

In fact, the chopped and channeled Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act is nothing more than a retreat of the 1946 Federal Full Employment Act, with one major difference. In 1946 full employment was defined, logically enough, as 0% unemployment. In 1977 full employment is defined as 4% unemployment. This, in a way, sums up the bourgeoisie's progress in their bombastically declared war on unemployment.

What, exactly, is the current incarnation of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill and why are the labor statesmen from George Meany on down whooping it up over it?

Big Changes in Bill

Unlike the earlier version (see *Revolution*, July 15, 1976) this model does not contain the controversial guarantee that every American has a right to a job. Even though such a right would be totally ridiculous—capitalism not only can't provide full employment but full employment isn't even good for capitalism—the politicians felt that, in the final analysis, such a promise might end up being inflammatory. Lawmakers feared the prospect of tens of thousands of unemployed workers taking action to demand their legally recognized "right."

Unlike the earlier version, the current bill drops the pretense of government planning in the economic life

Continued on page 15

Old Age Under Capitalism

Crisis Endangers Social Security

For millions of Americans retirement after years of labor means impoverishment. Millions more live with the fear that serious illness will strip them of what little savings or the home they have scrimped to accumulate over the years. Stories of elderly men and women freezing in their homes because they cannot afford utility bills, or shoplifting margarine and bread for survival dramatize the situation of a large number of the 33 million retired people in the U.S. today.

American workers are supposedly insured against the day when they no longer earn a wage. Social Security is supposed to provide income for retirement. It was won in 1935 through the mass struggles of the working class. But while it was a real concession to the demands raised by workers in the midst of the depression, Social Security has never been anywhere near adequate. Now people are being told that the whole Social Security program is faced with bankruptcy. In a few years, say officials, it will not even be able to meet the meager payments which retired workers are supposed to get.

Social Security in Trouble

In 1976 Social Security taxes totaled more than \$70 billion, but this amount fell over \$4 billion short of the amount paid out in benefits. The deficit was made up by dipping into the \$30 billion surplus that had accumulated in past years. Everyone is saying that at this rate, unless something is done, the surplus will be exhausted by the early 1980s, payments will continue to be greater than income and there won't be any benefits for workers who have paid in during their working lives.

The common understanding, fostered by the bourgeoisie, is that workers invest in their social security pensions during their working lives. In fact, it does not work this way. The way the Social Security program was set up, those now working support the retired through the deductions from their paychecks. As a result, the bankruptcy of the Social Security system is a reflection of the economic stagnation and crisis of U.S. capitalism.

In the last 10 years the number of people reaching retirement age has increased at almost twice the rate as the size of the workforce. This stagnation of employment is a clear example of the moribund nature of the imperialist system, the fact that overall it holds back and distorts the development of the productive forces in opposition to the needs of society. The millions of people unemployed, the youth unable to enter the workforce because there are no jobs to be found, mean that the number of incomes subject to Social Security tax is not increasing at a rate adequate to meet the number of people eligible to receive income from Social Security. Not only does this system of financing Social Security endanger benefits, it is set up in a way to pit the employed against the elderly.

Carter and Congress have numerous schemes cooked up to put money into Social Security and avoid its immediate bankruptcy. They can be summed up quite simply: people will have to pay more Social Security tax—that is accept a cut in living standards. At present employees are taxed 5.85% on all wages and salaries up to \$16,500. In addition, employers pay a payroll tax of 5.85% on these same incomes. From the beginning Social Security has been a regressive tax which hits the poor and workers the hardest. There has always been a ceiling on the taxable income. This means that a worker earning \$7000 a year pays 5.85% of his income to Social Security while a fat cat bringing in \$70,000 pays about 1%. Someone receiving \$100,000 or even \$1 million a year pays almost the same dollar amount to Social Security tax as a working class couple whose combined income might total \$16,500 per year. While the current proposals on Social Security call for raising the ceiling, this patch up attempt on a very rotten setup will only have the effect of increasing the tax burden on workers and sections of the petty-bourgeoisie.

This arrangement is said to be a 50/50 sharing of the costs of Social Security between employees and employers. In fact, it is the labor of the working class which creates all the surplus value out of which comes wages workers are paid and all the money that is put into social programs like Social Security. For the capitalists it is a simple equation. The less they have to pay in wages and outlays for these social programs, like Social Security, the greater amount of surplus value that can be converted into profits. It is in the direct interest of the capitalists, particularly in time of economic crisis, to squeeze pensions, Social Security benefits, unemployment insurance and other social programs fought for by the working class, as low as possible.

This is one of the reasons, for example, why they

have suddenly become so solicitous of the right of people to continue working after age 65. The longer people work, the less that will have to be paid out in Social Security and other pension benefits. They try to dress this up by lamenting the fact that people are forced to retire into enforced idleness while they still have many productive years left. They have floated "trial balloons" about raising the eligibility age for Social Security to 68 for men.

At Congressional hearings around the ending of mandatory retirement age they have trotted out the likes of John Wayne to say that he is over sixty-five, but can and wants to continue working. Of course it is ridiculous to say that a man or woman's ability to contribute productively to society ends at 65. And under socialism it is entirely possible for the elderly to play an important role in society. But under capitalism, when a worker's productive powers weaken, he or she is thrown out on the slag heap like a piece of old machinery, and replaced with younger, stronger hands. If workers would just die at 65, or even 45, that would be just fine with the capitalists, provided they had new sources of labor to replenish worn-out and slower workers with. Work them to death is the motto in practice of the capitalist class. Even today, while the organization and struggle of the working class has forced some improvements in working conditions, the average number of years a steel worker, for example, lives after the retirement age of 65 is less than five.

Under the conditions of capitalist production, workers look forward to being freed from the necessity of going back into the plant or crawling down the mine shaft every day. People certainly miss participating in productive labor and the friendship and comradeship of fellow workers, but not the life-stealing compulsion to work faster, the harassment of bosses, being exploited to make some parasite rich. But few workers are ever freed from that necessity. They are forced to retire and live at a greatly reduced standard of living. With this the case, many would, if they could, continue working past 65. There should be no mandatory retirement age, but there should be no need for workers to work past 60 or 65 in order to live a decent and comfortable life if and when they retire. When the capitalists talk of allowing the elderly the "freedom" to work past 65, they are talking about the typical capitalist freedom to work for them or starve. As the *Programme* of the RCP

states, the proletariat supports an end to forced retirement, but with plans and benefits making possible earlier retirement at livable income.

Disgustingly Low Benefits

Social Security benefits in 1976 averaged \$218 per month or \$2616 per year. In that same year the official government poverty line for a single person was \$2500 per year. But fully a third of those receiving Social Security benefits actually got only \$1600 and more than half received less than the \$2616 average. What this adds up to is starkly clear: unless a retired worker has another source of income he or she faces misery and poverty.

The capitalists and their spokesmen in government argue that Social Security was only meant to supplement other retirement income from investments, properties and other pensions. It is a ridiculous hoax. Few but the wealthy can afford to save or invest during their working years. And the fact is that only one-sixth of individuals and only one-third of married couples have retirement income from any other source than Social Security. According to government statistics, one out of every six older people is officially classified as poor. Among elderly Blacks, 36% are below the poverty line.

The same dismal picture emerges from a look at the setup of Medicare which was added to Social Security in 1965. This is supposed to cushion the retired from crushing medical costs. But even with Medicare a prolonged illness can wipe out the income of the elderly, unless they are covered under some other health insurance plan in addition to Medicare. Most are not. The portion of hospital expenses that must be paid by the elderly themselves under Medicare has increased 53% over the increases in Social Security benefits out of which they have to pay these costs.

When retired workers do take full- or part-time jobs to make ends meet, they are hit again. For every \$2 they earn over \$250 per month or \$3000 a year, they lose \$1 of Social Security benefits. This of course only applies to wages and salaries. It does not apply to the interest and returns the rich get from their stocks and bonds and other investments.

It is a heinous crime that millions of old people in the U.S. are forced into a life of poverty and degradation under the rule of capital. But the capitalists turn right around and try to put the working class into the situation of having to choose between the needs of the retired for decent benefits and a lowering of the living standards of the employed through increased taxes. But either option is worse. The stand of the working class is to support the struggles and fights of the elderly for livable income, including higher pensions and Social Security benefits and decent health care and medical benefits. At the same time every effort by the capitalists to saddle the employed with the burdens of their economic crisis and to further drive down living conditions must be fought. The bankruptcy of Social Security, and the added burden it is bringing both to the retired and to the employed, is another telling example of the bankruptcy of imperialism. ■



Youngstown—Jobs Fight

Youngstown, Ohio, where the recent shutdown of Youngstown Sheet and Tube threw 5000 people out of work, rang with the chants and shouts of marching workers and the applause of onlookers October 26, as about 100 steel workers marched through the downtown area.

"We Built the Mill, We Built the Town, We Won't Let Lykes Shut Us Down" was their powerful chant of defiance to the steel mill owners. Three-quarters of these steel workers and their families were Youngstown Sheet and Tube employees, including those laid off from the nearby Campbell Works and some of the few still working there, and workers from other mills owned by Youngstown Sheet and Tube. Others joined in as the march moved down the streets.

Organized by the Fight for Every Job Committee, a local group initiated only a few weeks before by the *Steelworker* newspaper, the action served as the first step in building a campaign to fight the shutdown of the mill. (See *Revolution*, November 1977) The de-

mands of this campaign are to reopen the mill, give those laid off the Supplemental Unemployment Benefits and medical benefits due them, and no cutbacks in education and other services in Youngstown due to the shutdown.

As one of the half dozen Youngstown workers who addressed the march said, "Up till now it's been the politicians, the union officials and the company who said what was what. This is the first time that the workers are speaking for themselves."

Two weeks later, about 20 workers from the shutdown mill were halted by police as they tried to barge into company offices to present their demands. Among other actions planned to carry through on this battle, the Fight for Every Job Committee is now building to pack a special city council meeting to discuss the shutdown, in order to confront the company representatives who will be there and demand that the council endorse the workers' demands. ■

McBride Sellout Shut Down

2000 March In Mesabi Mine Strike

On Sunday, November 6, striking iron ore miners, more than 2000 strong, marched through the streets of Virginia, Minnesota—a mining town in the Mesabi Iron Ore Range. Their strike against the steel corporations 100 days old and heading to be the longest strike in the history of the United Steelworkers of America, the miners rallied and heard strike leaders call for continued resistance and struggle against the companies.

While the miners have the mines locked up tight, this hasn't been enough. The press and media, controlled by the monopolies, have tried to black out news of the strike nationally. In Minnesota and Michigan, where the strike is mainly taking place, the media has attacked the strike, saying that the strikers are wrecking the economy and making the "public" suffer. At the same time the steel companies are trying to promote divisions between the strikers and the steel workers working in the mills by pointing the finger at the strikers for possible future layoffs.

Some steel companies in District 31 (the Chicago-Gary area—a district heavily affected by the strike) have been negotiating to import iron ore from South America. While the companies have been carrying on a massive propaganda campaign about how imports are threatening workers' jobs, this scab importation of ore has shown their concern has nothing to do with jobs for workers, but solely with their profits.

It was for these reasons that the iron ore miners have recently gone on the offensive, and the November 6 rally was seen as a big part of that. The march followed the same route as striking iron ore miners in 1916, who marched under the banners of the revolutionary Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) against the murder of fellow strikers by the steel companies. The words "Remember 1916!" were written on the signs carried by some of today's strikers, along with "We Are Stronger Than Steel," "Equalize Wage Disparity Now" and other slogans.

McBride's Sellout Fails

Lloyd McBride, president of the United Steelworkers International, was there for that march. But instead of

being there to lend support for the strike, he was there to personally deliver a sellout agreement he had just negotiated with the companies. While McBride tried to trumpet the virtues of this sellout, saying how it represented "... substantial movement on the part of the companies," the miners completely rejected the deal within 24 hours after they heard it.

The 16,000 iron ore miners have been out since August 1 against mines owned or controlled by the steel corporations. Although they are covered by the same Basic Steel Agreement as the USWA members in the steel mills, the miners make 65¢ to 85¢ an hour less due to the difference in incentive rates. Their main demands are for pay parity with the rest of Basic Steel, and around safety conditions and the harassment they are subjected to at the hands of the steel companies. The issues around health and safety are especially sharp around the ore processing plants where the workers often get silicosis (grey lung). There are now over 1200 unresolved grievances pending against the companies, and the miners are tired of being treated like dirt.

One of the things that gives this strike special importance is the fact that strikes are banned in Basic Steel under the terms of the Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) in which the union leadership has signed away the right to strike until 1980. The iron ore miners have gotten around this since their strike is formally a strike around local issues, and not against the Basic Steel Agreement itself. Nevertheless, it is the first strike not confined to one plant in Basic Steel since 1959.

For this reason, the strike is about something felt deeply by a great many steel workers, who've been told for so long by the companies and the company men who run the unions that a successful strike is impossible in Basic Steel, and that, in fact, the workers and the companies share common interests which would only be harmed by striking. For years, from the smallest grievance to the biggest sellout contract, steel workers have been told that they have no alternative but to take whatever is given to them. As support is built for the iron ore strike among other workers in Basic Steel, the example of the miners—their refusal to accept

San Francisco controller which declared that purchasing and renovating the I-Hotel would cost the homeowners of the city \$2.5 million in additional property taxes. This allegation was printed up and distributed to all the voters in the voters' handbook as "neutral fact" courtesy of the bourgeois state. When some supporters of the hotel tried to have this insidious move blocked in court, pointing out that funds were available from other sources and the estimate of the costs inflated, the court ruled it had no "jurisdiction" and that it was up to the controller.

This move made it all the easier for the authorities to present the terms of the struggle as a choice between two bourgeois alternatives—tear down the I-Hotel or further increase the burden on the people—and once the high tide of mass struggle ebbed to a degree after the eviction, there was a stronger pull on intermediate sections of the people to be influenced by this bourgeois logic.

Once the initiative was on the ballot it was imperative to fight for the largest yes vote possible. A Workers Committee Campaign for Proposition U was initiated by the Workers Committee to Fight for the I-Hotel and Victory Building, and the campaign committee went all-out to mobilize around the ballot issue. 80,000 brochures were distributed and 6000 posters in English, Spanish and Chinese were plastered around the city. Support is strong for the I-Hotel among class conscious and active workers and many took part in the election battle. The labor council and the major unions voted to endorse the proposition. The campaign committee used the election fight to continue to raise the issues of the I-Hotel, low cost housing and the planned destruction of Chinatown to tens of thousands of people.

Of course, the section of people voting in the election is by no means a fair sampling of the sentiment of the people of San Francisco. The turnout for the election was the lowest in 44 years and the I-Hotel proposition was lost amidst a list of over 100 candidates for the Board of Supervisors and a whole host of propositions. Plenty of people supported the I-Hotel but never heard of Proposition U. A great many workers weren't even registered to vote, understandably feeling it does no good. A great many immigrant workers, themselves in particular need of low cost housing and sympathetic to the I-Hotel struggle, are ineligible to vote. In fact a

the abuses all steel workers know so well, and their strong and determined fight against the steel companies—is touching on something deep in the heart of many steel workers, something often buried and unspoken of for a long time.

That's why McBride has been unable to openly move to smash the strike—for instance, he went along with authorizing it as a strike around local issues—and also why he's tried so hard to stab it in the back. The proposed agreement that McBride tried to get through was an effort to split the ranks of the workers. The companies offered a new incentive plan to only 75% of the strikers. The 25% of the union membership not covered by the proposed incentive plan would have their wages cut by 20¢ an hour. And the plan was not to go into effect until November 1979, less than a year before the expiration of the next national contract.

Joe Samargia, president of the largest local involved in the strike, spoke to why the sellout offer was rejected. "We've been out for over 100 days now, and we are going to stay out until we reach an agreement that will cover 100 per cent of our membership. We won't be party to any agreement that splits our ranks."

As part of the new offensive, leaders of the strike have begun to go out to other districts, going to plant gates and union meetings, explaining the issues and importance of the strike to fellow steel workers. The recent tour of District 31 was successful at beginning to counter the plans of the companies to pit the steel workers against each other.

Support Growing

Following this Chicago-Gary tour, greater support for the strike began to be built in that area. Several locals pledged various amounts of money to be sent to the strikers each month. Very successful gate collections have been held at two locals so far with others expected to take place this month. Already rank and file committees to support the miners have been formed in three locals, although some local union heads who were forced to give lip service to supporting the strike and to allow the formation of the rank and file support committees have tried to hold them back and even sabotage them.

On November 18, workers from U.S. Steel's Southworks and other mills in the area held a picket line outside U.S. Steel's headquarters in Chicago to break through the press blackout about the strike and build support.

The battle of the miners on the iron ore ranges of Minnesota and Michigan is being spread as a battlecry throughout the whole steel industry. At a time when mills and plants throughout the country are closing down; a time when the steel companies have put out a call to workers to line up behind them and fight against imports, the iron ore miners are showing through their example the only real alternative open to the working class—not to collaborate with or surrender to the capitalists, but to fight tooth and nail against them. ■

Ballot Defeat For I-Hotel

On November 8 a serious setback was suffered in the campaign to reopen the International Hotel when a ballot proposition calling for the city of San Francisco to purchase the hotel and use it for low cost housing was defeated 107,000 to 52,000. The ballot proposition originally appeared in the aftermath of the eviction of the tenants, an attempt by members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to cover their own complicity in that criminal act, while at the same time hoping to get a "mandate" to seal the fate of the hotel.

Like all elections in capitalist society, this one was a stacked deck from the start. The power of capital came out a hundred ways in the course of the battle. The major media mouthpieces of the bourgeoisie served their masters well, editorializing against the ballot proposition while making empty assurances of their intention to provide low cost housing. Four Seas Corporation itself (which owns the hotel) conducted a high priced blitz at the last minute with huge numbers of posters and advertisements on all radio stations, raising the slogan, "Prop. U Means U Pay."

Perhaps most damaging was a statement issued by the

whole series of propositions went against the workers of the city (for example repudiating contract demands) by an even greater margin than the I-Hotel vote.

The fight around Proposition U was by no means a total loss, however. The October issue of *Revolution* pointed out "getting it (Proposition U) on the ballot is itself a concession to the tremendous struggle that has been waged," while going on to point out that "the city is now using this as an attack too. They intend to paralyze struggle now and try to win a vote in order to seal their authority to wipe out the building."

The fact that the proposition was on the ballot helped to block the authorities' plans to demolish the Hotel in the fall. It showed that they had been politically isolated to the extent that they didn't dare carry through with their demolition plans without some sort of fig leaf covering them.

The ability of the progressive forces to build support for Proposition U was also severely hampered by the treacherous activities of I Wor Kuen and a handful of others who launched a sectarian attack on the Workers Committee and the RCP immediately in the aftermath of the eviction, then turned around and didn't lift a finger in the whole election battle. The more openly bourgeois and reformist forces, centered around the Northern California Alliance and the leadership of the I-Hotel Tenants Association, refused to participate in a joint city-wide coalition to vote yes on Proposition U. The net effect of all this was to discourage many of the thousands of people who had actively taken part in the fight to save the I-Hotel previously from participating in the election battle.

Although the defeat of Proposition U was a setback, the fight around the I-Hotel and low cost housing is not over. A great many people in Chinatown and throughout San Francisco see the hotel as the front line in the battle to keep Chinatown and other neighborhoods from being sacrificed to the lords of profit. The campaign is continuing to free the 10 who were arrested at the demonstration that blocked the demolition of the building. The Chinatown Tenants Organizing Committee (composed of working class tenants and small business owners) which grew out of the impetus of the I-Hotel fight is stepping up its activities to fight against evictions and for low cost housing in the area. ■



The intense resistance of the West German masses to the dangerous nuclear plants which are being rushed into operation is one of the targets of the new wave of repression launched by German capital.

“Terrorism” as Excuse

W. German Rulers Step Up Repression

It's been over a month since what the capitalist press called "Germany's week of terror." A hijacked jet was recaptured, three imprisoned terrorists died in what smirking government officials tried to pass off as so-called "suicides," and in response a kidnapped business tycoon was executed by the terrorists who held him. But the repercussions of these events have just begun to be felt in West Germany. Right now a huge and well-publicized manhunt is on for people accused of belonging to the terrorist Red Army Faction (RAF), also known as the Baader-Meinhof Group after two of its founding members. To make up for its lack of substantial success so far, the German government arranged for another jailhouse "suicide"—RAF prisoner Ingrid Schubert was hanged in her cell. But more significant, without a great fanfare the West German ruling class is using these recent events to advance its campaign of repression against all forms of political dissent in the country and particularly against mass struggle and ideas which hold the prospect of revolution.

The activities of the Red Army Faction only go to prove, one more sorry time, that no matter how sincere or daring its practitioners, basing a revolutionary movement on a strategy of terrorism cannot bring about, or even create favorable conditions for, revolution. To the contrary, it reduces the masses and especially the working class, the only force which is powerful enough to lead the struggle to overthrow the old system and build a new world, to the level of spectators in the battle. It helps permit the capitalists to sow confusion as to the nature of revolution, to depict armed struggle and revolutionary violence which are vital to the proletariat if it is to seize and hold power as desperate and purely vengeful acts, and finally to pose as omnipotent and unassailable.

This said, it must be pointed out that there is no reason to waste any tears on Hans-Martin Schleyer, who was kidnapped and executed by the RAF. Schleyer was seized because he was head of the West German employers association, a major organization of the country's monopolists. He was also a former Nazi and a colonel in Hitler's S.S., who had special responsibility for the plunder of occupied Czechoslovakia during World War 2. While overall his death does not weaken the West German bourgeoisie an iota, it certainly is no loss to the human race, although given the mileage the government there is trying to squeeze out of it, it might have been preferable if he had been run over by a bus.

Terror of Capital

Likewise, the West German government has done a truly remarkable job of demonstrating what Marxist-Leninists have always said, that the terror of small political sects can in no way compare to that of capital in power. The government's only explanation of the suspicious "suicides" is that the victims were trying to make it look like they were murdered when they "killed themselves" so as to embarrass the government. This odd little theory fails to explain how the RAF managed to turn Germany's tightest prison into what the government alleges was a virtual arsenal, why they didn't use

their weapons to take hostages and attempt a jailbreak, how left-handed Andreas Baader managed to shoot himself in the back of the neck with a seven inch long pistol in such a way that the bullet went out through the middle of his forehead and he got powder burns on his right hand, why the woman whose "suicide attempt" resulted in five stab wounds failed and is being held in complete isolation, cut off even from her family and lawyers, and countless other discrepancies. No finger prints were found on the "suicide" weapons. The clear fact is the government is guilty of cold-blooded murder.

The murder of the imprisoned terrorists is by no means the only crimes of the West German bourgeoisie in this period. In the guise of "the fight against terrorism," they are carrying a broad campaign of intensified political repression and cutting away at democratic rights. This has taken the form of a whole raft of new laws and proposals and attacks on critics of the government and its new measures as "terrorist sympathizers."

The lords of German capital are taking these steps because they feel they need them to deal with increasing problems facing capitalism in Germany. The background is the appearance of cracks in recent years in the well-publicized German "economic miracle." This was hurt both by the increase in oil prices which OPEC won and by its own success—as the German mark came to be considered the most valuable of capitalist currencies, and its exchange value increased, it became possible for the capitalists of other countries to undersell their German rivals. From the beginning of the year, West Ger-

man exports, which account for 20% of the country's gross national product, have been slowing sharply. As a result a certain degree of economic stagnation has set in the West German economy, accompanied by increasing unemployment, averaging over 1,000,000 workers at any given time. In fact, German firms are now more and more exporting their capital rather than investing it at home. This outflow of capital which has increased at a rate of over 20% a year in the last couple of years is going both to Third World countries and to other capitalist powers, foremost among them the U.S., as is the case with the new Volkswagen plant being built in Pennsylvania. This, in turn, contributes to unemployment in West Germany.

Struggle Mounts

While the terrorists are a mere handful, there is a growing tide of discontent and struggle among many sections of the people. Most visible is the new student movement on university campuses. Some educational officials estimate that 15-20% of Germany's 1,000,000 university students "are very critical of the state" and basically don't believe anything it says. To take this kind of a stand is a bold act since there are laws which bar anyone whose "loyalty to the constitution" is questionable from ever holding any kind of a public job—as official, teacher or garbage collector. The German workers struggle is also on the rise as the hold of the social democrats who control the government as well as the trade unions begins to slip. Recently delegates to a convention of the metal workers union whose 9% wage increase earlier in the year met howls of protest from employers' groups, including from Schleyer, voted over the strenuous objections of the top hacks to endorse and fight for a 35 hour week.

Both students and workers and many others as well are active in the sharpest mass struggle in Germany today, the fight to stop construction of nuclear power plants all over West Germany. These plants have been designed with profit and not safety as the overriding consideration, like those American citizens have been demonstrating against. The greater speed with which the program there has been rushed into effect and the greater population density and smaller size of the country has made this issue very hot. In late September, over 50,000 demonstrators defied roadblocks, searches, arrests and other harassment by 10,000 machine gun toting cops and troops to demonstrate against the dangerous new power station at Kalker. This anti-nuclear movement is no small threat to the German imperialists. They are counting on their atomic plant network to cut their reliance on Arab and other fuel imports and to give them cheap power fast so they can better compete with their capitalist rivals. One government minister says that unless these plants are built, West Germany's annual economic growth will be held below 4% for many years to come.

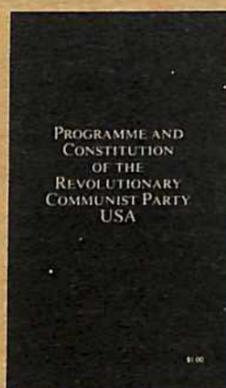
The various capitalist parties in the West German political system are vying with one another to add new reactionary legislation to the repressive laws already passed, like the one which permits the authorities, without even giving any reason, to forbid "dangerous" prisoners the right to see anyone, even their lawyers. Among the new proposals likely to pass are ones greatly extending the authority the central government has over local and regional police; easing restrictions on calling up the national guard; permitting widespread telephone taps and mail interception; restricting the right to bear arms; banning defensive measures like helmets at demonstrations; extending censorship; and more.

Attack on Marxism-Leninism

One of the most important of these proposals is an attempt to make Marxist-Leninist organization illegal in hopes of denying revolutionary leadership to the struggles of the German working class. Like the other attacks, this has been met by a growing outcry of resistance. On October 8th, 20,000 people answered the joint call put out by the three largest groups threatened by the ban and demonstrated in Bonn, the capital, to defend the right of the working class to organize.

The ruling class media have been aiming similar accusations at anyone who dares to speak out against its vicious campaign. Among those called "terrorist sympathizers" by the press or political demagogues are Heinrich Boll, a Nobel prize winner in literature who has stated his opposition to terrorism, people who knew members of the RAF up to ten years ago, student governments which have taken stands in defense of democratic rights—in fact the Minister of one province announced that anybody who said "Baader-Meinhof Group" and not "Baader-Meinhof Gang" was automatically a "sympathizer."

The German bourgeoisie is using the bogeyman of terrorism to develop and tighten up its repressive machinery. While this is not, as revolutionary minded people in West Germany are pointing out, the transition to fascism, it is a grave attack on the rights, organization and struggle of the masses of people. Already it appears that both the resistance to these assaults is growing and the struggles there are aimed at are continuing. The German bourgeoisie's effort to stop the growing struggle against it could well turn out to be a millstone around its neck. ■



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"Badge of Honor"

Top CIA Butcher Gets Slap on Wrist

On November 4, former CIA Director Richard Helms was asked to pay a \$2000 fine and given a two-year suspended sentence for failing to testify "fully, completely and accurately" when he assured the U.S. Senate that the CIA had never ever lifted a finger to overthrow the Allende government in Chile.

The judge gave Helms what the press described as a "tongue lashing," telling Helms that he'd been disgraced. "Let this be a warning," the judge concluded, "that anyone who breaks the law will be punished."

To hear the press and the TV commentators, Helms had been a real Humphrey Bogart. He'd lied to the Senate because it was his duty not to reveal what the CIA was up to, and he'd pleaded no contest to the charges of lying because he still didn't want to talk. Instead of trying to save himself, he'd kept the "national interests" in mind and decided to take his punishment. This role was obviously one Helms pictured for himself. "I don't feel disgraced at all," he told the court after sentencing. "I think if I'd done anything else, I would have been disgraced."

The Carter administration and the Justice Department had been negotiating with Helms for many months. They'd lowered the charges from contempt of Congress (which is the usual charge when someone lies to Congress—or refuses to talk) to the lesser, misdemeanor charge of not testifying "fully, completely and accurately"—even though Helms had been caught lying straight out. Helms finally agreed to take the deal and plead no contest when the government agreed that he'd be allowed to keep his pension. Helms was in a good position to bargain because if he had fought the charges in court, he could have dragged down a lot of other people, including former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and brought the whole question of the U.S. criminal intervention in Chile before the public attention once again.

In fact, so grateful were Helms' colleagues for his gentlemanly performance that they gave him a big party the day after he was sentenced, and passed the hat to pay all of his fine within a few minutes. Henry Kissinger called him a "great patriot," apparently for not fingering Dr. K., as well as for Helms' overall service to the U.S. ruling class.

For the bourgeoisie's publicity men in the press and the judge, this whole affair was supposed to show how the law applies to everyone, including the rich and powerful. It was also supposed to show how the Carter administration is different from the Nixon administration which Helms worked under. But in fact, the affair is part of a continuing cover-up of the U.S. ruling class' crimes in Chile.

No significant sections of the bourgeoisie nor any major politicians and public figures who work for them ever opposed the overthrow of the Allende government nor U.S. aid to the fascist military junta that the CIA set up in Chile. This goes for the Carter administration as well, although Carter mouthed a few pious words of regret about what had happened in Chile when he was running for president and he promised that it wouldn't happen again. Once in office, however, Carter recalled a junior diplomat who had taken him seriously and apologized in a UN commission for the U.S. overthrow of Allende. Helms was "punished"—if that's what you'd call being forced to waste a whole morning being yelled at by a judge—but not for directing the CIA's operations in overthrowing Allende. He just happened to be the victim of an unlucky chain of events.

What had happened was this: the CIA had tried to prevent Allende's election in 1970, and when this failed, they tried to prevent him from taking office. The ITT corporation worked with the CIA in this, using its money and influence in Chile to support anti-Allende newspapers, politicians and generals. ITT was especially determined, because Allende had promised that one of his first steps would be to nationalize Chile's telephone system, which ITT owned. In fact, ITT was so concerned with its own immediate interests instead of the overall interests of the U.S. imperialists that it jumped the gun and got involved in a premature coup attempt that failed. Probably to punish ITT for this premature act, which which temporarily increased Allende's prestige, forces in the U.S. bourgeoisie out to get ITT for a variety of reasons leaked to columnist Jack Anderson a set of ITT memos which showed exactly what ITT had done.

Whoever leaked these memos probably meant for the whole exposure to hit ITT and only ITT, but once out, it gathered a momentum of its own. Under the direction of the National Security Council headed by Secretary of State Kissinger, the CIA helped carry out a plan to bring down Allende by sabotaging Chile's economy, aiding Chilean reactionaries and so on. This time they succeeded. Faced with the fact that a great many Americans were disgusted by this crime and the terrible suffering it brought to the Chilean people, Congress was forced to call an investigation—meant to whitewash what the U.S. had done. But some of those named in the ITT memos who had little to lose and revenge to gain squealed on higher-ups—including Helms in particular, as well as exposing Kissinger's role.

Of course, it's not illegal to overthrow governments if it's done in the service of the American imperialists' government, so Kissinger had committed no crime. In

fact, Congress went easy on him, downplaying his involvement. In part this was because the Watergate affair was then unfolding, rapidly bringing Nixon down lower and lower in the eyes of the people, and for the bourgeoisie it was essential that Kissinger be painted as something different—as a "pillar" of the administration as Watergate prosecutor Jaworski later called him—so that the prestige of the government could survive the disgrace of the President.

But Helms was another matter. He was expendable. Earlier that year he'd retired from the CIA and been appointed ambassador to Iran (whose ruler, the Shah, owed his throne to a 1953 CIA coup that put him in power—and Helms played a big part in it). In confirming Helms' nomination, Congress had asked him some routine questions about Chile, and just as routinely Helms had lied. At that time, Congress had chosen to accept his denial of CIA activity in Chile, despite the ITT memos proving the contrary. But now a scapegoat was needed and poor old Dick Helms was it.

Whitewash Can't Cover Crime

So here we have Congress' stern actions against the criminals responsible for the bloodbath in Chile. Of course Congress hasn't cut off aid to Chile—U.S. aid to the fascist military junta has increased. Of course Congress hasn't really "investigated" anything, because Congress already knows what it would find and doesn't want to find it. And of course Henry Kissinger, who as head of the National Security Council was Helms' superior and actually orchestrated the whole plot, couldn't be asked to allow himself to be slapped on the wrist.

So poor old Dick Helms had to take the rap. The Ford administration kept putting it off and putting it off, until the whole thing fell into Carter's lap, and wanting to avoid even the slightest risk that Helms might sing, a deal was made. Justice triumphed, Congress was righteous, an ambitious judge thundered, and Helms received what the judge called a public crucifixion but which, as the press gleefully pointed out, was actually a public vindication.

For having tried to buy and sell a whole nation and its people, for having helped drown the Chilean masses' struggles in blood, for having brought fascism to Chile to serve the interests of American imperialism including ITT which got its damn phone company back, Richard Helms was given what amounted to a sentence to attend a fundraising cocktail party.

A final note: On November 17, it was announced that Helms had found a new job—as a "consultant" to the Shah of Iran. The Shah, like Don Corleone in *The Godfather*, knows how to return a favor. ■

Young's Shameless Defense of S. African Racists

Recently Andrew Young has made giant strides in convincing any doubters that he is indeed a good and faithful servant of U.S. imperialism.

On a single day recently Andy Young had the unenviable task of casting three vetoes in the UN Security Council against an economic sanction of South Africa. An embarrassed Young tried to cover his rear end by claiming that he was concerned that an economic boycott would cause hardship for South African blacks, but his act was too ridiculous to be taken seriously—except perhaps by the representatives of Britain and France (also well-known for their concern for the plight of Azanians) who alone voted no along with Andy.

In the aftermath of the murder of Steve Biko, Young told the British Broadcast Corporation that "I'm sure Steve Biko's death was unintentional," echoing word for word the lies of South Africa's Justice (sic) Minister James Kruger. First Kruger had declared Biko's death an accident, then picking up some pointers from the West German ruling class, declared that Biko's death was a "suicide." "I don't know," this swine said about Steve Biko's head injuries, "but I often think of banging my head against the wall."

Andrew Young's services have also been well appreciated by Ian Smith, head of the Rhodesian white settler regime. In an interview with a Chicago TV correspondent, Smith declared that he and Andy Young understand each other and that he hopes and has requested that Ambassador Young and the U.S. "will play even more of a role in Rhodesia."

Andrew Young's claim to be the great friend of the African people is wearing very, very thin indeed. ■

Ban the Krugerrand!

The support for the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa among the American people is growing stronger and more organized and some impressive victories have been scored. In many cities across the country the Organizing Committee for a New African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) have stepped up their activities (presently concentrated on fighting against the Krugerrand) and attracted new forces. In Chicago, for example, around 100 people attended a forum after initial leafletting was done. Other forces, particularly students, have been active as well. In Oregon, the State University's Board was successfully pressured into dumping over \$3 million worth of investments in companies doing business in South Africa. And in New York City the flagship stations of the three major TV networks, WNBC, WABC and WCBS, have agreed to stop carrying Krugerrand commercials.

In Milwaukee a victory was won recently when the second largest bank in town and the last one selling the blood-soaked Krugerrand, the M&I Bank, was forced to drop it after months of struggle. ALSC was able to make the issue of the Krugerrand a hot one in Milwaukee, spreading the word through actions like the one pictured here, even forcing the Common Council (the city government) to go on record as opposing white minority rule and businesses with investments in southern Africa. In the course of the campaign ALSC was able to unite with some Black newspaper reporters, helping to publicize the situation in southern Africa and the fight against the Krugerrand.



Regional demonstrations are being called for December 3 around the country against the Krugerrand. The actions are being sponsored by coalitions formed on the initiative of ALSC. The December 3 demonstrations are shaping up to be a significant escalation in the war on the Krugerrand as its peddlers look for big Christmas sales. For more information on these activities write ALSC, P.O. Box 87141, Chicago, IL 60680. ■

Demonstrate Dec. 3!

Crossroad...

Continued from page 3

side to life in the coalfields, beyond the militant and elementary class consciousness that flows from being locked in constant and direct battle with the owners and operators. This is reflected in a certain narrowness, a tendency to see it simply as the miners alone versus coal owners, crooked judges, bought off politicians and union hacks.

Lenin pointed out, long ago, in *What Is To Be Done?* that the capitalist ideas have great strength when workers first break out into struggle. These ideas are far older, they have at their disposal "immeasurably more means of dissemination." While spontaneous elements "represent nothing more or less than consciousness in an embryonic form," the "spontaneous development of the working class movement leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology." This spontaneous development has great force when the struggle breaks out in the absence of a genuine revolutionary Party with deep roots in the working class. Because of the treason of the old Communist Party and the whole history of American labor, this has been exactly the case in the USA.

The class struggle of mine workers, which raged throughout the 1920s, '30s and '40s, was consciously channeled by UMWA President John L. Lewis toward the most narrow economic goals. The revolutionary leadership of large sections of the miners was crushed as early as 1933. And because of a retreat by the CPUSA it was never rebuilt. With the UMWA hacks firmly in the saddle of the miners organization, the miners were carefully isolated from the political ferment in the rest of the working class. Throughout the 1930s the miners union served as a powerful rear area for the massive unionization drives, but was used as a source of power by those within that movement committed to "pure and simple" trade unionism.

Once unionized, miners went on to win great victories through struggle. And through their unity and sacrifice the masses of miners vastly improved their every day lives and conditions. On the basis of these economic reforms miners came to feel great loyalty to their union. And John L. Lewis became heir to that loyalty and respect among the masses of miners. At the same time as he led the fierce struggle for economic gains, Lewis was ruthlessly stamping out any independent organization or dissent among the ranks.

From the beginning, Lewis was a conscious standard bearer of capitalism and enemy of the working class posing as its "militant leader." As early as 1924 he made his outlook clear:

"The policy of the UMWA . . . is neither new nor revolutionary . . . it ought to have the support of every thinking business man in the U.S., because it proposes to allow natural laws free play in the production and distribution of coal." In the midst of the brutal coal slump of the 20's he said, "Shut down 4,000 mines, force 200,000 miners into other industries, and the coal problem will settle itself."

In the 1935, in the thick of the depression and just as he was initiating the CIO, Lewis said:

"Far be it from me to foster inferiority complexes among workers by trying to make them think they belong to some special rigid class . . . it is conceivable that if this dangerous state of affairs is allowed to continue there will not only be 'class consciousness,' but revolution as well. But it can be avoided. The employers aren't doing much to avoid it. But the United Mine Workers are doing everything in their power to make



John L. Lewis, who still retains a reputation of a militant fighter for the miners, was nonetheless a conscious standard bearer of capitalism and an enemy of the working class.

the system work."

This same stand was held by Lewis' corrupt successors to the end. Tony Boyle, Union president at the time, told the Senate in 1969:

"The UMWA will not abridge the rights of the mine operators in running the mines. We will follow the judgment of the coal operators, right or wrong."

"Common Interests" Pushed

The Union officials moved to constantly tie the workers more tightly to the profits of the companies. Once mechanization axed the piece rate system, it is not surprising that the hacks helped pioneer a new system tying health benefits and pensions directly to production. Although the health card miners won in 1946 was a major concession to protracted struggle, it was also an attempt by the coal companies and the Lewis leadership to lay the basis for "labor peace" and an outlook of "common interests" between the miners and the companies in the years ahead.

Miners entered the '50's with strong loyalty to the union structure forged by twenty years of economic gains and militant organizing drives. But they entered the '50s, too, with a union leadership at the top dedicated to class collaboration, retreat and defeat.

Into the '60s the firm grip of the union structure on the miners weakened. Tony Boyle replaced Lewis. The trust of the miners in their officials was deeply shaken as betrayal after betrayal rolled in.

While the upsurge of the late '60's quickly picked up great power, it was born in a labor movement that had been completely dominated by capitalist ideas for a generation. So it was born groping for understanding, struggling to find ways to organize, and full of confusion over exactly who is the enemy and what is the problem in society.

The rank and file started to move mine by mine, local by local. Mines are relatively small workplaces, each usually has no more than a couple of hundred workers. But from the start the stronger locals became storm centers, drawing neighboring mines into the struggle, throwing miners there into motion. Because of the obvious power of the movement, miners moved quickly and naturally to take on major issues that naturally affected them: the Black Lung disease (1969 and 1976); the attempted Nixon wage-freeze (1974); bad roads; flood relief; and the extremely important strikes of the last years against injunctions, for the right to strike;

and recently against vicious cuts in health benefits.

These broader movements have grown out of the day-to-day fights at the mine sites, and in turn they spread the ferment to new areas. New forces have constantly been thrown into motion.

From the beginning, organization grew trying to focus the movement onto key issues. The Black Lung Association and the Disabled Miners and Widows Association were formed in the late '60s. They sparked major wildcat strikes that forced concessions, including the 1969 Health and Safety Act, the payment of Black Lung Benefits to thousands and the return of the health card to many disabled and retired miners and to widows. Out of the gas protest (1974) and the contract battle of 1974, the Miner's Right To Strike Committee was formed.

Aim at the Union Traitors

Early on, the struggle took aim at the union traitors. Boyle's cronies were just the old Lewis machine with its makeup off. The Yablonski campaign challenge gave the movement its early form. And with Yablonski's defeat and murder, Miners for Democracy was formed, representing the strength of the rank and file, while also embodying many of the weaknesses the movement was born with. Miller's election on the tide of the rank and file movement brought with it actual advances, including vastly increased autonomy for districts and locals, the right of the rank and file to ratify contracts, and with the extensive dismantling of the Boyle machine, it brought more freedom of movement for the rank-and-file.

Miners started learning the hard way. They grabbed at all the means of protest open to them. Besides strikes, lawsuits were filed by the dozens. Years have been spent running around the halls of Congress, lobbying. And many had high hopes of quick and easy victories through the union elections of Miller and others.

Though these earlier rank-and-file organizations were important advances, they had exactly these serious weaknesses in outlook. That's why miners were hardly able to resist when the Miller organization pushed to dissolve the Miners For Democracy (MFD) and the Black Lung Associations saying, "These organizations are no longer necessary, the reformed UMWA will now take over their tasks."

Both organizations were severely weakened, despite their mass nature and their history of struggle. The MFD ceased to exist. The Black Lung Associations (always more independent of the professional reformers) have survived and they struggle on, in places. But much of the national strength of these Associations drained off, as some members were co-opted to union payrolls and because the Associations themselves were unable to break the legalistic grip of endless lobbying.

The weakness in outlook comes directly from the spontaneity of the movement. By themselves, the day-to-day struggles, however militant and widespread they might be, do not bring the workers a conscious understanding of the whole position and historic tasks of the working class. As Lenin said, left to themselves the day-to-day struggles lead to the rudimentary class understanding that workers need to unite and fight back against their immediate employers. And this understanding, while it in some ways may represent an advance, is not in itself a break with the outlook of the capitalist system. And therefore spontaneous struggles like this "naturally" develop as struggles over the terms of the sale of labor power, not in opposition to the whole wage slave set up.

Struggles Over Summation

In fact, the debate over how to sum up the upsurge has been going on for years. The capitalist class, with "immeasurably more means of dissemination" plays a big role. And this ideological warfare has gotten sharper as time goes on. And in the repeated experience of the wildcat strikes, in the many twists and turns of a great struggle, there is a great deal of raw material from which the working class can learn to understand its situation. The *Programme* of the RCP points out the process clearly:

"Where the struggle is successful in wringing concessions from the employers it spurs further struggle. Where there is a temporary setback, it spurs discussion among the workers as to the cause of the defeat.

"In these struggles, the workers begin to throw off the foot of the employer from their necks, to raise their heads. And in raising their heads they are able to see farther and more clearly. The face of the enemy and the forces fighting him come into sharper focus. And this gives rise to vigorous discussion not only about every question in the immediate struggle, but also about events throughout society and the world," (P. 101)

It is important to understand that these massive wildcats have not been "pure," simple, clean-cut affairs. They have grown in direct opposition to union officials, as well as the companies themselves. And this is just as true of the Miller administration in power, as it was of Tony Boyle's clique.

In fact, each strike has been a battle in itself, within the ranks of the miners. There has always been great controversy over whether to strike at all. Once a strike

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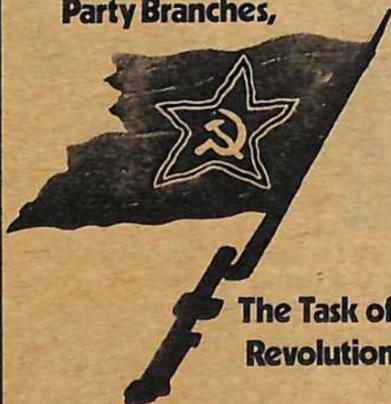
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Fight for Union at Stearns

Ky. Miners Locked In 18 Month Strike

"The men decided it was time to make a stand, because we can't run every time Blue Diamond tries something. They knew they would be jailed and there would be a battle, but they couldn't run. I don't care if they get every trooper in the state of Kentucky and the whole National Guard, I'll be there fighting if I can at all." It's this determination that has kept 130 miners on strike for a United Mineworkers (UMWA) contract for 18 months against the Blue Diamond coal company.

Blue Diamond owns many small nonunion mines in eastern Kentucky, including the Scotia Mine where 26 miners were killed in an explosion two years ago. The same murderous conditions exist at the Justus Mine in Stearns, Kentucky. The miners called in the UMWA in April 1976 and struck the mine unanimously in July over safety. They demanded a union safety committee with power to shut the mine down over safety conditions. Blue Diamond refuses to negotiate.

This battle is so sharp because of the number of non-union mines and the need for organization in the area. The fierceness of Blue Diamond's opposition to this organizing and the openness with which the state government and the courts collude with the bosses has angered working people across the area.

Blue Diamond hired forty thugs, seeking them out from among ex-cons, to "guard" the mine in the Fall of last year. They have toted automatic weapons, sniping at strikers on the picket line and injuring one. The miners armed themselves and gave the goons a taste of their own medicine. In August the Circuit Court stepped in with an injunction to "limit violence"—the miners were allowed only ten pickets and the company 28 guards. But on October 15, one scab was escorted into the mine by state troopers, and the next day two more slunk in. The strikers heard rumors that Blue Diamond planned to bring in scabs from other counties. After this, early in the morning all the strikers were on the picket line to take a stand. Most asked their wives to stay away, but as one wife stated, "If I knew it, I couldn't stand it. First there was one woman, then three, then ten, then twenty-five."

The women, waiting above on the road, began to hear reports on the police scanner of troopers from all over the state converging on a nearby motel. At 3:00 PM

over a hundred troopers appeared. As one striker described it, "They had no warrant, they were ready with clubs. They swung the first blow." Seventy-nine strikers were arrested for breaking the injunction, many severely beaten. Three women were injured and 22 arrested when they tried to prevent the police cars from getting through. Later the kangaroo court of Judge J. C. Thompson sent eleven men to jail for six months. Sixty-eight more are under bond and can be thrown in jail for any further "offense."

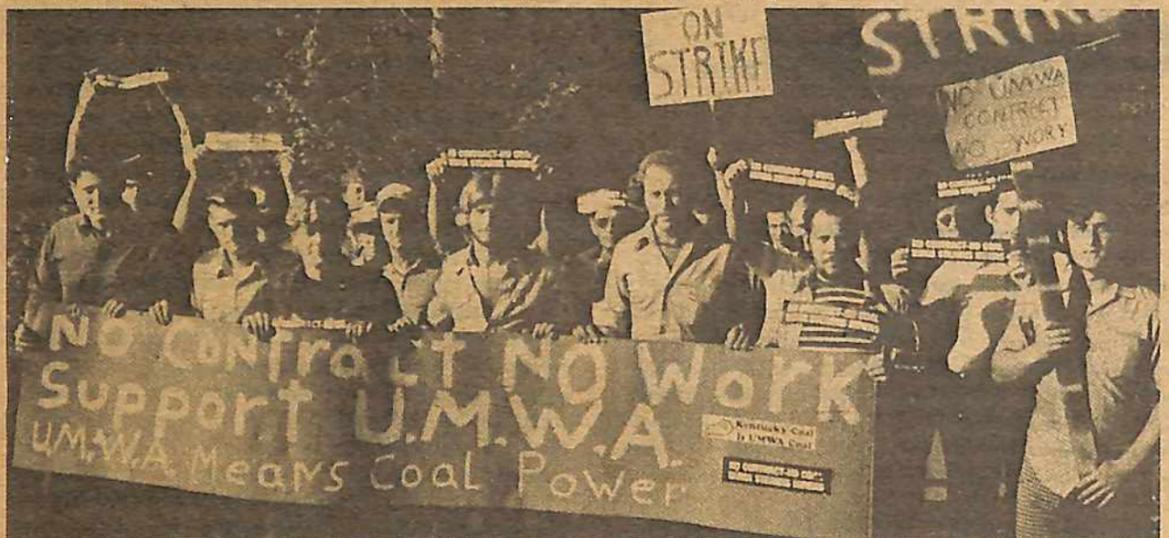
Blue Diamond is losing millions in production and paying over a \$100 a day to each of the gun thugs who threaten the miners and their families and scabs who so far have just sat inside the mine and played cards, since it hasn't been operating. All this effort is to keep eastern Kentucky mines nonunion. The Stearns Coal and Lumber Company (who sold out to Blue Diamond in 1975) owns most of Stearns and most of the mineral rights in McCreary County. Today's miners and their fathers have been fighting this company for 35 years, remembering when they were paid only in company scrip. The miners are fighting, in their words, "for the past, but

mostly for the future so our kids won't have to face this."

The strikers have remained solid. Only 17 have gone back in to scab despite the hardships of the long strike. Now the company claims it will restart production with these 17. As a wife put it, "We'd give our lives to get this union." The UMWA has several organizers in Stearns, but there has not been much in the way of official support from the leadership. President Arnold Miller, who appeared in Stearns only after the mass arrests, and sixteen months after the strike began and after the gun battles of the summer died down (although miners are still tailed and their homes are broken into), apologized and explained he had been "too busy" to come earlier. There has been support from rank and file miners and union locals but there has been no serious effort by the International leadership to organize militant support. It is clear that the UMWA leadership is frightened by the kind of militant rank and file unity displayed by the strikers.

The National United Workers Organization is planning to build support for the Stearns strike in conjunction with its overall campaign to support the miners in this year's crucial contract battle. A rally of 50 was held in Louisville, Kentucky by the Stearns Strike Support Committee, which the NUWO participates in.

Strikers and their wives, speaking to members of the NUWO in Louisville, said their eyes have been opened past McCreary County. Most of them are on strike for the first time. "We thought it was our own private fight but now we know that the working people are behind us. We working men, coal men, factory men everyone, are going to have to fight together, Blacks, Puerto Ricans, all of us. This is 130 men and their wives fighting against the state, the government. They say it can't be done but we're doing it." ■



There is a lot at stake in the Stearns strike. Safety for miners means danger for profits and the bosses figure if they can stop the union here, they can do the same in all of eastern Kentucky.

Crossroad...

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breaks out the debates focus on what demands to raise and when to go back to work. Discussions rage over who is the enemy and how deep the rot in society goes. There is also debate over the methods to use in the strike, whether to strive to unite the broad masses of miners consciously around the demands or to simply rely on violence and respect for picketlines.

Within these struggles the top union officials constantly strive to confuse, narrow, control the movement. And to do this they must reach out to win workers actively to their side.

The union is in tremendous turmoil—the rift between the top officials and the rank and file is so deep that, at times, in southern West Virginia the top hacks have virtually no control over the masses. Miller has even had to import his bodyguards from outside the Eastern coalfields!

And the hacks are at each others' throats, scrambling like rats for the top spots, while they fight over which tactics are best for suppressing the rank-and-file. Some union officers have scrambled to join strikes and scream their opposition to Miller, all in order to advance their own positions. In the recent strike over health benefits, a few full time officials actually presented themselves as militants to draw around them the active fighters while confining the struggle to "acceptable" goals.

The active and advanced miners are forced to contend with all these hacks for the leadership of the intermediate majority. Both sides call meetings, reach out local by local, and use all available means to affect public opinion. It is a sharp contest that has several times erupted into armed conflict.

The great strength of the active miners is that their line of struggle genuinely represents the interests of the great majority. The strength of the officials is in their control of the commanding heights of the union structure, a well-financed national organization. They also have the force of habit on their side, the ingrained ideas of generations of capitalist propaganda and of narrow

trade unionism—whether Lewis', Boyle's or Miller's brand. And above all, even while they have conflict with particular capitalists, overall their grip is reinforced by the capitalists, their media, and their state. Using all the forces at their disposal, the capitalists have launched a frontal assault on the miners' feelings of solidarity, their deep hatred of scabs and their respect for picketlines.

Even as they fight among themselves, the union officials have made some advances in whipping the lower level hacks into a "front-line fighting force." Because honest fighters often appear in local positions, this has required years of patient work, with lots of cash, secret conferences and heavy pressure from the top.

Rank and File Organization

The rank and file has sensed the need to get organized. The degree of organization has varied greatly in different strikes. It has depended on the particular issue. It depends on how well miners are able to shake loose the hold of the union officialdom. And it has, more and more, depended on the role of rank-and-file organizations within the strike.

In the face of heavier and more sophisticated attacks, the old loose "ad hoc" strike organization has shown its weaknesses. More and more it has been necessary to find tactics that constantly strengthen the rank-and-file through the complex struggle. The Miners' Right To Strike Committee has played an extremely important role in developing and spreading the struggle. And in addition, with its consistent practice of bringing out the opposing interests of the workers and owners on every question of the battle, the Committee has led the struggle to popularize the most advanced lessons of the struggle, to broaden and strengthen the movement.

Because of its role in the struggle, the Miners Right To Strike Committee has been the special target of attacks within the union and in the press. The capitalists aim both at separating the active workers from the intermediate and at splintering the unity among the active themselves. To do this dirty work the union officials couple their usual garbage about "common interests" between capital and labor, with outrageous lies about how "wildcats destroy the union," and how the movement is the sinister child of "radicals," "communists," "out-

siders," and "young hotheads who just don't want to work." They concoct tales of how the strikes come from a "tiny handful of right-to-strikers" who terrorize the "silent majority." They have even fabricated rumors of incidents where communists were supposedly lynched. And when they have felt strong enough, the officials have temporarily suspended rank and file leaders from the union, waved their notorious "10 point program to end wildcats" around and threatened to attack still more.

Limitations of the Movement

While the movement has come far and won great victories it is showing limitations that are frustrating and demoralizing to many.

As the movement has grown, miners have gotten strong enough to take on one issue after the other. And the movement, in some areas, has grown into a constant chain of strikes which naturally raises the question: "Where is all this leading us to?" For the masses of miners the struggle has brought with it tremendous hardship. Thousands of people have gone for years with irregular paychecks and for months with no income at all. 5,500 strikes in three years is a lot of sacrifice.

In the same period the crisis has deepened. The capitalists are attacking the workers in ever broader ways. And at the same time, the increased desperation of the owners has simply meant that it is harder and harder to win concessions—meaning that strikes have gotten longer and more bitter.

All this means that miners are asking serious questions about the future path. On the one hand, people know "You don't ever win anything without a fight." On the other hand, the old slogan of "Work a while strike a while" is not good enough.

Miners are directly confronting the fact that workers are up against a system. A system based on exploitation. And that striking miners, though powerful, can't break through alone. *Victories have not given rise to peace, but have given rise to ever sharper battles!* The very ability of miners to resist has come under fiercer and fiercer attack. And the bourgeoisie is being forced to throw more forces into the battle—like greatly expanding non-UMWA Western coalfields. The class struggle is

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U.S. Out to Cash In

Somalia Gives USSR Walking Papers

In November a significant development took place on the Horn of Africa, a hot-bed of superpower rivalry and people's struggle, when the government of Somalia summarily evicted all Soviet personnel, military and otherwise. Coupled with this came a full break in diplomatic relations with the Soviets' errand boys in Africa, the Castro regime in Cuba.

The latest move seals Somalia's departure from the Soviet orbit, something that has been going on for a year or more as the Soviets have made a giant move to get a hold on Ethiopia with whom Somalia is embroiled in an armed conflict. (See *Revolution*, September '77) It is a big blow to the social-imperialists who had established a very important naval base on Somalia's Red Sea coast bordering the Gulf of Aden.

The USSR hoped to gobble up the whole region, but their eyes were bigger than their mouth. The Soviets, together with Castro, had tried to push a scheme for a "Socialist" Federation of East Africa, which would have tied together Ethiopia, an autonomous Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti (the recently independent, former French

colony), and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The plan was a pipe dream, however—doomed to failure by the longstanding border disputes and the conflicting interests of the various ruling classes as well as their varying degrees of conflict with the USSR. Among the people, too, such a plan for Russian tutelage would have met opposition.

While the Somali moves against the Soviets must be supported, it is also necessary to understand the actions of the U.S. imperialists in the area who are, needless to say, rejoicing at the misfortunes of their rivals. In this light it is worthwhile to take note of a most interesting article that appeared in the British paper, the *Manchester Guardian*, concerning the role of the U.S. in the Horn (October 30, 1977 in the overseas edition). The article documents in convincing fashion that the U.S. imperialists have been playing a very active role in Somalia, including encouraging Somalia to continue its military backing of the Western Somalia Liberation Front in the war in the Ogaden desert.

Apparently, within weeks of Carter's entering the White

House, U.S. policy on the Horn of Africa was reviewed (Presidential Review Memorandum 21) with a particular focus on dropping support for Ethiopia which had been the main center of U.S. influence in the area but was increasingly looking to the Soviets and in deep trouble from the struggles of the Ethiopian masses and the Eritrean liberation struggle.

The *Manchester Guardian* points out that the "key vehicle in promoting U.S. interests in Northeast Africa is the burgeoning Saudi Arabia-Egypt-Sudan alliance, financed by Saudi petrodollars and cemented by a mutual defense pact." It goes on to point out that in April Carter discussed his views on the Horn with both Sadat and Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia. Then in June, Carter is quoted as explaining his policy of "aggressively challenging the Soviet Union and others for influence in areas of the world that we feel are crucial to us now or potentially crucial" and specifically mentioning Somalia as one such area.

The article goes on to reveal a series of secret diplomatic moves all aimed at assuring Somalia that, either directly or indirectly, the U.S. would help supply arms for their role in the war over the Ogaden desert.

It was only in mid-August after 10,000 deaths were suffered on all sides in the Ogaden conflict and the U.S. feared the whole situation might get out of hand (one problem being Somalia has claims on parts of pro-U.S. Kenya, as well as Djibouti and Ethiopia), that the U.S. decided against an open sale of U.S. arms to Somalia.

CP(ML)'s Opportunism

These revelations are, of course, not surprising—at least not to Marxist-Leninists. But they may cause somewhat of a shock in the office of the *Call*, the Communist Party (ML)'s weekly. A few months back (Sept. 12) the *Call* attacked the RCP for having dared to comment on what the U.S. was trying to accomplish in the Horn of Africa, which, according to the CP(ML) is tantamount to "supporting Soviet lies" and labeling Third World governments as "helpless pawns of the two superpowers."

While it is important to support the moves of the Somali government away from the Soviet Union, this has nothing to do with the CP(ML) ostrich position of pretending as though the U.S. imperialists don't even exist.

In their own article hailing Somalia's anti-Soviet move, the *Call* gave one passing reference to the fact that "both the U.S. and the USSR are frantically vying for control of this strategic area" but, true to form, as to what, if anything, the content of the imperialist moves of the U.S. are, the *Call* reader can only guess. ■

Crossroad...

Continued from page 11

obviously not as simple or as quick as it once seemed to most. Many more now see that the struggle is a protracted and a very serious undertaking.

Through struggle miners have learned a lot. Thousands have a real grasp of the treason of their top officials. The brutal wave of injunctions, fines and jailings have dispersed many illusions about the courts. And the constant insult in Congress over Black Lung has certainly given lobbying a bad name with many workers. In other words, understanding has grown since the early days, and the formation of the MRTSC has influenced that development.

But at the same time lessons are not learned automatically and can't be limited to these struggles and the lessons drawn from them alone. The process of learning is itself a class struggle. And a sharp one! Bourgeois trade unionist ideas are strong, and constantly reinforced from above. Even among the most active there is resistance to organizing independent of the union structure. The question is often asked, "Why isn't the UMWA enough?" And even among the relatively advanced there is a strong push to keep the movement narrow and to "stick to miners' issues." The struggle will be long. Experiences must be summed up and popularized.

It is one task of communists to help the miners sum up their struggles and these debates and draw from them the revolutionary lessons they contain. This includes, but is not limited to, such basic truths as the fact that the workers will never be able to have decent lives, to "live in peace," under the capitalist system. That system's laws constantly compel, regardless of anyone's will, the bosses to grind down the workers and the workers to resist.

Broader Experience

But the miners struggle is so sharp that it has drawn the assaults of the capitalist legal system, the scrutiny and slanders of the capitalist media, the attention and intervention of politicians, reformers and others whose interests draw them to one side of the battle or another. This intensification and broadening of the struggle becomes an even richer source of lessons about such things as the role of the state, the interests of other class forces, and the operation of the capitalist system as a whole.

Even this is not sufficient. If more and more miners are to become conscious fighters for the proletariat, communists must use Marxism-Leninism to help them sum up and understand their struggle in the context of all the other battles in American society and the world today. Only by learning about and participating in such battles, will miners together with other workers come to understand that they are all aimed at the same oppressors, the same "dark forces" Lenin spoke of. This is key in miners, together with all workers, becoming class conscious revolutionaries and fighting still more powerfully.

In contrast, without bold and fierce struggle by the conscious forces of the working class, the capitalist class will win the battle for summation every time, by default. The struggle for reforms gets summed up as an endless treadmill, where workers fight, fight, fight

and sacrifice endlessly . . . and the capitalists always have the last word.

In the coalfields the level of struggle requires changes. The old ways of loose organization and the old ways of looking at things just aren't up to the tasks at hand. And not only are these major advances necessary—it is more and more possible to shed the spontaneity of the past. With the rich experience of the last ten years, and with the development of new organizations of class conscious workers the basis actually exists for a major advance in the level of the movement—in its level of class consciousness and in its level of organization.

The problems within the miners' upsurge are the direct result of the growth of protracted struggle over ten years. These are natural growing pains, that require *ever more understanding and activity* from the conscious forces of the working class. This crossroads presents both the opportunity to advance off the victories of the past and the danger of a confused retreat.

It is generally accepted that the miners' upsurge has been a "great inspiration." It is seen as proof that workers *can unite* their ranks, that struggle is the only way forward and that the power of the working class is tremendous when the workers fight for their own interests. But an equally important lesson must absolutely not be forgotten: that it is exactly in the tremendous upsurge of struggle that it becomes clear again that building the day-to-day struggle as *an end in itself*, is a *dead end*.

The problem of workers everywhere are not solved by one piecemeal reform after the other, but by building an increasingly revolutionary workers movement that recognizes the face of its enemy, recognizes and struggles against all oppression and aims at the overthrow of the system itself. The point should not be to just build a movement that powerfully tackles one grievance after the other, since capitalism has a limitless capacity to create new oppressions and outrages. The treason of the John L. Lewises of the labor movement is *not* principally that they don't fight militantly for reforms on occasion, but that they *limit* the struggle of the working class to those reforms, condemning the workers to perpetual wage slavery.

Battle Taking Shape

The antagonism in the coalfields are heightening, and the struggle is getting ever more complex. The aim of the companies is not just putting over minor attacks. They're aiming for a knockout punch. Driven to desperation by their inability to control "these damn stupid miners," the companies are now dreaming of wiping out the ability of miners to organize and resist. Their policies have steadily gotten more sweeping. Along with the attacks on benefits and the opening of large nonunion fields, they are openly calling the continued existence of the *union itself* into question! They are threatening not to sign another agreement unless the contract *guarantees* "labor peace." For the companies as well as for the miners the right to strike is the key issue in December.

The whole battle is taking shape as a major showdown between capital and labor. It requires the attention and active support of all workers. By building this contract fight as a key part of the overall class struggle, both nationally and in the coalfields, we will be taking a major step toward the day when "From individual strikes the workers . . . go over . . . to the struggle of the entire working class for the emancipation of all who labor." (Lenin, quoted on page 101 of the RCP *Programme*) ■

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The real feelings of the Iranian people toward the royal torturer who rules their country and toward the U.S. imperialists who back him were shown throughout the demonstration, as in this burning of the Shah's effigy.

Shah Hit...

Continued from page 1

It had been known for months in advance that the Shah would come to the U.S. in mid-November and that Carter would visit Iran at the end of the month—a trip that fell casualty to Carter's decision to stay in the U.S. until Congress dealt with his energy bill. But the exact date of the Shah's visit was not made public until only three weeks in advance. Among other things, this allowed a pro-Shah organization to be the first to apply for a permit to demonstrate in front of the White House, thus blocking the way to anti-Shah demonstrators. Even though the pro-Shah forces made a mistake and specified the wrong date in their application, the National Park Service refused to give the anti-Shah forces the permit for the right date and instead "corrected" the first permit application.

The Creation of a "Welcome"

Never before, during any of his previous visits, has anyone demonstrated in favor of the Shah in this country. It was obvious that there was no way to stop the Iranian Student Association (ISA) from organizing a massive protest, although every effort was made to obstruct the ISA. Still, the U.S. and the Shah felt that they had to make a public ceremony of the trip, rather than just conduct their business behind closed doors. So it became necessary for them to organize a pro-Shah demonstration, to politically weaken and possibly physically attack the anti-Shah forces.

The creation of this pro-Shah "welcome" was carried out in a way that reflected the Shah's isolation from and antagonism with the Iranian people. ISA chapters around the country became aware that the SAVAK (the Shah's Gestapo, which operates in this country by the grace of the U.S. government) was spending millions of dollars to buy bodies for the demonstration. Some Iranian students were offered scholarships, \$200-\$600 in cash and all expenses paid to be on hand to greet the Shah in Washington. This effort failed, as ISA chapters spread word of the bribe offers and isolated SAVAK agents on campuses.

The next SAVAK move was to go into communities of people who are national minorities in Iran (such as Iranian Armenians and Iranian Assyrians), as well as among Arabs, Jews and the American people in general, with generous cash offers. Religious and business leaders in the Iranian minority communities were cajoled and threatened, despite the fact that most of the 200,000 Iranian Armenians in the U.S., for example, had fled Iran because of the brutal national oppression of the regime of the Shah and his father before him. Prior to November 15 people in these communities were literally afraid for their lives if they dared resist SAVAK inducements and afraid for their skins to go to Washington and face the righteous anger of Iranian patriots. SAVAK efforts to mobilize these communities were largely a failure as well.

In the last days before the visit SAVAK agents were among unemployed Chicano and Mexican laborers in Utah and the Imperial Valley in California, offering \$100 a day and expenses to demonstrate.

Of course, this kind of free money couldn't be kept a secret. As the story of the bribes became well-known and increasingly threatened to expose the nature of the Shah's welcome, the press began to report that Iranian-American organizations (rather than the SAVAK) were behind the organizing efforts. Especially in the East

Coast, full page ads calling for welcoming the Shah appeared in many papers, signed by organizations with no address or phone number and no previous known existence. The *Washington Star* estimated that at least \$8 million was spent to bring people to Washington, not to mention the vast amounts spent on publicity. When a few actually existing Iranian organizations in the U.S. were asked how they got such vast sums, the answer was that unidentified "patriots" in Iran had sent the money.

Of course the reactionaries didn't rely on money alone. The SAVAK unleashed a wave of terror against ISA members in the U.S., operating with the cooperation of the federal authorities and local police. For instance, in Chicago SAVAK agents roamed dormitories, slashing students with knives. One agent at the YMCA College was exposed as such by the ISA, and student pressure forced the college administration to hold an open hearing to consider expelling him from campus. The day of the hearing, Chicago police escorted him through student picket lines outside the building as he waved a large picture of the Shah, provoking an incident. With this excuse, the cops waded into the picket lines with clubs, sending four people to the hospital seriously injured (including one person with a broken back) and arresting a dozen more.

This incident and others like it made it clear just how high the stakes were. For Iranians in the U.S., being arrested means the strong possibility of deportation to Iran where they face imprisonment or even death. The bourgeois media tried to use these incidents to discredit the ISA and the anti-Shah opposition in general, painting the anti-Shah Iranians in the U.S. as a bunch of lunatics and malcontents who should be grateful for being allowed to live here and who represent no one in Iran. The ISA and others (including the Revolutionary Student Brigade) waged a real battle to turn this around. The ISA held several large and successful regional conferences to build for the demonstration on the campuses, followed by militant demonstrations that took the question of the Shah's visit out broadly. As the whole thing became more of a public controversy, Iranians were interviewed in the newspapers and on TV, and the media began to make a show of presenting "both sides" of the issue.

Pro-Shah Demo Put to an End

It took the D.C. action itself to blow a big hole in this "two sides to the issue" propaganda and put it out there that the pro-Shah forces were a bunch of mercenaries, rich Iranian businessmen and cops. As the demonstrators began to gather in Washington on the morning of November 15, the press and TV made a special point of saying that the number of pro and anti-Shah forces were about the same, although in fact the pro-Shah organizers had announced that they expected 15,000 people and only a few thousand actually showed up. The anti-Shah demonstrators surged and howled with anger. "Down, Down, Down with the Shah!" rang out for hours as the demonstrators amassed. The police on the street were few in number and not in full riot gear, which would have put the ceremony in a bad light right from the start, although riot police were on hand and brought out later. At 10:30 AM the Shah arrived for the reception on the back lawn of the White House. The pro-Shah forces cheered and a 21 gun salute went off. That was to be the end of the pro-Shah demonstration.

Previous to this moment, some anti-Shah Americans and Iranians had quietly joined in the pro-Shah crowd. When the guns went off, they moved to take the stage and address the Shah and the crowd. SAVAK agents attacked them with lead pipes and clubs, going for the face and eyes. Then the anti-Shah demonstrators surg-

ed forward. The fences protecting the pro-Shah forces went down, the cops fell back and within minutes the pro-Shah forces had fled and disappeared. Welcome banners lining the White House fences were ripped down. Police desperately threw pepper gas and tear gas into the advancing crowd, but soon the gas was blowing onto the White House lawn, causing weeping and gasping by Carter and the Shah and their entourage, wiping the smiles off their faces.

The charge of the anti-Shah forces had hit the phony pro-Shah welcome exactly in its weakest point—the fact that the majority of those standing under the pro-Shah banners had no common interests or loyalty at all for the Shah. Those who'd come for a free weekend vacation and a hundred dollar bill were scattered and blown away like a pile of leaves, leaving behind only the SAVAK agents and some of the 700 Iranian servicemen currently being trained in Texas, who the U.S. government had given three day passes and brought to the White House in Navy buses. As the gas cleared and these forces regrouped to hold their ground, they were engulfed in a wave of demonstrators swinging 2x4s. Within 15 minutes, the field was cleared and the pro-Shah forces dispersed for good. Meanwhile demonstrators had joined White House tours and taken the protest inside, and at one point the fence around the White House was scaled. There was fighting on the White House front lawn.

While a frightened White House aide remarked to a reporter that it looked like a "storming of the palace," Carter was left with nothing else to do but make a feeble joke about how the Shah "sure could attract a crowd." Demonstrators marched around the White House with thousands of clubs and sticks raised in the air. Iranian TV, which had contracted to use the facilities of NBC for the first ever live telecast to Iran, was forced by the turn of events to take its cameras off the ceremony and show the demonstration, although they tried to deal with it by telling the TV audience that these people were "American professional demonstrators paid \$10 a day" and Palestinians (since obviously Americans were a small minority among the protestors). The Shah had been robbed of the big spectacle he had come for—and the very different spectacle that was shown on TV for the next two days left Carter looking pretty bad as well.

A Big Exposure

The whole affair turned out to be a big embarrassment for Carter and the American ruling class, serving as one of the most concrete and striking examples of the real nature of U.S. imperialist policy in the world. It has been reported that Carter had asked the Shah not to come at this time, fearing the inevitable protests and preferring to work things out far from public view. Yet when the Shah insisted Carter couldn't refuse. After the visit had turned out even worse than had been feared, Carter tried to imply—and many bourgeois journalists said openly—that the strategic value of Iran's oil and location "made" it necessary for Carter to deal with the Shah "despite" the nature of the Shah's regime. Nothing could be more ridiculous. In fact the regimes of fascist underlings like the Shah are nothing but the ugly, naked face of imperialism as it expresses itself in the nations it oppresses.

The U.S. has pumped \$22 billion worth of arms and 30,000 U.S. "advisors" into Iran in the past six years in order to build up the Shah's regime as the guardian of U.S. imperialism's interests in the Gulf region through which most Middle Eastern oil must pass. For the Iranian people, the U.S.-backed Shah regime has meant increasingly bitter exploitation and some of the bloodiest repression in today's world. But for the American imperialists, the Shah has been of real value, using his military might to hold back the people's struggle throughout the region and serving as an increasingly important part of the U.S. contention with the USSR. In addition, not only is Iran an important source of oil to the U.S. itself, but also, as the second biggest oil producer in OPEC, the Shah's promise to Carter this trip that Iran will act in OPEC to hold down oil prices has a real weight.

The bourgeoisie has been hurt, so naturally it has hit back. Nine of the Iranian students arrested in Chicago face deportation hearings. There may be more hearings around other arrested Iranians. In keeping with the way the ruling class has tried to deal with the demonstration, the Justice Department has announced that it will investigate "both sides." And of course Carter was not shamed into breaking with the Shah. "The President reaffirmed to His Majesty that he fully supports the special relationship which the two countries have developed over the last 30 years and gave his personal commitment to strengthen further our ties," read a Presidential statement following the Shah's departure to France—where he faced more demonstrations.

The close big dog-little dog relationship between the U.S. ruling class and the Shah will continue, but the explosion of the wrath of the Iranian people that took place around the Shah's visit has helped create conditions less favorable to U.S. support to the Shah and more favorable for continuing and stepping up struggle against them, just at the moment when they need each other more than ever. ■

VVAW...

Continued from page 2

us that we (Vietnam Veterans Against the War) were the only contingent in the whole parade the crowd cheered like this for!

The day before, delegations from the VVAW chapters in San Diego and Los Angeles arrived, we called on vets in the Bay Area to assemble at Third and Market to join us. As the time approached, vets wearing their old battle fatigues, some with medals and campaign ribbons, at least three WW2 vets, Korean War vets and Vietnam vets gathered for a short rally. Then, moving out five abreast, we marched 70 strong to the start of the parade six blocks away. (By the time we were to reach the Review Stand, we would number 100 strong!) We passed by high school drill teams and marching bands, ROTC cadets and the glaring eyes of parade officials.

The parade began. As we rounded the corner onto Market Street, we were determined to tell the world that we veterans will not be used again!! We will not be used to fight another rich man's war, and we certainly won't be used on Veterans Day or any other day to glorify the rich man's blood-soaked rule around the world. That's why they celebrate Veterans Day, and we were there to turn that around! We were there to demand jobs, decent benefits, and that the United States get the Hell out of Panama Now!!

And turn it around we did! We were cheered by people all along the parade. More vets joined our ranks. One donated \$100 worth of printing to VVAW. We were greeted with clenched fists from passersby. The solidarity we felt with the people was overwhelming.

As we counted cadence and sang out: "Fight The Rich and Not Their Wars, It's the Working Class We're Fighting For!", we marched like we'd never marched before. In the service, marching is one way they keep you in line. Here, marching and being organized made sense—it reflected our determination to turn this "National Honor" crap around! It reflected our determination to fight the Rich for what we need!

The crowd knew this and joined us in our demands. We marched by the Review Stand victorious! The hacks on the Stand (made up of VFW and American Legion leadership, military brass and assorted politicians) announced to us over the PA system: "Alright, you've had your little fun. We've given you more time than any other group. Your time is up, now move on."

The crowd booed them down! Someone from the back of our contingent yelled at the 'officials': "No! Your time is up!" We chanted: "U.S. Out of Panama Now! Fight the Rich and Not Their Wars!" We marched on, leaving the parade 'officials' looking pretty damn silly and alone! We had come to "slap the system in the face," we left—stealing the whole show!

The hacks on the Review Stand and the Rich class they represent did not want us there on that day! They did everything they could to keep us out. Last year they flat out denied VVAW entrance into the Vets Day parade. This year, we built a whole campaign around Veterans Day. Huge posters and two leaflets went out all over calling on vets from all wars to join us. We held an organizing meeting and a VVAW Pancake Breakfast! We took a slide show and Vets History photo display around to show how vets from the Revolutionary War to the Vietnam War have always come home angry at being used and thrown away by the Rich class, and have always organized to fight for what we need! VVAW

was on over 14 radio and TV stations in the weeks before Veterans Day. We debated the American Legion and held a number of talk shows ranging from 30 minutes to two hours long. It was this kind of campaign that added up to victory in the "Battle of Veterans Day" in the Bay Area. On the weekend of the parade, almost 50 vets from the West Coast region marched in a demonstration for the International Hotel on the day before the parade. That night, we had a chow mein and fried chicken dinner, then saw the "Battle of the Bicentennial" film.

Our strength was in the thousands of people who knew and supported what we were fighting for. That was the real honor that veterans received this Veterans Day. And like we told the hacks on the Review Stand: Their time is up!

To Hell With Their National Honor—We Won't Be Used Again!

VVAW—Bay Area Chapter ■



At the start of the San Francisco parade, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War contingent numbered 70. By the time it hit the reviewing stand there were 100, chanting and marching in close formation.

Veterans...

Continued from page 2

stellation for one), and the organized GI movement against the war on military bases.

This period saw the formation of Vietnam Veterans Against the War and the phenomena of veterans returning home to protest the very same war they just fought and exposed many atrocities U.S. troops were forced to commit. The demonstration in Washington, D.C. in 1971, organized by VVAW, where vets threw back their war medals to Congress was a tremendous impetus to the struggle against the war.

The bourgeoisie, finding its Vietnam era veterans untrustworthy, decided that one important way to put the war behind them was to keep veterans of that war out of public view. Until recently few motion pictures were made about the Vietnam War or the problems of its veterans, in stark contrast to the flood of patriotic films on both World War 2 and the Korean War. Clearly the immense unpopularity of the Vietnam War made it a subject too hot to handle. Those few that were, especially on television, commonly portrayed Vietnam vets as violent, drug crazed, psycho killers, as the bourgeoisie tried to create a social stigma around Vietnam vets, and generally discredit them.

A Potential Social Force

The experience of VVAW has shown that veterans can be mobilized in the political struggle and that the authority of their experience among the masses can help build up public opinion of a revolutionary character. Already mentioned was the demonstration where Vietnam vets threw their war medals away. Another striking case in point is the campaign around the theme, "We Carried the Rich for 200 Years—Let's Get Them Off Our Backs!" last July 4, 1976 in Philadelphia. VVAW initiated the call for the demonstration and joined with 3000 workers and others from around the country to demand "Jobs or Income Now" and "We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War."

The public presence of VVAW in Philly, not only at the demonstration itself but during the weeks leading up

to it, made it much more possible to counteract the attacks of the bourgeoisie. And again, more recently, the campaign around Veteran's Day 1977 (see article on page 2) where VVAW raised the banner "To Hell With Their National Honor—We Won't Be Used Again!" and the slogans "Fight the Rich, Not Their Wars," "Jobs or Income Now," "U.S. Out of Panama," and demands around veterans benefits all show that vets can be mobilized around key political struggle.

Vets have in the past and continue today, to put up resistance to the attacks on them by the bourgeoisie. At the present time, in particular areas where veterans are concentrated—and especially where their livelihood depends on their status as veterans, such as on junior college campuses or on disability compensation—the attacks by the capitalists and the bureaucracy on veteran benefits can become sharp questions.

VVAW chapters have initiated and lead such struggles and in the course of them tied them into the whole question of "Use Once and Throw Away," that is, exposing and attacking the whole way in which the ruling class, claiming to act in the interest of society as a whole, uses servicemen as cannon fodder in their dirty imperialist wars and the way it mistreats them after they return. This is opposed to the bourgeois line that veterans have performed "special service for their country" and so should get special treatment.

Large numbers of veterans came to oppose the Vietnam War to one degree or another. Although the summation of that war is very uneven, the common feeling among veterans is that they were used to no good and continue to get the shaft. VVAW, as a mass organization of veterans, can play an increasingly important role in deepening the understanding of veterans, and among broader strata of people, to the imperialist nature of that war. Along these lines VVAW has mobilized vets to give material and political support to ongoing national liberation struggles—as when they gave sets of fatigues to the Pan African Congress, which is leading armed struggle in South Africa, on last African Liberation Day—and exposing imperialist war preparations. VVAW can and must play an important role in exposing and struggling against the U.S. imperialists' drive to go to world war with their Soviet counterparts. An important task is to build on the understanding many Vietnam vets gained about the nature of imperialism while stressing the nature of the world war in the making.

In order to better carry out its tasks of organizing the resistance of veterans to their attacks and mobilizing them to play a key political role, and to reach out to

broader numbers of vets, VVAW has developed a kind of minimum membership requirements for veterans who either are not ready to be part of the active core of the organization, or are involved in political struggle on other fronts, especially in the plants. These include paying a small amount in dues, selling a few copies of *The Veteran* each month, and attend "general membership" meetings held every two months or so. These expanded meetings will be "educationals," that is either a speaker, a slide show, movie, etc., coupled with discussion.

Given the fact that many workers are veterans, and that the experience of veterans, especially the millions of young men during the Vietnam War, is something which deeply affects the way they look upon society, this flexible membership policy can bring many new forces into the revolutionary struggle and exert an important political influence on the working class itself. It would be wrong to underestimate this potential.

To illustrate this point it is helpful to take some of the statements striking iron ore miners in Minnesota, a great many of whom are Vietnam veterans, made, words to the effect of: "They used the hell out of the youth of this country in that stinking war in Indochina—U.S. Steel and a lot of other companies made big money on it—now we are going to fight them for what we need" and "If Vietnam had not happened, I would not see things like I do now."

These statements above underline the fact that the masses have numerous and multifaceted experiences that influence them, sometimes to a very great degree. By organizing veterans around the question of "use once and throw away" and mobilizing them into political struggle it is possible to tap the reservoir of hatred for the capitalist system existing among large numbers of veterans and utilize and build upon the experience veterans have around imperialist war.

As the RCP Programme states, "As the working class and its Party increasingly takes up and leads the struggle of veterans and this struggle becomes more consciously aimed against the imperialist system, veterans become a spark for the entire working class movement." And "Veterans, who have already struggled in the tens of thousands against the Vietnam War, can play an increasingly important role against imperialist aggression and suppression—against war preparations and acts of aggression by the imperialists and against future imperialist wars. More, veterans will play an important part in many battles of the masses in this country against the imperialists, as well as in the actual armed struggle to overthrow them." ■

RCYB...

Continued from page 1

ture Is Ours If We Dare to Take It," while underneath it read "Founding Convention of a Young Communist Organization."

As the stormy applause subsided, the convention was officially opened with the pounding of a very special gavel—a length of fence post from Blanket Hill at Kent State University. The meeting was dedicated to the students who were slain in combat at Kent, at Jackson, Orangeburg and Southern University, to those who had taken part in the great student upsurge of the 1960s and early '70s, and to the future generations of youth, the young successors for whom the struggles of today are paving the way.

Political Report

The convention got down to business fast. A member of Newark, New Jersey Youth In Action, who was on the Presidium, presented a report on the situation facing youth and the masses of people at the present time and the tasks of the convention and the organization it would form. Right at the outset it proclaimed, "Our generation, like those of the past, aspire for a world worth living in. A world where no one need know hunger. Where no nationalities are discriminated against and kept down. Where people use their muscles, brains and labor to contribute as fully as possible to overcome social problems and the problems of nature. Where peace is the rule and not a pause.

"These are high ideals—but not idealism. These are lofty goals—but not impractical. Fundamentally, these are the demands of our generation. At times these desires may be in the back of our minds, deep in our hearts or on the tip of our tongues. But every time youth, or anyone else for that matter, enter into the struggle it is not merely against how things are but also for how things should be. This is what we come to this convention to discuss. How to bring to birth a world that makes those ideals a practical reality. How to help mobilize millions of youth to contribute to that struggle. And how to help build up and contribute to a movement that will someday smash that fetter on constructing a new world—the political power of the capitalist class."

From here the report went on to address the question, "Is revolution necessary?" and showed that the roadblock to all those ideals was indeed the capitalists and concluded that "This is our choice—to abandon our hopes and aspirations, for their continued profits, or to abolish their system to make realizable our hopes and dreams. To do the first is to give up life itself, to do the second is to make life worth living."

The report summed up the situation today, with U.S. imperialism in deepening crisis, increasingly challenged by the imperialist USSR, and attacking the masses ever more viciously in its efforts to lighten the effects of that crisis. The general level of struggle is not as high as it was in the '60s although the first shoots of a new and more powerful movement with the working class at its core are visible. In this context, the new organization will have to devote much of its energy to the task of building big battles with small forces, like what the RSB did around Kent State this Fall, using the single spark method of concentrating forces in key battles, seizing the opportunity to spread and develop them to make a breakthrough. In such battles, the communists "have to present an alternative to being whipped around by the arbitrariness of the rulers, an alternative view of what's going on in the world, an alternative future to the one offered by this system."

Testimonials

The report was followed by an inspiring program of "testimonials" in which fighters described briefly some of the key battles they had been in and lessons learned in waging them. Speakers came from Stanford in the Bay Area, where hundreds of students seized a building last Spring in an anti-apartheid battle and triggered similar actions across California; from Kent; from Hawaii, the "island paradise" where the capitalist system operates just like on the mainland and huge battles around evictions have taken place; from Wall Street where hundreds of youths gathered this summer to demand jobs, saying, "If we don't work, you don't work!"; from the International Hotel anti-eviction battle in San Francisco, where hundreds of young people saw just what kind of life and future the capitalists had in store for them; from Ohio, where the young woman speaking had been arrested and subjected to racist threats for her role in smashing the KKK rally on July 4th and still said, "I'm proud I did it and I'd do it again." An important testimonial from the past was delivered by Clark Kissinger, once national secretary of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), who described how SDS had been formed and developed. He compared it with the new group being formed, saying "You have banners, we had banners. You have picket signs, we had picket signs. You have marches, we had

marches. But you have a weapon we didn't have, you have Marxism-Leninism!"

The most enthusiastically received of all these short speeches was that given by a leader of the Iranian Students Association (ISA); fresh from their historic demonstration in Washington, D.C. She was interrupted repeatedly by applause as she described how the ISA had worked to make the American people aware of their struggle and how they had smashed the Shah's bought-and-paid-for "welcoming rally" (see article, p. 1) and when she hailed the long ties of solidarity and mutual support between the ISA and the RSB.

This section of the program was followed by a set of workshops on major political and theoretical questions. Workshops on subjects as diverse as the nature of socialism, doing revolutionary work in a nonrevolutionary situation, religion, the woman question, and the international situation were the scene of spirited discussion following an initial presentation. People came to them to learn about subjects on which they knew little or nothing, to debate questions that had been bothering them, to deepen their understanding of how to handle those issues among the masses. Almost every group summed up that it had had good discussion and that it could have easily used another couple of hours to answer unanswered questions and work out the major implications of what had been discussed.

Speech by Party Chairman

The whole convention reassembled Saturday evening to hear the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party, Bob Avakian, deliver an important speech to the convention. He opened by pointing out that "the working class and its Party put great hopes and store in youth" in the struggle to change the world, to turn things right side up. In describing how the convention itself and the organization it was founding had come about as a result of the struggle and the questions that arise every day in this society, he pointed out that the capitalist system is a great teacher and if the lessons are not grasped the first time, the system will be only too happy to teach them again and again.

He proceeded to show how the inalterable vampire-like nature of the capitalist system and the ruling class promises only oppression and exploitation and, in fact, increasing oppression and exploitation for the masses. He then summed up that the gut hatred that this breeds in people, while it is absolutely indispensable and basic in making revolution, is not sufficient to overthrow the enemy. It must go hand in hand with dialectical materialism, the scientific outlook of revolution, to analyze the contradictions and motions of phenomena in the real world. Only by using this science can the working class win victory.

In the last section of his speech he addressed what communism is, what communists stand for—in opposition to the lurid tales of the bourgeoisie—touching on such questions as dictatorship, atheism, and such views as communism is against human nature, it always goes bad, it's the same as fascism, it's all brainwashing and so forth. In closing he laid out three broad tasks that the new organization would have to take up, in addition to training its members in Marxism-Leninism: first, leading the masses of youth in struggle against the attacks and abuses they face; second, fighting at the side of the working class under the leadership of its Party in the overall struggle against the imperialists and for revolution; and third, broadly and boldly propagating communism among the masses, and especially youth.

The first night concluded with a second set of workshops, on the key battlegrounds for youth and students in the coming period. Despite the late hour and fatigue of many participants, these covered important ground. In the Africa workshop, people began by exchanging summations of their practice. Not only did the reports of local victories paint a picture of a swelling grassroots movement, but they helped people deal with broader questions like how to develop struggle around an issue which is not immediately the most burning one on people's minds and how to draw the real character and lessons of the issue out so it does not remain just a point of moral outrage. The workshop on the Bakke Decision considered among other questions how to work in coalitions with diverse forces and how to draw out the connections between the Bakke direct attack on oppressed nationalities and its effect on different sections of the masses, including the working class.

Before the convention reassembled Sunday, as during every other temporary lull in the scheduled activity, the halls were full of people discussing all sorts of questions, to such an extent that it took a long time to get through the area, even if you didn't wind up in one of the conversations.

The second day's activities began with reports on previous periods of struggle among youth. A former member of the Young Communist League, youth group of the CPUSA during the Great Depression, spoke on how the YCL had been an organization of struggle and an important social force among the broad masses of youth. A former leader of the Black Panther Party in Trenton, New Jersey drew on the positive and negative aspects of his experience to show how a small group can indeed become an influential force with broad support among the masses. Clark Kissinger spoke again, summing up at greater length the contributions and weaknesses of SDS and its effects on American society.

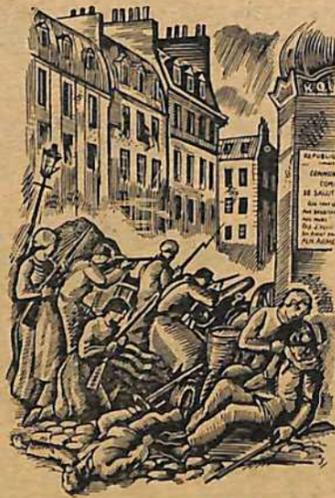
These talks were accompanied by film clips of some of the struggles they described. Indeed throughout the weekend several films and lengths of footage were shown on battles like Wall Street, the International Hotel and a Berkeley sit-in over university complicity in South Africa.

After this the convention went into plenary session to collectively determine the most important questions about the nature of the organization it was bringing into being. Guided by the Presidium, the discussion focused on some key questions which had arisen, particularly in the workshops. The first was the national question and very important questions were discussed. Why is a single Party and communist youth organization needed? Could there be such a thing as "white socialism" under which minorities are still oppressed? Youth and students of all nationalities spoke out. One youth from Oakland, in summing up her experience, told how someone in a Black Student Union there had told her "communism is only for white people," but she had come to the convention anyway to see. She concluded, "I'm going back there and tell her she's wrong, and tell her why!"

A similar discussion took place on the question of freedom, of democracy and dictatorship, both under capitalism and socialism. Again the discussion was lively as the first speaker drew on what he had learned in the workshop on the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and others in theirs.

Nature, Tasks, and Name of the Organization

The plenary moved on to summing up that the kind of organization needed was a communist organization.
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Humphrey-Hawkins

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of the country, while continuing to recognize the valuable role of monetary string-pulling via the Federal Reserve Board. The original movers behind Humphrey-Hawkins wanted to take some beginning steps towards more centralized and long-term government intervention in the economy.

Most business leaders opposed this aspect of the original bill pretty much right on down the line. Their main objection was that large-scale government attempts to "manage" the capitalist economy have led in the past to a higher rate of inflation. This would retard investment in new means of production at a time when the need for increased investment, both to reduce labor costs in general and to improve the competitiveness of U.S. industry *vis-a-vis* its "partners" in Western Europe and Japan, is intensifying. In fact, the current "recovery" has a much lower rate of capital investment than any of the previous five post World War 2 recoveries, which alarms the bourgeoisie.

Not only did inflation jitters shoot down moves towards more planning, at the Carter administration's insistence the bill says specifically that "high rates of capital formation are necessary" to assure expansion of productivity and productive capacity. This particular reassurance points in an entirely different direction than "full employment." Inducing a high rate of capital investment, through tax breaks or other forms of investment credit, might temporarily result in higher employment of some semi-skilled and skilled workers in the machine tool and machine building industries, for example, but overall it will mean less labor is needed—and so more unemployment—in whatever sections of industry might manage to retool.

What the 1977 Humphrey-Hawkins bill boils down to is this:

—Twin goals of 3% adult unemployment (over 20 years old) and 4% unemployment overall by 1983 while maintaining "reasonable price stability." (Inflation is now running at an annual rate of 6 to 6.5% and it is unclear whether this figure, or one somewhat higher, is "reasonable.")

—To this end the President's annual economic report, given every January, must set short-term numerical goals for employment, unemployment, production, real income and productivity for the year at hand and the year after that, and, medium-term goals for the three years following.

—The President must list the programs and policies he thinks are necessary to meet these goals and to include them in the proposed budget.

—The Federal Reserve Board must tell the Congress what it plans to do with the money supply for the coming year and explain how their plans mesh with the administration's short-term goals.

The Humphrey-Hawkins bill, in addition to proposing all these splendid things, gives the President "flexibility to modify the goals if necessity requires."

Labor Officials

Yet, in spite of the bill being 99% hot air, the big-time labor contractors like George Meany have nothing but praise and support for Humphrey-Hawkins as the solution to the unemployment problem. (Of course, since the bill promises much but actually delivers nothing, Meany has warned with his usual flair for understatement that Humphrey-Hawkins will require follow-up action to "translate the promise of this bill into reality." To say the least.)

The bill's main utility to the labor traitors is political and ideological. The masses of union members have persistently demanded that their unions take up the fight for jobs and against unemployment. Aside from calls for protectionism and other trade restrictions, pushing the Humphrey-Hawkins bill is the hacks' way of "getting down" on unemployment.

Humphrey-Hawkins, with its promise of more promises to come, is an act of "renewing the faith" in the bourgeois political setup. It is the tired old AFL-CIO strategy of relying on "labor's friends" in the Congress and administration. And labor's biggest friend in Congress, of course, is the bill's main sponsor, Senator Hubert Humphrey. Indeed, an empty bill full of hot air will make a fine monument to Humphrey's memory.

The unions, along with other forces like Coretta King's section of the old civil rights coalition, have banded together in the Full Employment Action Council (FEAC). This group sponsored a Full Employment Week in early September with press conferences and even some demonstrations.

The Full Employment Week demonstrates that the union leaders are from time to time ready and willing to mobilize a few of "their" workers in political battles and to carry out what they term "independent political action." Over the past few years they have

pulled out the stops for a number of issues, principal among them calls for trade barriers and trade wars to restrict imports. The rub is that their political action is politically reactionary.

The centerpiece of Full Employment Week was Humphrey-Hawkins, though in the fuller program of the FEAC it only fulfills step one ("Set basic national goals and timetables for reducing unemployment"). By focusing the attention of the rank and file on a pact between the unions and the government, through the Full Employment Week and numerous articles in the trade union press like the UAW's *Solidarity* and the USWA's *Steel Labor*, the unions hope to keep at the head of the demands to deal with unemployment at the same time as they try to keep rank and file anger from turning into struggle *against* the bourgeoisie.

Of course, in order to demobilize the rank and file after the winning of Humphrey-Hawkins the government will probably have to come up with a few jobs. And while a very small number of jobs may be thrown as a bone to the union hacks, most jobs will undoubtedly be of the workfare type Carter is pushing for. And this "fight for jobs" which will bring more attacks than concessions will be handled in the time-honored method of bourgeois politicking—behind doors conferences, arm wringing, fancy dinners, vote getting and cloak room maneuvering—none of which is supposed to concern average workers and is better left to their "betters" in the upper crust of the labor aristocracy.

So Humphrey-Hawkins is both a way to mobilize faith in the bourgeois system and to, after a period of time, demobilize the enthusiasm of the workers for political struggle.

The full program of the FEAC, as excerpted by *Ammo*, a UAW publication, is:

—Set basic national goals and timetables for reducing unemployment;

—Set balanced growth rates for all major areas of total national production;

—Set goals for growth in health, education, recreation, communications, etc.;

—Make full employment a long-range goal without neglecting immediate needs;

—Balance the federal budget; and

—Reject the "trade-off" theory [that high inflation and low unemployment, and vice versa, are necessarily connected].

Points two and three, set national growth rates, pick up the national planning theme that the Humphrey-Hawkins bill lost between last year and this. Point four is simply asking that long-range and short-range planning complement each other. Points five and six are ridiculous pious wishes under imperialism, an appropriate sum-

mation of the whole list.

The FEAC, by demanding—and therefore holding up the possibility of—national planning attempts to ignore (in fact, cover up) the inherent anarchy of capitalism. The idea of a rational economy without crisis, dislocation, chronic unemployment, etc., strikes a responsive chord among workers. But to contend that this is possible under capitalism is absurd and even a quick glance at the situation of the "planned economy" in Britain, for example, shows just how far off such a possibility is.

The whole program of the FEAC, like that of the labor hacks generally, is to promote the illusion that somehow the laws of capitalism aren't really laws at all, and that the government can just step in and insure something for everybody—jobs for the workers, profits for the bosses, and no inflation to boot.

If anything, the whole situation in the economy in the 1970s is a refutation of this fallacy. The capitalists have long found it necessary for the government to play a role in stimulating the economy (out of concern for profits) but the very measures they have taken are increasingly bouncing back on them and intensifying the basic contradictions of their system. The bourgeois economists have even coined a word—"stagflation"—to describe the situation of combined stagnation and chronic unemployment coupled with inflation.

Fighting for a capitalist system with a harmony of interest between labor and capital, without crises, without inflation, is, of course, an idle pipe dream. But what is very real is the political assault carried out under this cover.

Not only are the workers disarmed, told to place all their hopes on these pie-in-the-sky schemes, but the actual plans and programs that will be implemented under the cover of efforts to create a "rational" capitalist system will be the things that Carter and the bourgeoisie are already digging up: work programs used to drive down wages, cuts in unemployment benefits, perhaps new attempts at wage controls, and so forth.

While Humphrey-Hawkins has lost some of its immediate bite by not directly setting up the framework for massive wage-cutting programs, it has lost none of its slow poison. The trade union structure has shown that it will appeal to the rank and file around a political program that lashes out at a major running sore of capitalism, unemployment. But the program of the union leaderships is reactionary and leads workers back into the sinkhole of bourgeois politics.

The union leaders have taken up the cudgel of political struggle around unemployment and the workers must battle them back to propel the struggle around unemployment forward. ■

RCYB...

Continued from page 15

zation which would take up the tasks laid out by Bob Avakian in his speech. A statement of principles proposed by the Revolutionary Communist Party was adopted which embodied the position of the new organization on the situation in the world and the U.S. today and on the most important issues facing youth and the masses and which called clearly for socialist revolution and communism and identified the organization as the youth organization of the RCP, USA.

This discussion actually continued in another form and higher unity was reached in the discussion over the name of the group. There were two major proposals put forward—one by the RCP for the name Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade and one submitted by members of one chapter of the RSB who favored Revolutionary Youth Movement. It soon became clear that the real question was whether or not the word "communist" should appear in the group's name.

The written proposal for the other name actually tended to undercut the whole idea of a communist youth group in favor of a more general group which people didn't have to consider themselves communists to join. Some other speakers expressed reservations about using the term communist in the group's name, because they felt it would serve as a roadblock to carrying out the group's goals and make the issue in everything the organization did the question of communism. Both long-time communists and new people took part in the discussion, and by a great majority were in support of the RCP proposal. Drawing on experiences, particularly in building for the convention, they pointed out that the controversy over communism is unavoidable anyway and is a good thing which can help the group in carrying out its basic tasks. Anti-communism is a real phenomenon in this society but it cannot be uprooted among the masses if it is not confronted. Several people said, "Dammit, we *are* communists, we should say so!" The whole session helped consolidate people's understanding of what it meant to build and be part of a *communist* organization. This organization, while a militant force in every major struggle facing youth, will at the same time be clearly identified as standing for the overthrow of the existing order and clearly offer to youth—particularly working class youth, to whom

capitalism can offer nothing of substance—a life with a purpose and the future of communism.

When the vote was finally taken, it was overwhelmingly and enthusiastically in favor of the RCP's proposal. The Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade had been formed!

There was still much work to do, however. The convention heard a moving statement of solidarity from Mzonke Xozo, a cofounder with Steven Biko of the South African Student Association and currently a representative of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). In his speech he stated that the students who were murdered at Kent State and those gunned down in Soweto alike were comrades fallen in the struggle against imperialism. He went on to describe the heroic, difficult and victory-bound struggle that is raging in Azania today.

With little time left, the organization quickly passed on proposals for campaigns from the Africa, Bakke and jobs workshops, with plans for educational activities, local actions and big national demonstrations. Then a new leadership was chosen. The group divided into regions and nominated representatives to the National Political Committee of the new organization. The RCP and the old national office of the RSB also put a few names into nomination and the convention voted unanimously to accept the proposed slate, a broad body combining youth and students and experienced cadres and fighters who have come forward recently.

This new leading body, like the whole organization, has its work cut out for it. The convention had to leave many questions unsettled—from major tasks like overcoming the relative underrepresentation of working class youth compared to college student members, a legacy, among other things, of the longer existence of the RSB than any of the youth groups, to fleshing out the campaigns. Among these tasks is also the publication of a collection of the major documents and decisions of the convention.

At the same time, the members of the RCYB are in an excellent position to undertake the workload facing them. Their organization has come into being, strong and with a good and hard-earned understanding of its own character and tasks, an understanding which will now be put to work and deepened in practice and struggle in cities and on campuses all over the country.

The closing speech of its founding convention expressed the spirit of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade: "We are determined to be the generation that grows up to establish socialism in this country. The future *is* ours, because we have shown this weekend that we do dare to take it." ■