

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

The Workers' Advocate

Supplement



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Dec. 20, 1987

On the 70th anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia:

Defend the principles of scientific socialism!

The MLP marked the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 with dynamic meetings on Dec. 5 in New York, Detroit, Seattle, and the San Francisco Bay Area. See the Jan. 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate** for more details. The following speech was among those given at the meetings. It has been edited for publication.

Comrades and friends,
Seventy years ago, in the midst of that terrible

bloodletting known as World War I, the question was posed sharply for the working masses -- which way out from this capitalist hell?

The Russian working class answered decisively. They rose up against their own capitalist blood-suckers and blazed a trail of socialist revolution that shook the whole world.

Today the world is again shaking. And, for the masses of working people, the question has come up again of finding the alternative to this oppressive capitalist system.

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Why the solidarity movement should not support the Central America pact

The MLP meetings of Dec. 5 on the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution also dealt with the struggle in Central America. The following speech was delivered in Detroit.

What is going down in Central America? What should the workers and progressive activists here in the U.S. do about it? These are hot questions. They are questions growing hotter as the drama of the Central American peace pact unfolds.

Over last months, there has been a fresh wave of struggle against U.S. intervention in Central America. At the Concord naval base in California, there is an ongoing battle over the death train shipments of munitions to Central America. Here in Detroit, there was another good sized rally on October 4. Among other things, October 4 showed that the networks of college and high school activists that emerged last spring continue to organize and grow.

This shows the determination of the working and young people to stop Reagan's dirty war and

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**STATEMENT OF
THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN ON
THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF COMRADE JAFAR SHAFI'EE**

WORKERS, TOILERS!

Comrade Jafar Shafi'ee, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran and member of the Central Committee of Komala who was leaving Kurdistan to go abroad on an organizational mission, lost his life as a result of a collision with the car that carried him on the evening of Thursday, October 29th in Iraq. The sorrow of his loss weighs heavily on our hearts and the hearts of all free-thinking, revolutionary and communist people.

Comrade Jafar was a well-known figure in the communist movement in Iran, one of the founders of the CPI, a popular leader among the workers, party comrades, and the masses of toiling and struggling people in Kurdistan. He is among those to whom our Party owes a great deal of its achievements.

To rear leaders of his kind, the communist movement and the working class [has to] undergo years of struggle and many arduous experiences. He was among those communist leaders whose name, behavior, and every act symbolizes and spurs the struggle toward liberation from bondage, inequality, and exploitation. He was the embodiment of a communist leader of masses of workers and

toilers.

In his years of political and communist struggle against the unjust system of capital, against the regimes of the Shah and of the Islamic Republic, he undertook tasks of the heaviest responsibility. In various organizational positions, in the Central Committee and Politbureau of Komala; in the Central Committee of CPI, as the chief editor of the radio "Voice of the Iranian Revolution" and of party publications, in his writings and speeches, in various political and organizational missions, he was a remarkable example of communist faith, ingenuity, and dedication. He was a distinguished, valuable, and untiring pioneer of our Party in propagating communism, in informing, unifying, and organizing the workers, in exposing the demagogues, and in struggling against the revisionists and the false claimants of Marxism and communism.

His absence is undoubtedly a great loss to our Party and our class.

The name and the shining memory of comrade Jafar has left its unforgettable mark on the hope-inspiring resonance of communism, on the fight against the enemies of freedom and the exploited humanity, on exposing the enemies of the working class, and on directing our class on the path toward socialism and communism -- a path chosen by hundreds and thousands of communist workers.

The path of the liberation of our class is filled with numerous heroisms, dedication and self-sacrifices of which Dr. Jafar's life and struggle was indeed the full manifestation.

The memory of our beloved comrade [will] inspire the conscious proletariat, his fellow strugglers and the communist pioneers of the working class in their efforts to build up the world of free and equal people. The grief of his loss [will] turn into an even firmer determination in bringing down the system of poverty and enslavement.

**Long live socialism!
Cherished is the memory of comrade Jafar
Shafi'ee!
Long live freedom, equality, and workers'
government!**

The C.C. of the Communist Party of Iran
30 October 1987

The above is from a leaflet of the CPI--the Committee Abroad. Our Party mourns with CPI the loss of this communist revolutionary. <>

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On the national meeting of sympathizers of the CP of Iran
HOW SHOULD THE IRANIAN ACTIVISTS PARTICIPATE IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE U.S.?

Recently various circles of sympathizers of the Communist Party of Iran held a U.S.-wide conference or seminar. It dealt with the question of strengthening the work of these activists.

Positive Features

There were a number of positive features of this meeting.

Support for the Communist Party of Iran

For one thing, this meeting manifested support for the Communist Party of Iran. We think that this is quite important. The CPI is the organized force in Iran that fights against the bourgeoisie, both the Khomeini regime and the liberal bourgeoisie, and upholds the class independence of the proletariat. It is the force that fights consistently for the revolution. In our view, support for the proletarian political party in Iran is an essential part of support for the class struggle.

Participation in Communist Work in the U.S.

As well, the meeting centered on the issue of participation in political activities in the U.S. This too is quite an important issue. We believe that Iranians resident in the U.S. should not only support the revolution in the homeland, but take part in the class struggle in the U.S. This is important for their political training. As well, the participation of activists from other countries strengthens the movement in the U.S. immensely.

**Improve the Situation in the Circles
of Sympathizers**

The meeting also considered the question of how the sympathizers' circles should organize their work. We believe that it is possible to improve this work. So an open discussion of this point is no doubt quite useful.

**But Also Negative Features:
An Orientation Towards a Dual Party**

In our view, however, this meeting was dominated by wrong views on various of these questions.

It discussed building a new communist organization or network (or establishing a process

to later declare such an organization or network) to deal with the struggle in the U.S. The meeting gave such examples as the anti-apartheid movement, the struggle against U.S. intervention in Central America, the struggle in the factories, etc. But it avoided making an assessment of how the class struggle in the U.S. is being waged, and what the different trends in the American left were. It avoided the issue of the struggle in the American left between reformism and liquidationism on one hand and revolutionary Marxism-Leninism on the other. It avoided the issue of taking a serious attitude to party-building by simply saying that it recognized no one as the party. Facing differing views among the Iranian activists concerning all these questions, it failed to start a process of resolving these differences and establishing clarity.

Instead, in essence, the meeting took the stand of evading the issue of party-building and the concrete situation in the U.S. with the idea of forming an organization or trend based either on Iranian nationality or sympathy to Iranian issues.

Although the meeting didn't put it in these terms, this plan is based on the ideology of building a dual party of some sort in the U.S. or a party based loosely on nationality. We believe this is a profoundly wrong orientation. It does propaganda that the proletariat should be split up according to nationality. It also will harm the work in support of the Iranian revolution and in support of the Communist Party of Iran. It is an idea that has been tried many times in the American left with regard to other countries, and there is a wealth of experience that shows it to be a mistake.

The meeting didn't use such terms as "dual party" or "nationality party". But this was the drift of where its proposals were leading.

It should be noted that what the meeting was discussing was not simply an organization to deal with work that is a direct extension of party work inside Iran. Our Party has repeatedly extended the hand of internationalist assistance to overseas party organizations which carry out work which is part of the struggle in the homeland. But this was not what was at stake at the meeting. It was instead an organization or network connected to the class struggle in the U.S.

Furthermore, even here, the problem was not simply that the meeting considered forming a new organization. The problem was that the meeting did not see the need to consider the ongoing

struggle in the American left between opportunism and Marxism-Leninism. It did not seriously examine the present situation in the class struggle in the U.S. at all. It did not take seriously the role it should play inside the American left, but instead thought it could evade all these issues by loosely, in a vague manner, defining itself as somehow based on Iranian issues. Let us look into some of the issues raised by the discussion in this meeting. We will be dealing with the general ideas that came up, whether in speeches or individual discussions. We are not saying that everyone or even most comrades had all these ideas. We are not denouncing this or that comrade who may have expressed these ideas: on the contrary, we want to strengthen our comradeship with the Iranian activists. We are saying, however, that these ideas were influential in the work of the meeting and harmed it.

Participation in the Mass Movement Requires Taking the Class Struggle Seriously

The meeting dwelt a good deal on the question of participation in the mass movement in the U.S. But it had no assessment of even the most overall features of the ongoing class struggle. This is a mistake. Participation in the mass movement must be on a conscious basis if it is to have a positive effect.

Consider the struggle of the Communist Party of Iran itself. It didn't simply organize for participation in the struggle. It began with, and continually developed, its assessment of the class struggle. It had a burning idea of what it wanted to accomplish in the mass struggle. It fought (with differing methods, as appropriate) the reactionary Khomeini regime, the bourgeois liberals like Bani Sadr, and the practices of the various opportunist trends. Without a concrete assessment of such things as the role of the bourgeoisie in Iran, the CPI would have gotten no where and there would have been no reason for its formation.

Likewise, in the U.S., one must fight the Reaganites, the influence of the Democratic Party as well as that of the Republican Party, and the various reformist and liquidationist currents that bow down before the bourgeoisie. Otherwise participation in the mass movement becomes either an empty phrase or tailing behind the reformists.

Activists may start participating without being clear on everything. That is natural. But it is essential that the activists take a serious attitude towards dealing with the class struggle. Then they can constantly sum up experience and move forward. Only through this process can unity develop among the revolutionary activists.

In the past in these circles, a concrete assess-

ment of what is going on in the U.S. has often been replaced by the idea that a program of demands would galvanize the American workers' movement. This is just another way of closing one's eyes to the actual class struggle. In fact, such programs of demands have existed. But a program, in itself, doesn't overcome the difficulties.

For example, any strike in the U.S. is faced by resistance from the labor bureaucrats. Overcoming this resistance requires protracted work among the rank-and-file workers to destroy their faith in the official apparatus of the unions and to encourage their initiative to organize independently of the bureaucrats. This process cannot be short-cut simply by introducing the perfect program of demands. Nor would such a program unite the various left groups. The division between the reformists and the Marxist-Leninists is on such questions as the attitude to the labor bureaucrats, and this difference would not go away in the face of a new program.

Having a Conscious Role in the Fierce Struggle Between Liquidationism and Communism

Another issue that the meeting overlooked was assessing the ongoing, bitter, protracted battle between opportunism and communism in the U.S. The reformists are seeking to keep the masses tied to the Democratic Party. The liquidators (those who profess Marxism-Leninism while in fact supporting the reformist political line and opposing building a revolutionary political party) are in league with the reformists. A fierce struggle is being waged on such questions as:

**to trail behind the Democratic Party and the liberal bourgeoisie or to build up an independent movement of the working class;

**to uphold militancy and struggle or to fear to do anything that might frighten away the liberals;

**to oppose the hold of the labor bureaucracy over the working class or to seek a cozy niche in the labor bureaucracy;

**to organize the masses against racism and national oppression or to fall behind the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations, such as Reverend Jesse Jackson;

**to build the proletarian political party, or to denigrate party-building;

**to uphold the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism or to fall in with the current sneering at everything revolutionary; and

**to perform revolutionary work in the midst of the workers' movement and other struggles or to boycott various movements as inherently impure.

Some of the liquidators cover their opportunism with a show of leftist phrases. For

example, the OMLWP makes a show of having a very "left" criticism of the communist movement of the past, even denying that it exists. But when it comes to their own work, they trail after the reformist-led forces such as CISPES. They have ridiculed our Party for its independent communist work in the movement against U.S. intervention in Central America and advocated trailing the reformists. (See "OMLWP Repeats the Errors of the 7th Congress of the C.I." in the Sept. 25, 1985 of the **Supplement**.) At the present, it appears to be a couple of the more revolutionary-sounding of the liquidationist groups that have some influence among the U.S. circles of sympathizers of the CPL.

When one participates in the mass movement, one is in practice taking a stand on these issues of the struggle between opportunism and communism. It doesn't matter whether one is conscious or not of the struggle in the American left or the situation facing the workers' movement. One's actions inevitably play a role. One may be unaware of the significance of doing these things. But, whether consciously or unconsciously, his or her action has an effect on this struggle all the same.

Therefore it is important for activists to take this struggle seriously. It is no sin for someone to start participating in demonstrations without clarity. At a time when the reformists and liquidators dominate the movement, most people begin activity under the influence of the liberal or reformist or liquidationist organizations and their slogans. But it is a sin to close one's eyes to what is going on, for then one will never break free of the influence of the political servants of the bourgeoisie.

This is why it is so harmful that the meeting shuffled aside any concrete consideration of this struggle inside the American left. This meeting did not consist simply of naive new activists. It talked in the name of Marxism-Leninism; it had some idea of the experience of the Communist Party of Iran; and various of the participants had some experience in the U.S. But the orientation of the meeting led away from considering the struggle in the U.S. movement against revisionism, against reformism, and against liquidationism.

The Struggle Against Revisionism Is Regarded as Sectarianism

Indeed, one of the ideas that was spread at the meeting was that the struggle against opportunism in the U.S. was sectarianism. This wasn't said in so many words. But this idea had influence because the meeting ignored the way the struggle between opportunism and Marxism-Leninism manifests itself in demonstrations,

factories, and elsewhere. Instead the idea came up that our Party is sectarian because we are unable to mobilize certain of the more revolutionary-sounding liquidationist groups into revolutionary activity. Presumably it is our fault that these groups carry out in practice their opportunism; it is presumably supposed to be up to us to maneuver these groups into becoming active, positive forces in the movement.

For example, it would be said that certain of the more left-sounding liquidationist groups were simply groups of communist activists rising from the ranks of the working class. So it would be implied that opposition to the revisionism and reformism of these groups was sectarianism.

If this idea was taken to its logical conclusion, it would mean that revisionism and reformism would be regarded as something belonging only to the realm of historical questions and abstract theory, while supposedly everyone who sounds left can unite in the ongoing class struggle. But this isn't true in Iran, and it isn't true in the U.S. either.

Denigrating the Struggle for the Party

Another wrong idea at the meeting was the denigration of the need to build a proletarian political party.

Our Party, the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA, is dedicated to building up the political organization of the working class. We believe that all revolutionary Marxist-Leninists should join us in this task. Our Party is the only nationally-organized force in the U.S. that fights inside the mass movement and the among the workers for revolutionary communism against reformism, liberalism, and revisionism.

But when we say that the meeting denigrated the task of party-building, we do not simply mean that the activists did not immediately recognize our party as the genuine communist party in the U.S. We understand quite well that activists must make up their minds themselves. We do not seek to force people into our Party. On the contrary, we rally around ourselves those who are sincerely and fervently convinced of the need to build up our Party, and we tell them the truth about the path of struggle and sacrifice that this requires.

The problem with the meeting was not that it did not immediately agree with us. The problem was that it didn't take seriously the need to build the party in the U.S. at all. It didn't have its own assessment of what is needed to build the party or what party should be built. Instead it simply brushed the question aside.

For example, one argument was that an international communist organization, such as the

Comintern, does not presently exist. If it existed, Iranian activists could simply join its local branch in the U.S. But since it doesn't, well, one could apparently forget about the issue of building a party in the U.S. and leave it to someone else.

But if one can ignore the issue of party-building in the U.S. because an international communist organization doesn't exist, then it would stand to reason that one could ignore it in Iran or anywhere else. And then where would we be, if everyone waited until an international organization was formed? And how could one carry out ardent work about the need to support a definite party in Iran, the Communist Party of Iran, when the ideology is presented that the issue of building a party is quite minor with respect to participation in the class struggle in the U.S.?

It is the job of every communist to either support the communist party of each country, or to support building up a new party in those places where the old party is corrupt. When communists organize, they have to take seriously assessing what the state of the party is in the country they are working in. They have to orient all their activity to building up a party. This task is obligatory, whether or not an international organization exists.

Sectarianism on Historical Questions

Another way of denigrating the task of party-building was to suggest that there cannot be unity around a party without perfect agreement on the exact analysis of how the Soviet Union degenerated. For example, the CPI presently appears inclined to the idea that the Soviet Union became state capitalist in the late 1920's. Some comrades at the meeting advocated that this means that the Marxist-Leninist Party could not be recognized, since we regard the crucial turning point as taking place in the 1930's, and then giving rise to a process of further degeneration.

This, in our view, is a sectarian argument.

We believe that it is important that communists oppose Soviet revisionism. The present-day Soviet Union is a state-capitalist country, not a socialist homeland. And the communists must oppose the strategy and tactics set forward by Soviet revisionism for the working class movement.

But the historical study of the Soviet Union and how it degenerated is still in a preliminary stage. (The CPI itself has not yet published the background material that would provide evidence for the assertions it makes in its historical articles.) And even if this study were ten times more advanced, it would be utter nonsense to insist on splits in the world Marxist-Leninist movement on the basis of what year one regards

as the turning point in the Soviet Union. And it is precisely a question of calling for splits among the revolutionary communists of the world when one says that two parties can't recognize each other without perfect agreement on this question. Or can one believe that there will be a world movement consisting of parties that refuse to recognize each other?

We don't say this from lack of confidence in our own analysis of the Soviet Union. Although our analysis is still in a preliminary stage, we are convinced that study of the changes in the political line in the mid-1930's is essential for criticism of current-day revisionism. We believe it is also necessary to look at prior years. And we are still looking into the political and economic pressures prior to the mid-1930's that created the conditions for this change. But the question of the previous years, which is a vital and important issue, cannot wipe out the significance of the change in line in the mid-1930's. For example, criticism of the errors of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International of 1935 is extremely useful in developing a correct idea of united front tactics, party-building, participation in the mass movement, etc.

We believe that the CPI, our Party, and other revolutionary Marxist-Leninists should vigorously exchange views on these historical issues. We look forward to this. But we are opposed to allowing this to degenerate into sectarianism.

Political Clarification -- A Burning Need in the Iranian Circles

On these and other questions, there were various views among those who participated in the meeting. Some Iranian comrades liked one organization in the U.S., and others preferred different groups. There were also different stands on what the situation in the class struggle in the U.S. was.

In this situation, we believe that the task of the meeting wasn't to hide this situation. We did not want the meeting to impose stands that didn't correspond to the views of the bulk of the activists present. But the task was to advance the work of political and ideological clarification. This could not be done by shuffling aside issues on which there were differences.

Step Up the Work in Support of the Communist Party of Iran

For one thing, even though this was a meeting organized by the local circle of sympathizers of the CPI, there was need for more work in support of the stands of the CPI. There were many activists whose support of the CPI is still at quite a

low level. And there were comrades present who were not actually supporters of the CPI.

We think that the meeting failed to really push forward the work in support of the CPI. We do our best to spread support for the CPI among the American working class and all activists in the U.S. And we look forward to cooperating with all other comrades who see the same need.

Take a Serious Attitude Towards the Situation in the American Movement

With respect to the class struggle in the U.S. and the situation in the American movement, the meeting also failed to put forward the need for clarification. It evaded the differences. Instead it should have looked the differences among the activists squarely in the face and thought over ways to begin a process of clarification among them. Evasion may seem like a convenient way to ensure unity. But it is bound to lead to serious problems in the future.

One Step Forward, and Another Step Back

This is why we feel that the meeting seminar failed to accomplish its basic goals. It took a big step forward in bringing together the supporters of the CPI, in calling for participation in the class struggle in the U.S., and in discussing what the circles of supporters should be doing.

But it took one or two big steps backward in evading the serious ideological and political differences among the Iranian activists. It failed to step up the work for the Communist Party of Iran, it downplayed the struggle against revisionism and reformism in the U.S., it downplayed the question of party-building in the U.S., and it neglected a concrete consideration of political trends in the U.S. The vagueness of the organizational plans presented at the meeting was also a definite drawback.

The Tasks Before the Iranian Activists

We believe that the Iranian activists, like immigrants and activists from other countries, are faced with a three-part task.

Support the Struggle in the Homeland

There is the struggle in support of revolution in the homeland. We think that it is correct and important for the Iranian activists to work actively for the Iranian revolutionary movement. This will have a good effect both on the situation in Iran and on the movement in the U.S.

What type of organizations should be formed for this purpose? On one hand, we think that the overseas party organizations from Iran can be used for work that is directly part of the revolutionary movement in Iran.

At the same time, the MLP,USA itself propagates support for the Iranian revolution among the workers and activists. When the work in support of an oppressed nationality or of revolution in the homeland is taken up by a genuinely revolutionary communist party uniting all nationalities (and by various organizations that support such a party), then this work can take on its full revolutionary significance. If, say, the work for the Iranian revolution were segregated into simply Iranian immigrant circles, it would suffer and be narrowly constricted.

Fight Against Attacks on Iranians in the U.S.

There is also the struggle against oppression of the Iranians, whether local racist attacks or deportations and U.S. government repression. The Iranians, as other national groups, are faced with defending themselves against such attacks.

The MLP also calls upon the workers and activists of all nationalities to defend the Iranians and other immigrants.

Take Part in the Struggle in the U.S.

As well, we believe that Iranian activists, as all immigrants, should take part in the struggle in the U.S. We have already developed this point above, so we shall not go into it further here. Let us simply say that we hope that the meeting, despite the errors in orientation, does indeed usher in further contact between the Iranian activists and the U.S. movement. By putting forward our views, we hope to contribute to a process of strengthening the work of the CPI sympathizers' circles in the U.S. <>

PROTEST OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN TO THE OMLWP

The following letter is reprinted from **Bolshevik Message**, paper of the CPI-the Committee Abroad. It protests the way OMLWP reports on a seminar held in winter '86-'87. The letter states:

"We argued (against the the argument of the OMLWP delegation) that any measure which gives the impression that a new trend is being formed or that the organizations involved are forming a tendency would be far from the truth, harmful to the cause of real communist militants, and therefore would be strongly opposed by us. Our argument was apparently accepted by the seminar."

However, the OMLWP has in fact promoted the idea of an international trend arising from the seminar. The CPI letter mentions various facts about this. As well, since the CPI wrote this letter, the OMLWP has put out a publication, the **Extra Bulletin**, which claims to be the voice of an international trend. (We have only seen issue #1, dated August 1987.) The **Extra Bulletin** does not openly declare itself as a journal of the OMLWP but instead states that it

"is independent, but in basic support of a developing international trend: Communist Party of Iran; Organizzazione Comunista Internazionalista (Italy); Organization for a Marxist-Leninist Workers' Party (U.S.A.)..."

In fact it is (or was) a paper of the OMLWP while it decked itself out as the journal of an international trend. -- **The Supplement**.

LETTER TO THE OMLWP

Workers' Truth, No. 7, paper of the "Organization for a Marxist-Leninist Workers' Party" (U.S.A.) has published a report of a seminar in which it has referred to the Communist Party of Iran. The following letter was sent by the CPI to the OMLWP in this connection. For the information of those who may have read the **WT** report we hereby publish the CPI letter.

BM [Bolshevik Message].

* * * * *

OMLWP
Boxholder, P.O. Box 5830
Chicago, IL, 60680
U.S.A.

July 1st, '87

Dear OMLWP,

I am writing in protest to your report in **Workers' Truth** No. 7 (March '87) of the seminar in winter '86-'87 in which the CPI also took part.

There are many points in your report that make us protest to you. We do not wish to dwell on minor ones. It is enough to mention that there are inaccuracies in reporting the discussions and especially in reporting the positions put forward by the CPI; there are quotations from (two) CPI papers as if they were the resolutions of a conference, while in reality those papers put forward the CPI views; a CPI paper has been supplemented to your report which, incidentally, you were informed that it was not for general publications; ...

But, above all, you sum up the seminar as an experience which "should prove to be a big aid in unifying and organizing revolutionary Marxist-Leninists internationally" and you talk of the organizations in this seminar as belonging to an international trend or tendency. As your delegates to the seminar are well aware, in the final session of the seminar we explicitly stated that we consider this seminar as a seminar of discussion on certain theoretical problems. We argued (against the argument of the OMLWP delegation) that any measure which gives the impression that a new trend is being formed or that the organizations involved are forming a tendency would be far from the truth, harmful to the cause of real communist militants, and therefore would be strongly opposed by us. Our argument was apparently accepted by the seminar.

In view of all the above, we wonder what sectarian reasons may have motivated such a measure on your part, but we consider the publication of such a report by the OMLWP as unprincipled and opportunistic.

We demand your serious attention to this question and your explicit and public self-criticism in this regard. We consider this as the assurance for a principled relationship between us. Otherwise, and as long as you do not in this way assure us that such unhealthy methods would not be repeated, we see no point in continuing any relation with your organization.

For the benefit of your readers, I request that you publish this letter in the next issue of **WT**.

For the Political Bureau of
the Communist Party of Iran
Iraj Azarin<>

**FROM THE
RESOLUTIONS OF THE SECOND CONGRESS
OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA
FALL, 1983**

**On the Unity of Workers of
All Nationalities in a Single Party**

"There must be only one Marxist-Leninist party in each country. The proletarian movement needs unified leadership. Only a unified, class conscious vanguard can successfully lead the entire working class and revolutionary movement of the country and concentrate the energies of the working masses so that they make the supreme effort required to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie.

"Furthermore, the genuine communist party must not be a federation of different national groups, but must unite unconditionally the workers of all nationalities of the given country. If the proletarian party were simply a federation of national groups, or if there were separate parties for the workers of different nationalities in the same country, it would lead to chaos, to splintering the working class movement and reducing it to a weak and fragmented federation. Instead, the party must unite the workers of all nationalities and itself vigorously lead the struggle against national oppression.

"Although there must be only one party for each country, sometimes a party has to have certain organization in other countries. The Bolsheviks, for example, had certain party organization abroad prior to 1917. But this is not incompatible with the principle of one party, if a distinction is maintained between the work that is part of the revolutionary movement in the host country, and that hence should be done by the party of that country, and the work that is a direct part of the revolutionary work in the homeland, even if circumstances force it to be conducted outside the homeland. [For example, the Bolsheviks published the famous newspaper Iskra outside Russia and smuggled it back inside. If a party today had to publish its journal in the U.S. and smuggle it back into the homeland, this would be work that is a direct part of revolutionary work in the homeland. --ed.] Our Party extends the hand of fraternal proletarian internationalist cooperation to such overseas party organizations of other parties."

(From the resolution "On the Relations Between the Marxist-Leninist Parties".)

In Defense of the Immigrant Workers

"The capitalist rulers of the U.S. have always singled out various sections of immigrant workers for harassment, discrimination and persecution. In times past, Irish, Italian, Eastern European and other immigrants were subject to this sort of treatment. Today the brunt of the attacks falls on immigrants from the oppressed nations of Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa. ...

"Those without documents, the so-called 'illegal' immigrants, face the worst situation. The capitalists and their apologists are raising a big chauvinist hysteria over the question of the undocumented immigrants. Seeking to cover over the failures of the capitalist system, the capitalists and labor bureaucrats blame the undocumented immigrants for unemployment in the U.S. The capitalists, in reality, are not against exploiting the labor of the undocumented workers' they are only against giving them rights. The labor of the undocumented immigrants is very useful to the capitalists as a form of semi-slave labor. At the same time as they make fat profits from this labor, the capitalists organize system terror against the undocumented workers so that they cannot fight back against their brutal exploitation. Chauvinist hysteria against the undocumented workers is useful to reinforce the terror and to split the immigrant workers from the rest of the working class. ...

"The immigrant communities in the U.S. have always been centers of organizing by political activists in support of the progressive and revolutionary movements in their homelands. This activity has an enlivening influence on the revolutionary movement in the U.S. and has been a sharp thorn in the side of both the U.S. government and various reactionary and fascist governments abroad. ..."

"The Marxist-Leninist Party opposes all attacks and persecution of the immigrant workers. It stands for full equality and rights for all immigrants, documented or undocumented. The oppression of a sub-caste of immigrant workers is an attack on all the workers. the MLP urges all the workers to come to the aid of their fellow immigrant workers."

(From the resolution "The Struggle Against Racism and National Oppression")

**The Marxist-Leninist Party is the Party
of All Class-Conscious Workers,
Whether Immigrant or Native-Born**

"The Marxist-Leninist Party considers the immigrant workers as part of the American working class. Thus it encourages the immigrant workers to join in the class struggle and revolutionary work against the U.S. capitalist rulers.

"Since the immigrant workers face not just exploitation as wage slaves but also special oppression, the Marxist-Leninist Party supports the immigrant working masses in fighting back against discrimination, persecution and racist attacks. It encourages all workers to defend the immigrants.

"Also, since the immigrant workers have close ties and deep interest in the revolutionary movement in the homelands, the Marxist-Leninist Party

encourages and supports revolutionary work in support of these struggles.

"The Marxist-Leninist Party holds that there can only be a single vanguard for the working class of each country. The MLP is the party of the class conscious workers of all nationalities, foreign or native-born, immigrant or citizen.

"The principle of one party for the U.S. working class does not, however, mean that parties of other countries may not have certain organizations in this country. The principle is upheld if a distinction is made between the work of organizing the immigrant communities, work that is part of the American revolutionary movement, and hence should be directed by the MLP, and the work that is a part of the revolutionary work in the homeland. The MLP extends its hand of fraternal proletarian internationalist cooperation to such overseas party organizations of other parties."

(From the resolution "The Struggle Against Racism and National Oppression") <>

**FREE MOSES MAYEKISO, GEN'L SECRETARY OF THE NAT'L UNION OF METALWORKERS OF S. AFRICA!
DOWN WITH APARTHEID!**

From the Dec. 1 issue of **Chicago Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP-Chicago:

In June 1986 the racist South African government arrested Moses Mayekiso, general secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa. He has been held in solitary confinement since June 14, 1986 -- with a light bulb on for 24 hours a day -- under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act. He has been denied access to legal counsel or visitors.

On April 22, 1987, Moses was indicted along with four other activists, Mzwanele Mayekiso (his brother), Paul Tshabala, Richard Mdakane, and Oben Bapela, for high treason, subversion and sedition.

The South African government is notorious for *jailing* its opponents on trumped up political charges. For example, organizing a rent boycott is the government's "proof" for the charge of treason against these five activists.

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. Last summer, the government arrested over 20 activists from the United Democratic Front (UDF) who were also charged with treason. Many South African trade union leaders have gone into hiding since the apartheid regime does not hesitate to carry out

raids and mass arrests at union halls.

Under their declared "State of Emergency", the Botha regime has jailed tens of thousands without trial. The police have killed over two thousand Black protesters. The white-minority government has also declared that the press may not report any of the atrocities of the police nor any of the resistance of the masses. They want to hide their crimes and give a false image of stability.

But there is another side to the story. The mass struggle against apartheid is rising. Over the past couple of years, the black students have conducted a series of school boycotts. They targeted not only the racist school system, but also the occupation of the townships by the racist troops. They protest the "state of emergency" and other brutalities of the apartheid system. The masses have turned countless funerals for murdered black activists into bitter protests of apartheid.

Coming to the head of the anti-apartheid struggle are the millions of black workers in South Africa. This powerful class is more and more putting its stamp on the fight to smash apartheid. A strike wave has broken out in South Africa. Last summer more than 350,000 Black mineworkers waged a tenacious strike. It spread to over 50 of South Africa's gold and coal mines. This strike itself came on the heels of fierce strikes by the

railway workers, metal workers, and general strikes in May. The workers have been demanding that their unions also take up a political struggle against apartheid. We see more and more the mass participation of workers in the protests, demonstrations and other actions. The white minority regime is desperate to put a lid on the struggle of masses. They fear that the masses will organize a revolution to overthrow minority rule and smash their repressive state.

The South African government has made a particular point of suppressing the working class. On April 22 of this year, the South African government opened fire on two different groups of railway workers near Johannesburg. It aimed to crush a militant six week strike of 16,000 railway workers. Six workers were murdered in cold blood and several more were injured. During the mineworkers strike, at least 7 miners were killed and 350 injured. The police arrested more than 300 miners. The mine owners fired thousands from their jobs. This all happened when the strike was officially "legal". As the strike went on the government, blinded with fear, threatened to ban the strike and unleash even more brutal repression.

The South African government has jailed Moses Mayekiso, a leader of a trade union that waged several of these strikes. It hopes to send another message to the workers that they should give up their strikes against the rich moguls of South Africa. Furthermore, one of the charges against Mayekiso is that he is a socialist. We do not necessarily endorse Mayekiso's politics as being

socialist or revolutionary. But this charge shows the extreme fear of the South African government that the workers will take up socialist politics. They are shaking in their boots from the thought that the workers will rise up in a revolutionary struggle for socialism. The bottom line of the charges against Moses Mayekiso is preserving white minority privilege and wealth.

What should be the answer of the working class and revolutionary activists in the United States? We have no other answer but to protest this act. We must denounce it.

Here in the U.S. we know that our own government has supported the repressive South African regime. Reagan praised such atrocities as the "State of Emergency". This is because American capitalists, such as the owners of GM and Ford, have made a mint from the exploitation of the black workers of South Africa.

In Europe and the U.S. demonstrations have taken place demanding the release of Mayekiso. The MLP supports these actions. We resolutely denounce this jailing and demand the release of Moses Mayekiso and all the prisoners of apartheid "justice". The jailing of Mayekiso again brings out that the apartheid government is racist to the core. Only a revolutionary struggle can sweep this away. We stand in support of the revolutionary struggle of the Black workers of South Africa. We stand for building a revolutionary movement in solidarity with the toilers' revolution against apartheid. <>

CORRECTION

TO THE ARTICLE "NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LITERARY DEBATE"

The Nov. 10 issue of the **Supplement** carried several articles on the literary debate. This included the "Draft letter on the first issue of Struggle", "In Defense of Revolutionary Literature: A reply to the draft letter, Part one", and "New developments in the literary debate".

The article "New developments" characterizes the complaints from the comrades who wrote the draft letter. There is an error with respect to one of the complaints. It identifies the main author (or, to be precise, the comrade who we believe to be the main author) as having become "infuriated" when the draft letter was sent in by the local comrades of the MLP to the central Party apparatus. This is incorrect. However the other author of the letter became upset when informed that the draft letter had been sent on.

This error is our own and not that of the

local comrades who reported events to us. And we apologize to the main author of the draft letter for any distress that this error caused him.

At the same time, it does not change the basic point made by "New developments" concerning the complaints by the discontented against the method used by the **Supplement** in the literary debate. In this regard, the significant thing about the complaint that the draft letter was passed on is that one of the authors of the letter was indeed upset about this.

It was the opening of the discussion of the literary debate in the **Supplement** that began the process of objectifying the views and stand in the literary debate. And the essence of the controversy over method described in "New developments" consisted in various of the discontented comrades opposing this objectification of the discussion.<>

"LABOR GOVERNMENT" IN NEW ZEALAND ATTACKS THE IMMIGRANT WORKERS

Today, in the midst of the economic crisis, the allegedly civilized, "humanitarian" capitalists of the "democratic" capitalist states are stepping up their attacks on immigrants. This is also one of their ways of forging repressive chains for everyone. In the U.S., there is the Simpson-Rodino bill. In France, there is the heightened anti-immigrant hysteria. In Canada, there has been a clamping down on immigration.

The social-democratic "Labor" Party in New Zealand has been promoted worldwide as allegedly a force for peace and progress. We have discussed its role in sabotaging the anti-nuclear struggle of the New Zealand people elsewhere (see the issues of the Supplement for March 1985 and October 1986). Here we carry two articles on the Immigration Act of 1987, which is a major act of repression against immigrant workers and is part of the overall attacks of the Labor Government against the working class of New Zealand.

These articles are reprinted from the Nov. 18 issue of **Auckland Worker!**, paper of the Marxist-Leninist Formation of New Zealand. They may be contacted at

MLF
P.O.Box 52051
Kingsland
Auckland, NEW ZEALAND

IMMIGRATION ACT 1987

On November 1st, the Immigration Act 1987 came into force. And force is certainly the word.

This Act is part of the political offensive against the working class in NZ [New Zealand]. It further strengthens the ability of the state to single out workers on racist lines whenever the system needs to beef up its divide and rule dictatorship. It makes racist thuggery legal and justifiable -- while it makes workers' support for their workmates illegal and aims to force working people, at pain of prosecution, to betray fellow workers. All opposition to the Act is unlawful. Even articles like this, which call for organization by workers in defense of their class brothers and

sisters, can carry a jail sentence.

* * * * *

Pacific Island immigrant workers in NZ have always lived with the threat of deportation hanging over their heads. Repeatedly in the past, police and immigration officials have gone on the hunt, to the tune of fanfares of publicity pushing the myth that the labor power of Pacific Island workers is reckoned surplus (and even a threat to the jobs of local workers). Remember the dawn raids and street detainments of the '70s, under Kirk's Labor Government? They are the most infamous example of many a clampdown. But the ruling class was not satisfied with the sweeping powers used under the previous Act, and so a revised version was drafted by the last National Government. The snap election of '84 cut short its passage through parliament -- and now we see the very same law, hardly changed, spewed up by the latest Labor capitalist government.

In its own words it is: 'An Act to reform the law relating to immigration, and in particular to remove the need for persons who are in NZ unlawfully to be dealt with by way of criminal prosecution.'

It is supposed to look as if immigrant workers and their families now have rights. Nothing could be further from the truth. The whole point of the immigration Act is to abolish any legal rights whatsoever for Pacific Island working people in NZ. The Act says there is no need for them to be found guilty by a court, because it says they are already "unlawful". The courts just decide whether a person stays locked up or not until they are "removed" from NZ.

**This Anti-Working Class Act Means
Workers and Their Families:**

Can be ordered to retain and produce their permit at any time.

Can be interrogated on their "lawfulness" if they try to apply for a job, enrol for training or education, rent accommodation, seek emergency assistance.

Are at risk of a boot or a baton through their door and immediate detainment at any time, day or night.

Can be beaten up, jailed, and stripped of whatever cash or possession their labor has scraped together, to refund the state for their

forcible eviction from NZ.

Even the most ordinary features of everyday life -- receiving letters, owning a car, paying power bills etc. -- become extraordinary risks for immigrant worker families, because this Act orders other workers -- in Housing Corp, NZ Post, Telecom, Social Welfare, Ministry of Transport, local bodies and power boards -- to disclose information for the records for use in hunting down the so-called unlawful.

Any doubts that this is a class attack on Pacific Island working people can be removed by reading the provisions in the Act and its Regulations which exempt any armed forces invited by the state, the rich visiting on business or coming to stay, and under the visa-free scheme, citizens of countries whose tourist dollars are welcomed. The political reality of "exempt" status for crew members of visiting merchant ships was well-illustrated by the state's illegal arrest and deportation of striking Filipino seamen only the week before the Act came in. And the visa-free scheme, which now extends to 34 other countries, was given special treatment by Lange's Government earlier this year, when this brief status for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa was abruptly cancelled. With a stroke of the pen, the government decreed visitors and immigrants from these countries 'abusers' of NZ's goodwill, so as to create both apparently justification for the impending Immigration Act, and its first scapegoats. Labor's ruthless practices were further confirmed when the Fiji coup, far from resulting in relaxation of this ruling, prompted Labor to tighten up on the 48-hour stopover "loophole" which might have allowed refugees to claim political asylum.

Racist Thuggery Legal

Justification of any force used and "protection from criminal responsibility" is spelt out. Police and immigration officers will be fearless in thuggery, backed up by the assurance, in the words of the Act, that they are "not guilty of an offence and not liable to any civil proceedings" in enforcing it. This guarantee of immunity also extends to any vigilante "assistants" along with the cops.

If their "violent manner" is later questioned, police and immigration officers and their assistants have an excuse if they were "not in uniform" or it was "impracticable" to tell the suspect "the reason for the arrest"...

In the "belief" that they can "serve any warrant...detect any offense...or...apprehend any person" under the Act, police can "by force if neces-

sary, enter at any reasonable time by day or night any building or premises"...

Workers!

Our friends, neighbors, workmates and their families have been decreed outlaws and can be hunted down. Taken by force from jobs, schools, sports clubs and pubs: their families split up in jail until their deportation. Deportation back to countries harshly exploited by imperialism (NZ's included) and by the profiteering of the local ruling class in those countries.

Class unity is our first weapon against vicious state reaction. Close ranks! Immigrant workers must be able to ask for and expect unconditional support from fellow workers.

Rank and File Workers on Every Job and in Every Community Need Organization:

So that any move by the state under the Immigration Act will be met by a solid wall of resistance.

To stand firm collectively on non-disclosure of information to the state and so ensure that the onus of refusal does not fall on individual workers.

For uncompromising strike action if immigrant workmates disappear or are dragged off the job for deportation.

**NO DEPORTATIONS!
AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!
CAPITALISM IS THE OVERSTAYER!<>**

WORKING FOR THE CLAMPDOWN

The capitalist press has lately featured stories and photos of whole families queuing wearily for entire days at immigration offices. This is not meant to arouse public sympathy. With obscene distortion, there are headlines like: **A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY...A LAST CHANCE...AMNESTY.** the only opportunity immigrants dream of -- a job, a better chance for their kids, sending home hard-earned wages for relatives' survival -- has been stolen again. There is no amnesty. The government is even boasting how the time for 'amnesty' has gone. The Herald, the Star and the Sun are doing their bit for the clampdown. Trying to calm NZ citizens' suspicions of the Immigration Act. And displaying the state's velvet glove to beckon as many immigrant workers as possible within reach of the iron fist it hides. <>

6 CAR TRAINS + JOB ELIMINATION = SAFETY HAZARD

From the Dec. 1 issue of **Boston Worker**, paper of the MLP-Boston:

Several weeks ago the MBTA management introduced 6-car trains on the Orange Line and they are planning to do the same on the Red Line as soon as next Spring. There is nothing wrong with 6-car trains in themselves; in fact they make good sense as a way to reduce overcrowding at rush hour. The problem is that the Authority is trying to use this change to eliminate jobs. Instead of adding an extra guard for the extra two cars the Authority is trying to force one guard to handle the entire train. This is not only an unfair increase in the responsibilities of the guard, but it is also dangerous for the passengers. It will be much more difficult for the guard to see if everyone is clear before closing the doors, especially during crowded rush hours. This is already a problem on the Orange Line but it will be even worse if management gets away with the change on the Red Line. On the Red Line the curved platforms will leave the guards no choice but to cross their fingers and hope that they are not squeezing a passenger in the door and dragging him to his death.

To get an idea of the safety issue involved

you only need to look at the situation in New York City where so far this year 28 people have been dragged by trains and 2 people have been killed in these incidents. Part of the problem in New York is a modification that the MTA made in the doors that allows the trains to move with doors open as much as 4 inches. (Actually this is not too much different than the situation on the Red Line and some Green Line cars.) But an equal factor in these deaths is the fact that the New York MTA forces one conductor (what we call a guard) to close all the doors on a 10-car train.

Of course the MBTA just like the New York MTA doesn't give a damn about the safety of the riding public or the jobs of its workers. The T is not really in the business of providing decent service to the people but of shuttling working people to and from work for the rich like so many cattle. Who cares if a few cattle get killed as long the employers have enough slaves and the T officials get to have their little empire? In fact you can bet that when people get hurt in the doors the T will disqualify or suspend the guards rather than correct the unsafe situation they have created. The workers should join with the riding public to fight these unsafe conditions. <>

Boston Bus Driver Persecuted for Objecting to Racist Beating of a Black Youth
MORE FACTS ON THE ELLIS LAWRENCE CASE

From the Dec. 1 issue of **Boston Worker**, paper of the MLP-Boston:

Last month **Boston Worker** reported on the case of bus driver Ellis Lawrence. Ellis Lawrence was beaten up and arrested by 4 cops for the simple act of verbally objecting to their beating of a 16-year-old black youth by the name of Walter Coleman. Not only was Ellis beaten and arrested, but the MBTA has suspended him with a recommendation to fire. Ellis was scheduled to have a trial on November 3, but the MBTA lawyers postponed the trial. They claim to have been "unprepared".

But while they may be unprepared to give Ellis a chance to state his case, both the MBTA police and management has been quite prepared to spread vicious slanders aiming at discrediting Ellis and Walter Coleman and justifying the police attack on them. But unfortunately for the MBTA officials, the truth cannot be hidden forever. Recently we were able to examine the transcripts of Ellis' and Walter's probable cause hearing at Dorchester district court. The testimony in these transcripts is a big exposure of the police lies.

Lie #1. The MBTA police and management have spread the story (which was also printed in the **Globe**) that Walter Coleman and another black youth attacked a white youth at Mattapan station and attempted to handcuff and rob him. But at the probable cause hearing the white youth testified that there was only one black youth, Walter Coleman. The white youth also admitted that the handcuffs were his. He stated that he had got into a fight with Walter Coleman and had thrown the handcuffs at Coleman. (This explains the gash that Coleman had received on his face which required 8 stitches.) It was so clear that the white youth had started the whole incident and then told

hysterical racist lies to the starters and police that the clerk magistrate at the hearing said at the end of the hearing that the whole incident never would have happened had the white youth not lied to the police.

Lie #2. The police claim that Ellis wildly assaulted them while they were attempting to arrest Walter Coleman. But when the cops got into court their stories were so wildly contradictory that no one could believe them. One cop claims that he was assaulted by Ellis. But this cop's partner places him 40 feet away from the incident at that time. The one MBTA inspector who testified to back up the police was so contradictory that he placed himself in two places at the same time. And the police were not even cross-examined.

But despite the fact that the police can't even keep their lies straight and despite the fact that the white youth has recanted his original story, the MBTA is continuing to press felony charges against both Walter Coleman and Ellis Lawrence. And it is quite "prepared" to continue the suspension of Ellis Lawrence who has now been out of work for 2 months. The fact that the T officials are still going ahead with the case is a typical example of the racism and police-state mentality of the rich and the authorities in our country. No matter what, they want to punish Ellis because he stood up to their thugs. They figure, "Right or wrong, workers and blacks must be taught their place."

A lot of Ellis Lawrence's co-workers are outraged at the continued attacks on his rights. A number of workers are beginning to organize a fundraising benefit to help Lawrence out financially. This is a good development. The united action of the working people is the only force that can stand up to and beat back the racism and police bullying of the rich. <>

CORRESPONDENCE:

AGAINST THE GUARDIAN

Nov. 30, 1987

Dear Comrades,

I was reading the opportunist ragsheet, the Guardian (Nov. 18) and was sickened by their disgusting mudslinging at genuine Marxism-Leninism and their cover-ups for Gorbachev's Russia and her East European allies. When the Guardianites promote state-capitalism in crisis as real socialism, it is a real crime against the working class. I hope you will consider using the enclosed polemic.

Fraternally,
[Name omitted]
Los Angeles supporter

GUARDIAN LIQUIDATORS SLANDER SOCIALISM

In their headlong rush into middle class respectability and Democratic Party careerism, the Guardian newspaper, that misnamed "Independent Radical Newsweekly" has launched an open attack on the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism (Nov. 18). Of course this attack will serve to ingratiate the Guardianites further to the liberal political wing of the U.S. ruling class.

Guardianites set up straw men

The Guardian scribblers set up their attack by deviously trying to foist the calamities of present-day Russia, Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, China, etc. as examples of the failures of so-called socialism (Pg. 10-12). But any serious Marxist and champion of the working people's interests knows that for over thirty years Russia and her allies have gutted Marxism-Leninism and have steered a counter-revolutionary course, building up state-capitalist regimes and, as well, their fake-socialist rulers have more recently been encouraging the growth of a private capitalist sector for entrepreneurs and speculators. In this way the revisionist bosses hope to strengthen capitalist class rule over the working people.

According to the Guardian's social-democrat views, it seems that all that is needed to label a country socialist is a requisite amount of state ownership -- but if one uses the Guardianites silly definition of socialism even outright western imperialist states like France, Sweden, Spain, Israel,

Great Britain, etc. would qualify. It seems that all the Guardian's loyal years of service in building up the imperialist Democratic Party have brought the Guardianites to a typical U.S. bourgeois cold war view as to what socialism is.

In fact it is a state-capitalist ruling class that has been lording it over the working people of Russia and her East European allies for over three decades. In these countries commodity production has once again become the defining and determining characteristic of its products including means of production. The working people there come forward merely as sellers of the commodity labor-power on the state-capitalist labor market. Production of surplus value (profits) is today the direct aim and determining motive of production. According to Comrade Karl Marx, these facts are overwhelming evidence that these societies are of a capitalist character (see K. Marx, Capital, Vol. 3, International Publishers, [Part VII, Ch. LI] Pg. 879-880).

Obviously Marxist categories in political economy mean nothing to the Guardianites. These political hucksters prefer their reactionary amalgam of the "works" of Michael Harrington, John K. Galbraith, Neil Kinnock, Francois Mitterand, Gus Hall, Walter Mondale and Reverend Jesse Jackson or the late unlamented Indira Gandhi and the renegade Josip Tito.

Opportunists attack Leninist party

On page 11 the corrupt scribblers heap their political bilge on the Marxist-Leninist form of political organization. While making a rather clumsy effort to maintain a left cover, they sneer at the Marxist-Leninist party for being "all-knowing, all-powerful", "rigidified by Stalin", etc. Hmm, kind of echoes the line of the Democrat candidates and, in fact, this anti-communist drivel just happens to warm the heart of every concessions-pushing trade union hack. Well, maybe its the centripetal [inward] forces at work with the Guardian's bootlicking in the imperialist Democratic Party. Seems the Guardian is not against capitalist politics, it is against Marxist-Leninist politics.

Guardianites slander Marxism-Leninism as a secular religion

The fake-radical Guardian article attacks the

alleged "dogmatism" of Marxism-Leninism. It states that "Communism, during the Stalin era" had become "an all-encompassing world view" and "To believers, it was a very comfortable world outlook" (pg. 11). Yes, Marxism-Leninism is a world view, a rich, revolutionary scientific world view at that. It is based on the scientific philosophy of dialectical materialism as first developed by Marx and Engels, enriched by Lenin and legions of other revolutionary socialists up to this day. It is not some kind of religious opium "for believers". Marxist dialectical materialism is the philosophical basis for understanding the laws of development in nature, society, and human thought. For Marxists, revolutionary theory becomes a material force when it grips the masses (Lenin).

Of course the Guardian crew itself is full of "believers". They believe very strongly in building careers around and in the Democratic Party by helping the Democrats deceive the innocent and the naive. It is precisely the political opportunism of the Guardian which helps greatly to explain their hostility to the scientific world view of Marxism-Leninism.

Guardian distorts Lenin's views on the imperialist epoch

The Guardian is one of the biggest purveyors in the U.S. of the anti-Leninist politics of having "peaceful co-existence" in the age of imperialism. By promoting this Khrushchov-Gorbachev garbage (pg. 10-11), they consciously distort Lenin's views in his classic Imperialism, the Highest Stage of capitalism and in other works. Lenin exposed imperialism as the dominance of monopoly capitalism, of a financial oligarchy and as "reaction all the way down the line". Lenin also showed how the world economic crisis inevitably leads to imperialist wars and political crisis. Leninism shows the correct path for the working people to organize to fight and eventually bring down the capitalist ex-

ploiters and also how the working people build a new socialist society.

Sandbox "socialism" Guardian-style

The Guardian shamelessly promotes open bourgeois political analysis with its "theory" of "models of socialism". The Guardian scorns any scientific materialist analysis of the economic basis or the political superstructure of Russia or her East European allies. It wants people to look at politics as would a five-year-old child (and as the editors of the Guardian do). Like the child picking out a Revell Model toy, the Guardian offers up "models of socialism" like children's toys. But it is absurd to discuss socialism on the Guardian level. Socialism is a science with class analysis, forms of organization and definitive social relationships, etc. Beware! Any outfit that tries to promote state capitalism, state monopoly capitalism, capitalist welfare-statism and even military juntas as socialism is trying to pull a fast one on the movements of the working people.

Workers of all countries -- unite!

We have to redouble our efforts to ensure that the revisionists and opportunists like the Guardianites are not able to ideologically cripple the budding people's movements of struggle. We must explain patiently to honest workers and activists that the state capitalist bilge that rules today in Russia has more in common with our "own" capitalist class and government than with anything else. We will have to give a Herculean effort to expose the Democrats' criminal bi-partisan deals with the reactionary Reagan regime. We will see the movements of the working people grow faster and the class struggle will sharpen quicker as the class collaborationists and the opportunists Trojan Horses like the Guardian crew are exposed for the frauds they are. <>

CORRESPONDENCE:

**LETTER FROM THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY OF NICARAGUA
ON THE POSTPONEMENT OF THEIR TOUR OF THE U.S.**

Managua
October 31, 1987

Executive Committee
Marxist-Leninist Party
USA

Comrades,

The Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua sends communist greetings to you, and, through you, to all the militants of your Party.

Since the last time we wrote, and principally since the signing of the Esquipulas Accords, the political situation in Central America and particularly in Nicaragua has entered into a dynamic of constant movement.

The counter-revolutionary character of the Accords, summed up in the continuation of the imperialist aggression, in the pressures of social-democracy and Russian revisionism upon the people, and in the application, each time more concrete, of the Sandinista political-economic program of class conciliation, has imposed a complex and difficult situation for the revolutionary forces and especially for the proletariat in Nicaragua.

Faced with this situation, our Party, which flatly rejects these Accords in their content and in their form, has put into effect a tactic which has as its basis the organization and mobilization of the masses and the working class against these Accords. This is indissolubly linked to the political movements, which we have been developing, in the midst of the struggle of parties, with the aim of trying to hinder the bourgeoisie and its political and trade union organizations from taking more advantage of the space which Esquipulas II brings them.

The opening of the counter-revolutionary daily La Prensa, of the radio station of the Catholic hierarchy Radio Catolica, the setting up of the National Reconciliation Commission presided over by the enemy of the revolution Cardinal Obando, the setting up of the National Dialogue between the government and the political parties as a case of political negotiations, are some of the concessions pulled out by the bourgeoisie which has thrown itself into the task of reorganizing and making

more powerful its forces under the protection of Esquipulas II, at the same time as they try to manipulate the principal demands of the people and the workers.

But also the latter [the workers] are mobilizing themselves around their immediate economic, trade union, and political demands.

Our Party has put in motion all its forces and resources trying to bring to the masses the political clarity so necessary in this moment, trying to raise the political and organizational level of the workers, trying to hold back the viciousness of the bourgeoisie and the readiness of Sandinism to make concrete the social pact which would put a gravestone over the revolutionary process.

Every comrade, every cell, every front of work, every organism of the Party is working to the maximum of its capacity in order to give battle at the level which is demanded by circumstances.

Due to this, the Central Committee of our Party in its latest meeting resolved to suspend, until the start of the coming year, the tour and political visit which we had planned with you.

We are convinced that internationalist activity is an important factor, above all in a situation like this, but we have considered it necessary to dedicate all of our time and resources to carrying out the tasks which we have defined in order to confront the plans and immediate actions of imperialism, the bourgeoisie, and Sandinism.

[The letter went into some concrete plans concerning contact between the MLPN and the MLP, USA and then continued.]

We believe it necessary also that you continue your campaign of solidarity with our Party, with our press and with our trade union organization Frente Obrero, especially now after the signing of the Esquipulas Accords and when Reagan is preparing to ask for \$270 million more for the contras.

We are sure you will know how to understand our decision.

We wish you success in your communist tasks.
Greetings to all the comrades.

Central Committee
Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MAP-ML)<>

WHY THE SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT SHOULD NOT SUPPORT THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PACT

Continued from the front page

to take a stand in solidarity with the struggling people of Central America. However, for the movement to emerge as a powerful force it still has to overcome major roadblocks.

How must we work to encourage this movement? Along what lines are we to build the struggle?

We must cast off the wet blanket of reformism which tends to choke off militant activity and mass struggle, which tends to leave us all waiting for the day when the Democrats in Congress will stop the war -- a day which never comes. Most critically, at this time, we must challenge the illusions spread in the so-called Central America peace pact.

This is what we want to discuss tonight, because right now there are two ways for the movement to go. There is the way demanded by the reformist misleaders, which is to place faith in lies and treachery of a peace scheme cooked up in Washington and the death squad capitals of Central America. Then there is the path of struggle, the path of building the movement with faith in ourselves, the working people and activists in this country, and with faith in the revolutionary workers and oppressed of Central America.

Balance Sheet of the Arias Plan

The debate over the Arias plan isn't about "maybe's" or "what if's". It has been signed for four months now, and what has it brought?

The contra war continues

First of all, there is the question of the contra war. The movement is being sold this pact as an end to the dirty war on Nicaragua. But the war continues. The killings, kidnappings and burnings go on non-stop. Arias himself is pushing for the maintenance of the contra forces in their Honduran bases.

And look what the Congress is doing. The liberal Democrats told us that as long as this pact had any chance it would put a seal on any more contra aid votes. But the contra aid votes keep coming. And these same liberals are voting for contra aid! Since the signing of the pact, two short-term aid bills have already gone through. This aid didn't just pass because of some wavering swing votes. Oh no. Even such self-styled critics

of the contra war as Congressman Bonior (D-Mich.) and even that liberal of liberals George Crockett (D-Mich.) voted for more contra supplies.

A larger \$30 million vote is due next week and we'll see what happens. If, more funding is delayed this time, then what? Well, congress is looking after that too. It has recently created another loophole which is big enough to march several Ollie North brigades through. The joint intelligence committee (controlled by the Democrats) has now voted to allow the CIA to carry out "intelligence cooperation" with the contras. And this is to be funded by the CIA's secret budget.

True, Congress, more than Reagan, wants to allow time for the Arias pact to do its work. They hope to make the most out of diplomatic pressure against Nicaragua. But both Reagan and Congress are united in their goal of strangling the Nicaraguan revolution. And that is why they are both united on the need to keep the contras as a club against Nicaragua.

Meanwhile, every opponent of the dirty contra war should take note of the dirty business going on in Washington. The Crockett's and Bonior's must not be allowed to get away with this. The Democrats need to be exposed as the two-faced politicians that they are. And we should make use of such exposures to build our struggle independent of the two big parties of U.S. imperialism.

Hand in hand with "the peace process", the war process and contra funding goes on non-stop.

Denying the Right to Self-Determination at Gun Point

Then there is the question of Nicaragua's right to self-determination. We recently received a letter from an activist in Ann Arbor in support of the Arias pact. He conceded that the pact was flawed. But since Daniel Ortega and the Sandinista leaders have agreed to it, then the activists in this country also must support it. And he argued that to fail to do so would violate Nicaragua's right to self determination. But this is turning things upside down.

We also think that the right to self-determination is a critical issue. This is an invaluable triumph of the revolution. The Nicaraguan workers and poor liberated their land from the say-so of the Pentagon and the State Department. Opening the way for deepening their struggle to build a new society.

But that's just the problem with the Arias plan. It tramples on this hard won right to self-determination. Unfortunately, Daniel Ortega and the petty-bourgeois Sandinista leaders have agreed to this trampling. But that doesn't mean the Nicaraguan people accept it, or even that the rank-and-file Sandinistas accept it. Moreover, we know that the party of the revolutionary workers, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua, denounces the Arias plan. It takes this stand precisely because the plan allows the U.S. and other capitalist governments in the region to dictate how Nicaragua must conduct its internal affairs. Or more exactly, to dictate sweeping steps to dismantle the Nicaraguan revolution.

Just yesterday, the Nicaraguan government was holding talks with the contras in the Dominican Republic. The pro-contra Cardinal Obando y Bravo was chosen by the Sandinistas as a mediator. The demands of the contras were simple: the Sandinistas must give up control of the army; they must give half the national territory to the U.S. mercenaries; and they must make political changes to give the CIA-contra directorate a crack at political control. This is an outrage. It's an insult. It's just spitting at the Nicaraguan people. But hitching themselves to the Arias process, the Sandinista leaders have little choice but to go ahead with these talks with Reagan's mercenaries over the fate of Nicaragua.

Maybe some people saw the November 24 editorial in the Detroit Free Press. It says that "Ronald Reagan's stubborn dedication to the contras is not the main obstacle to peace." Rather it's the lack of internal changes in Nicaragua, like the failure to dismantle the neighborhood mass organizations. Now, keep in mind, this wasn't written by Jeane Kirkpatrick or Pat Buchanan: the Free Press is a liberal Democrat newspaper. But now with the Arias plan, Reaganite and Democrat, along with capitalists and reactionaries throughout the Americas, are all ganged up as one to compel so-called "democratic" political changes inside Nicaragua. And with every change the Sandinistas make, Reagan and the Democrats say it isn't enough, the Sandinistas must bend further or more missiles will be sent to the contras.

In short, the peace pact means robbing Nicaragua's right to self-determination at gun point.

Reagan-style "Democracy"

So what is all this chatter about "democracy". After all, the Arias pact promises to bring democracy to Central America. Well, in the death squad regimes, that was easy enough. No matter how many working and progressive people they assassinate and torture, these regimes are already

labelled "democracies" by the state department and the media.

In El Salvador, the Arias plan has meant exonerating the military men and right-wing death squads and encourage them in their grisly work. And for the people? In Honduras--a country held hostage to hunger, the generals, the contras and the U.S. military--it has meant the release of just 28 peasants arrested for taking part in a struggle against a plantation owner. In Guatemala, no one came out of prison or got amnesty, because the regime doesn't recognize political prisoners: it simply "disappears" workers, peasants and leftists by the thousands.

Nicaragua, however, is a different story. Because in Nicaragua, the revolution of the workers and peasants smashed the old capitalist tyranny of Somoza. Because in Nicaragua there are no death squads and no bloody terror against the masses, except for the terrorism of Reagan's contras, who are protected by the Arias plan. (There is still repression by the petty-bourgeois Sandinistas against the class-conscious proletariat and their allies among the poor peasantry, but Arias has nothing against that.)

In the name of "democracy", the Arias pact is pushing to close this hard-won freedom. It is pushing for the restoration in Nicaragua of a more typical Central American regime. A regime where the big capitalists and landlords, along with the U.S. companies and the CIA, have full freedom to finance reactionaries to rule over the masses.

Amazingly, this type of "democracy" even has support from the reformist forces within the solidarity movement. These apologists of the Arias plan try to argue that giving a freer rein to the pro-contra right wing is in some way beneficial to the Nicaraguan people. They would like us to believe that the steps the Sandinistas have agreed to under the peace pact are not a retreat in the face of the pressure of capitalist reaction. Oh no, they are supposedly going forward. After all, Sandinism has always promised "democratic pluralism".

But the Sandinista promise is absurd. There is simply no such thing as a "democracy" that stands above the class struggle. Playing at "democracy" cannot satisfy the capitalist reactionaries and their contra army, on the one side, and at the same time satisfy the needs of the revolution of the workers and poor peasants. It's either one or the other.

The press

Take the example of the press. The daily newspaper La Prensa is a tool of the contras and a source of reactionary disinformation. Its style is to print a picture of a car accident and portray it

as another atrocity of the revolution. La Prensa's links with the contras and the CIA are well-known. The Sandinistas have even published cancelled check stubs the paper has received from the CIA. But now, La Prensa is not only free to publish, the Sandinistas are also giving it precious paper and other subsidies. But newspapers and radio aren't enough for the reactionaries. Now a consortium of Mexican, Venezuelan and other capitalists is pushing to rig up what would be Nicaragua's most powerful TV station.

Meanwhile, the workers' daily newspaper, El Pueblo, closed down by the government seven years ago, apparently has been given permission to renew publication. But this doesn't mean much when El Pueblo's equipment remains confiscated and there are no funds or supplies to put it out.

Guaranteeing the Property of The Contras

Or take the repeal of the law on confiscating property. The government has recently scrapped the law which allowed for the expropriation of the properties owned by capitalists who flee the country. In other words, now they can go join the contras and keep their plantations, factories, and buildings. Presumably the profits can be used to buy more guns and missiles.

Meanwhile the workers are as poor as ever. It is a major undertaking for the Workers' Front union just to put a roof on their hall so that they can hold meetings.

Think about it. If the capitalists are allowed to dominate the economy, if they hold the most useful buildings and property, if, with plenty of help from the CIA and world capitalism, they are allowed to establish the most powerful mass media apparatus, then just how far with they be from re-establishing their old reactionary power?

Will This Be a Peaceful and Fair Struggle for Hearts and Minds?

The Sandinista leaders keep reassuring us that there is nothing to fear. They say that this is all part of the peaceful struggle for the hearts and minds of the people. But this is to be blind or foolish. Because step by step reaction is rebuilding its lost positions. And this is no less dangerous to the revolution as the war of bullets and mortars taking place in the countryside.

Nor will the bullets simply be in the countryside. Just recently, in Managua there was a demonstration by mothers of martyrs of the revolution against giving a general amnesty to contras and members of Somoza's National Guard. It was confronted by mothers of National Guardsmen and other right-wingers. One right-winger shot at the

mothers' demonstration. Isn't this a sign of what the Arias plan is bringing forth?

What About the "Breathing Space"?

Finally, on the peace pact, there's the famous question of the "breathing space". The reformist supporters of the Arias plan say "Yes, the plan isn't perfect, but at least it provides Nicaragua with a much needed 'breathing space'."

There's much that could be said about this. As we have seen, the contra war continues right through this "breathing space"?

But let's also look at it from the angle of the neighboring countries.

Over the last 8 years, a powerful defense of the Nicaraguan revolution has been the revolutionary upheaval next door. Especially the insurrections and strikes of the workers and peasants of El Salvador and Guatemala. These movements have put the fear of god in the Pentagon strategy makers: they fear that direct intervention against Nicaragua could open the whole region to revolution. But the Arias pact is stacked against these movements. It defends the status quo of the death squad regimes.

Looking for a "breathing space" in this pact is sort of like looking for breathing space by sticking one's head in a plastic bag.

If Not Arias, Then What Else?

What, then, is the alternative to the Arias pact? What is the way out for Nicaragua?

Here too, we're not talking about "maybe's" or "what if's". Because the revolutionary workers and their Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua are giving such an alternative its flesh and blood. They are organizing in the factories and fields to keep the revolution alive. They are organizing to defend the gains of the workers and poor peasants in the face of the contra war, the pressures of the Arias plan, and the backsliding of the Sandinista leaders.

Everyone who writes about the Nicaraguan workers movement is forced to recognize the presence of the MLPN. But in the reformist and Sandinista literature they attempt to minimize its importance. After all, Barricada International says that the Workers' Front trade union center has formally affiliated to it work places with only 5,000 workers. Actually, that's a significant number in Nicaragua, particularly as most of MLPN's influence in the factories is in the rank-and-file Committees of Struggle because the Sandinistas manipulate the official union elections. But most importantly, these numbers give no idea of the Workers' Front true significance in light of

what's going on in Nicaragua.

Presently, Nicaragua is being hit hard on two fronts: the war and the economy. The U.S. blockade and capitalist sabotage have been successful in creating an economic disaster. And they are striving day and night to spread discontent on this front in order to build support for reaction among the masses. The CIA is attempting a repeat of its tactics against Allende's Chile.

How are these tactics going to be defeated? You can take the attitude of the Sandinista leaders and their apologists. You can ridicule and frustrate the demands of the workers for food and wages. But this is just a recipe for handing this wide field of discontent over to the reactionaries.

That's why the MLPN has taken an active, fighting stand on this front. It is building its committees of struggle in critical work places across the country. Wherever the masses press their grievances against the capitalist owners, or against the Sandinista bureaucracy, the MLPN and its Workers Front is there.

Last month there was a demonstration of all the opposition trade unions in Managua to raise economic grievances. The economic slogans of the Workers Front were taken up by the whole demonstration. Apparently, this left the right-wing CUS leaders, funded by the AFL-CIA, isolated.

Also recently, the 500 workers at the MACEN plastics factory (a very large plant for Nicaragua) voted in a new union leadership which has the support of the Committee of Struggle there. The workers are raising demands for living wages, for adult education, for medical services, for a revival of the rank-and-file assemblies in the unions, and for the better mobilization of the workers in the tasks of military defense against Reagan's contras.

It doesn't take much imagination to see the importance of this work. When push comes to shove in Nicaragua, will the 500 workers of this plastics factory be passive observers. Or worse, will they be dragged along by the right-wing? Or will they be mobilized and active in defense of their revolutionary interests?

That's what the work of the MLP of Nicaragua is all about. Along these lines they are fighting

to close the streets to the pro-contra reaction. They are striving for a revival of the revolutionary movement of the workers and the poor peasants. They are organizing to bring Nicaragua out of its agony through the road of the proletarian revolution and socialism, the road of Lenin and the October Revolution.

And What About Here?

The final question is what does all this mean for the U.S. solidarity movement.

We must reject the counsel of the official leaders and their support for the Arias plan. Because this plan is a plan directed against the revolutionary workers and toilers of Central America. Because this plan is being used as a shield for U.S. intervention. Because the Democratic party fakers are hiding behind it to carry on their dirty support for the contras.

And we must be on guard against the attempts of the reformist leaders to impose the wet blanket of the "Arias spirit" onto the solidarity work. There can be no toning down of the mass actions against the contra war. There can be no "spirit of dialogue" with those responsible for the rape and destruction of Nicaraguan villages.

There can be no backing away from militant support for the revolutionary struggles in Central America. This means exposing the Arias fiction of a solution that will satisfy Reagan and the U.S. interventionists without trampling on those who are being victimized by the U.S. interventionists and their death squad puppets. This means welcoming every defeat for U.S. imperialism in Central America.

The Crockett's and Bonior's may tell us that this approach won't get anywhere in Congress. But all of our work on this question over the last months has shown us that it will get somewhere where it counts. In the factories and work places, on the campuses and in the demonstrations, it has support. It has the sympathy of a section of the militant workers and anti-intervention activists. And that is just where we want to lay the foundations for building the solidarity movement. <>

DEFEND THE PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

Continued from the front page

Stock Market Crash -- Symptom that the System of Profit-taking is in Crisis

A few weeks ago the stock market crashed with

a thunder reminiscent of the Great Crash of 1929. The shock waves spread out from the U.S. and sent stock markets tumbling in Europe, and Japan, Hong Kong and Australia. The capitalists and their pet politicians were sent scrambling. Congress put up a howl. "Restore confidence in the

stock market," they cry. But every Monday brings another round of the blues on the stock market. There is no confidence to be had. The citadels of capitalism have been shaken.

Why has the stock market crash caused such upset? It's not just the money that some stuffed shirts lost on Bloody Monday. It is more than that.

The crash is a symptom of the severe economic problems that have been piling up throughout the capitalist economy. Flip through the pages of the newspaper -- side by side with hysteria over the "stock market crisis" are the cries about the "dollar crisis" and the "debt crisis" and the "crisis in trade", along with the "industrial crisis" and "over-capacity crisis in the auto industry" and the crisis of "slower growth in the service sector."

What the stock market crash shows is that the capitalist system is not working: it should be done away with.

Capitalism is based on the exploitation of the workers. It works only so long as a handful of moneygrubbers can take profits from the labor of someone else. And the minute the profits don't flow, the system stops cold. In fact, fundamental to the workings of capitalism are periodic economic crises. The capitalist profit-taking leads, necessarily, to economic collapse.

Where did the wealth come from that the capitalists were trading and gambling with on the stock market? It came out of the hides of the workers; out of the last eight years of a vicious takeback offensive that's seen wages slashed, taxes jacked up, and social programs gutted.

And now that the stock market has crashed, where are Reagan and Congress looking for the wealth they need to "restore confidence in the stock market"? They want to skin the working masses once again. They want even more cuts in social programs, even more tax increases, still more takebacks at the work places. It is the working masses who are paying and then paying again for the debacle of this outdated system.

And will the impoverishment of the working masses solve the economic crisis? Don't bet on it. For years the capitalist ruling class has been walking a tight-wire with the economy, all the time saying "don't worry, you have a safety net". But now the economy is tottering, and the worst is yet to come.

Capitalism at its best means grave hardships for the working masses. But capitalism in crisis shows us a system that cannot even feed the class that has produced all the wealth to begin with. This system is rotten; it is crisis-ridden; it should be done away with and replaced with a system that serves the majority, the working masses.

Capitalist Austerity Fuels Working Class Movement Around the World

The current situation has not only shown that capitalism should be put in its grave; it has also given us a glimpse of who will be the gravedigger. The working class around the world is being set in motion. It is fighting the vicious austerity programs of the capitalists. It is once again moving to center stage in country after country.

Latin America

Take Latin America.

For decades the American and other imperialist banks have been sucking the blood of the working masses. They've sucked so much there's little more to be had. Debt has been piled upon debt, so now even to pay the interest on these debts is almost impossible. The capitalist regimes in Latin America can only raise part of the money, and then only by terrible austerity measures and reactionary suppression of the masses.

But the workers have been pushed too far already. General strikes have broken out in Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, and Bolivia. The working class is again becoming the force to reckon with.

Eastern Europe

Also in the pro-Soviet revisionist countries of Eastern Europe and revisionist Yugoslavia a new wave of struggle is emerging.

The American capitalists like to say that the trouble in Yugoslavia or Romania is because of socialism. But it's a lie. Not only are these countries not socialist; not only have they restored a capitalist exploitation of the workers as severe as in the west; but their biggest immediate economic problems are the result of the mammoth loans they've taken, just like the Latin American regimes, from the imperialist bankers.

Last month in Romania workers marched out of the factories and stormed the city hall in Brasnov. A strike wave by the Yugoslav workers has also broken out. And there are reports of strikes in Russia too.

South Africa and South Korea

Whether it is these struggles or the strikes of the black miners in South Africa or the auto assemblers and transport workers in South Korea, we can see the storm brewing. And the working class is in the center of it.

When will the next revolution break out? Where will it happen? How long till the fever captures the American workers? We cannot say.

But we know capitalism is shaky. We know that its prescription for the crisis, its "solution", creates conditions for renewed working class struggle.

And we know that whether the explosion comes next year or the next decade we must get ready. We must use every opportunity to organize the workers as an independent force; we must work to make it conscious of the aims of the working class movement; we must show it the socialist alternative to this capitalist blight and the revolutionary path out of misery.

Look to the October Socialist Revolution

That is why today we say look to the October Socialist Revolution in Russia. That revolution, although 70 years old, still gives us an example of the socialist alternative and shows us the way to organize and fight for the working class victory.

The October Socialist Revolution was the second great attempt by the working class to take power itself and to mold society in its own image.

The first was the Paris Commune in 1871, where the working class in the city of Paris rose up and established the first workers' government. The Commune lasted only a few weeks. Then the revolt was savagely crushed and the revolutionary workers massacred.

The socialist revolution in Russia went further. The workers rose not just in one city, but in cities throughout the country. And not only in the cities but also in the countryside; the working class mobilized the peasantry and led them in rebellion. And not only for a few weeks, but for year after year the workers held power in their hands and carried the revolutionary struggle to the field of transforming the old, capitalist-landlord system into a new, socialist homeland for the workers.

Ultimately the socialist revolution in Russia was also defeated; there was a corrosion that became revisionism. The working class was put under the heel of wealthy bureaucrats who live in the lap of luxury no different from their brothers in the U.S. And capitalism was restored with all of its evils.

But the revolution was defeated only after the working class had blazed new trails through uncharted territory. Only after they had smashed, in the first years of the revolution, the intervention of a coalition of the major imperialist powers behind the armed counter-revolution of the capitalists and landlords. Only after they had restored the economy from the ravages of World War I and the civil war. Only after they had made strides in building a new socialist economy, with its barriers to capitalist economic crisis and its benefits to the

toilers, in a tumultuous struggle against the capitalist forces in the cities and countryside. And even later, in the midst of the corrosion that later led to capitalist restoration, the Russian working class and peasantry heroically defeated the fascists invaders in World War II.

Today we celebrate the victory of 70 years ago because it was not only an advance for the Russian workers, it was an advance for the working class the world over. It proved in practice that socialism is indeed better than capitalism. It proved in practice that socialism is not just a pipe dream but a real possibility. It proved in practice that Marxism-Leninism is not some utopian fantasy but the science of the working class revolution.

They Tell Us Socialism Won't Work

But today, at this moment when the crisis of capitalism is itself calling for another answer, for the socialist alternative; at this moment when the lessons of the October Socialist Revolution are so vital, so essential for the working class movement; at this moment, a new howl has gone up against socialism, and from every corner we hear the charge that "socialism won't work".

This new wave of anti-socialist propaganda is being fueled and encouraged by the actions and propaganda of the revisionists themselves around the world, and most especially by Mikhail Gorbachev -- the new leader of Russia. At the very time when a new crisis is starting to visibly shake western capitalism, Gorbachev has launched a program -- called perestroika (renewal) and glasnost (openness) -- to further open up Russia to traditional capitalist forms of exploitation. Of course Gorbachev doesn't admit to giving capitalist exploitation free rein. On no, he just talks about opening up "competition" and letting the "market" operate. But this "market socialism" is just a typical form of capitalist exploitation; and everybody knows it.

The Western capitalist press is in euphoria. The British magazine the Economist described the festivities inside Russia for 70th anniversary of the October Socialist revolution as not so much a celebration but "a wake for an idea whose time has past". The capitalist journalists are turning out volumes saying "sure capitalism has problems, but look socialism is even worse. Why, socialism's so bad that even its leaders are calling for reintroducing capitalism."

What these propagandists want to hide is that the reason that Russia and Eastern Europe and China and the other revisionist countries are in trouble is that long ago the revisionist leaders departed from the path of Lenin and the October Socialist Revolution and put their countries on the

path of capitalism. The crisis in Russia is not a crisis of socialism, but of capitalism. It is one more sign that capitalist crisis is shaking the world. It is one more sign that the tottering capitalist system must be done away with and replaced with a higher, better system, with the genuine revolutionary socialism that was outlined by Marx and Lenin.

Ridiculous Arguments Against Centralized Planning

Typical of the anti-socialist propaganda inspired by Gorbachev's reforms is the hoopla against "centralized planning". We are told over and over again that the reason Russia has problems is because it turned from the "free market system" of capitalism to "centralized planning", to a system where the government directs the economy through a central plan. Central planning, we are told, necessarily leads to the evils that are typical today in Russia and other revisionist countries.

But if the question is simply planning per se, then these arguments are ridiculous. All capitalist countries also have planning of the economy -- in one form or another -- to a greater or lesser degree. And there are a number of revisionist countries where they have already eliminated the traditional "central plan" and are even opening their own stock markets.

In fact, the hypocrisy on this by the propagandists for U.S. capitalism is outrageous. When they want to denounce socialism they point to the revisionist countries and cry out: see centralized planning necessarily leads to inefficiency, corruption, shortage of computers and poor quality of TV's. But when they want to cover up the aching problems in the U.S. itself, they point to Japan and cry out against "unfair competition" because the Japanese government plans the economy and intervenes in it to help out its businesses. Apparently central planning in Japan is too efficient, produces too many computers, and makes too high a quality TV.

What Type of Central Planning?

Obviously the issue is not central planning as such. The issue is what type of central planning and what is this planning for?

Under capitalism, planning is aimed at making a profit for a handful of overbloated moneybags. As such, the planning can only go so far in directing the economy; it is hemmed in by the laws of capitalism in which the drive for profit by each capitalist monopoly ranging over the globe necessarily throws all of them into vicious competition where they must produce as if they alone will win control of the market. Crises of overproduction arise

from the necessary operation of capitalism. And capitalist economic planning can only maneuver with, but not overcome, these laws.

Socialism is not hemmed in by such problems. It does away with private ownership of the means of production by the moneybags. It does away with the capitalist profit motive. It does away with the exploitation of the workers, and it turns the economy to the service of the working masses. As such, production does not run into the barrier of capitalist profit-taking; it is freed from capitalist economic crisis; and the working class can plan the economy to grow steadily to meet the needs of those who work.

When the capitalists denounce centralized planning they are actually arguing for capitalist planning, for profit-taking, for more exploitation of the masses.

Capitalist Planning in Russia to Increase the Exploitation of the Workers

This is exactly what's going on today with Gorbachev's talk against centralized planning in Russia. He says the centralized plan is "inefficient". Therefore every workplace is now on its own to increase its efficiency or be shut down.

In the U.S. workers' movement this is what we call "whipsawing". It's the use of the blackmail of plant closings to pit workers from different plants against each other to see which of them will give up the most concessions. It is exactly the same kind of thing we are seeing at General Motors right now.

In Russia they call it perestroika (renewal). But no matter the name, it's murder against the workers. It is estimated that Gorbachev's reforms may wipe out 10 million jobs. And there are only vague promises concerning what will happen to these legions of the superfluous. Meanwhile those still working have nothing to look forward to but pay cuts and intense overwork.

So this is what all the shouting against "centralized planning" amounts to -- increasing the exploitation of the workers.

Socialist Economy Is Free of Economic Crisis

Now, if you want a serious discussion of centralized planning; if you want to compare the results of actual socialist economic planning with the "free market" economy of capitalism; then look back to the last great depression, the one that broke out with the stock market crash of 1929, the one that took place when the Soviet Union was still a socialist country. If you look back to that time then you get a different story than the capitalists want told, a story of how socialism benefits

the working masses while capitalism means nothing but devastation.

In the 1930's, the U.S. and most of the rest of the capitalist world was in the depths of depression. The stock market crashed; industry collapsed; tens upon tens of millions of workers walked the streets without jobs; homelessness spread like the plague; hunger gripped vast sections of the masses. According to statistics from that time by the League of Nations [a pre-World War II version of the United Nations], in the period between 1928 and 1931 the volume of industrial production for the whole capitalist world actually fell through the floor -- it declined by about 29%.

But what about Russia, where they were putting into effect the first Five-Year Plan? According to the same sources, industrial production for 1928 to 1931 in Russia actually rose 86%. In the midst of the worst world-wide depression, the socialized, planned economy in Russia was actually growing.

And what did this mean for the workers? Well, Russia was still a poor country; it could not overcome all the backwardness of the old Tsarist Russia at one stroke; but big changes took place. Among other things, in this period unemployment was eliminated in Russia. While in the U.S. millions had no jobs, and worse still, unemployment insurance did not even yet exist in the U.S. to give them any relief, in Russia the working class was able to realize the socialist promise of eliminating economic crisis and doing away with unemployment. Indeed, the workers were able to push forward the building up of industry and to begin the collectivization of farming to such an extent that at times they even faced a problem of labor shortages.

It's this kind of result -- and not the present-day crisis in Gorbachev's Russia -- that shows the nature of socialism, that shows the actual power of socialism. The economic advance in socialist Russia during the late 1920's and into the 1930's was so dynamic that even the capitalist economists in the West have been unable to deny it. For 70 years they've been trying to exorcise this socialist demon from their nightmares. But try as they may to deny it, they end up being forced to admit it took place.

They are left only with grumbling that, well, the centralized plan, the Five-Year Plan, was not carried out exactly as set out. Or they carry out campaigns, like the one spearheaded by Robert Conquest, which claim that eight million Ukrainians, a fourth of the entire population, millions and millions of peasants, were killed through "forced" collectivization which supposedly brought on a famine. Now there was drought and heavy frosts that caused famine in certain parts of the

Ukraine. But it seems odd that nobody at the time noticed the disappearance of a quarter of the population. Indeed, this fantastic story didn't come up until two years later and then only in the scandal sheets of the Hearst reactionaries. In the 1930's even the dominant section of the bourgeoisie didn't believe this fairy tale. But today these and other atrocity stories are being retold over and over, and made the subject of congressional investigation, as if they were the gospel.

Still, even with all of their scurrilous horror stories, the capitalist economists simply can't deny that while the capitalist world was going to hell in a basket, socialist Russia was forging ahead.

Socialism and the Class Struggle

To be sure this was not all smooth sailing. What took place in the Soviet Union only took place through an arduous and tumultuous class struggle. And problems arose concerning the direction for this struggle, how it was carried out, and how to maintain the mobilization of the masses. This was the first time that the revolutionary workers had confronted the actual tasks of socialist construction in practice, and they had to work rapidly while surrounded by a hostile and more powerful capitalist world.

The working class had to fight like crazy against a whole array of capitalist elements, like the bourgeois experts who were sabotaging industrial plans, who were resisting socialist development, and who were trying to open Russia up for capitalism.

There was an especially sharp fight in the country-side where the kulaks (the rich peasants) were getting fat by exploiting the poor peasants and by hoarding grain to jack up the price that the workers in the cities would have to pay. This, along with droughts and other natural problems, led to shortages and even the rationing of bread in some cities.

The kulaks, above all, fought against the poor and middle peasants pooling their land into collective farms where they'd be free of kulak exploitation. This was a big struggle involving tens of millions of peasant households, over vastly different regions, and on a previously uncharted course. It could not, and did not, develop without sharp clashes, problems, and mistakes.

Among other things, collectivization caught on and developed far more rapidly than anyone expected. This meant a whole series of unforeseen problems, a shortage of trained communist cadre to lead and organize the struggle, a shortage of tractors to supply the collective farms, and the multiplication of situations where administrative measures were used instead of patient explanation

and organization.

To fully understand this struggle in the countryside -- and also the development of the class struggle in the cities, in the Party, and in the state during this period -- requires further study by our Party. But what we can see at this point is that as long as the Russian communists stuck to the class struggle, as long as they held to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, as long as they relied on the working masses, the working class was able to advance.

The Turn Away from Marxism-Leninism in the mid-1930's

Unfortunately, in the mid-1930's, the Russian communists began to turn aside from principle. Under the intense pressure from world capitalism, under the pressure of the emergence of fascism and a new trial of strength for the world working class movement, under the pressure of the intense class struggle in the Soviet Union, carried out under conditions of a poor country needing rapid progress to deal with being surrounded by enemies, the leaders of the Russian communist party began to give up the perspective of the revolutionary class struggle and to depart from the life-giving principles of Marxism-Leninism.

Our Party has discussed this question in detail in our analysis of the 7th Congress of the Communist International which marked a backward turn in the international communist movement. Our Party has pointed out how the Leninist principles of the united front were distorted to denigrate the fight against reformism and social-democracy; how unity with the liberal bourgeoisie was sought even at the cost of harming the independent organization of the working class and undermining the mass struggle; how in the name of "peace" illusions began to be spread about the bourgeois democratic imperialist powers, like U. S. imperialism; and how petty-bourgeois nationalism began to replace the perspective of the class struggle and proletarian internationalism. Our Party has criticized all of this in detail, a criticism that exposes not only the serious problems in the international Marxist-Leninist movement in general, but precisely the problems in the orientation that Stalin and other leaders of the Russian party were advocating internationally.

The dreadful degeneration that we revealed in international policy was also developing in the domestic affairs of Russia. Precisely how revisionism emerged within Russia and the key features of the betrayal of the Russian working class requires more study by our Party. But it is clear that the Russian leadership gave up reliance on the working class and declared the class struggle over. It

abandoned the struggle to maintain and enliven working class rule. It gave up the struggle to hold in check the growth of the bureaucracy. A process of bureaucratic degeneration set in. And eventually this led to the loss of all socialist character and the restoration of capitalism. At least by the time of the Krushov "reforms" of the mid-50's, the Soviet Union had become a state capitalist society.

Gorbachev -- Continues the Capitalist Counterrevolution

Gorbachev's reforms today are simply a continuation of this degeneration. Gorbachev's oppression of the Russian working class today is not the fruit of the October Socialist Revolution -- as the capitalists would have us believe -- but of the capitalist counterrevolution against socialism. The misery of the Russian workers today is not the product of the revolutionary ideas of Lenin -- as the bourgeois journalists try to pretend -- but of the turning away from Leninism, the negation of Leninism, the revising of Leninism to gut it of its liberating value for the working class.

A New Wave of Revisionist Liquidationism in the U.S. Today

But still there are those inside the revolutionary movement who are so awed by the bourgeois propaganda, or who are so enraptured with revisionism, that they are pointing at the crisis in revisionist Russia today to sling mud at the October Socialist Revolution; to create doubt about Marxism-Leninism; to throw aside the very principles of scientific socialism. Gorbachev's new capitalist reforms have not only unleashed a wave of anti-socialist propaganda by the paragons of capitalism, it has also set loose a new wave of liquidationism within the revolutionary movement.

Now, comrades, there are many different trends and shades of opportunism in the U.S. movement. And each one of them has their own particular ax to grind, their own particular way to deal with Gorbachev debate. Tonight I only want to point out two of the general ways in which this liquidationism is coming up right now.

Guardian-style liquidationism

One of the ways is from opportunist groups who actually support what Gorbachev is doing: they see in Gorbachev's reforms vindication for their own deep-felt prejudices against Marxism-Leninism, for their own grievances against the party concept, for their own petty-bourgeois bias against workers' power and the dictatorship of the

proletariat.

Such is a group of so-called "socialists" who crib their analysis from the New York Times, namely, the Guardian newspaper. In the November 18 issue of their paper the Guardian carries a special section to celebrate the capitalist "reforms" spreading through the revisionist countries. They echo the cries from the New York Times against "central planning". They repeat the attacks on Lenin's revolutionary line on fighting imperialist war -- which were part of the revisionist distortions by Dimitrov and Stalin at the time of the 7th Congress of the Communist International -- as if they are new discoveries proving the wisdom of Gorbachev. And, nearly panting with excitement, they conclude:

"Change is afoot throughout the Soviet bloc. It is up to the socialists in the West to welcome it, support it and link arms with it."

The Guardian against the Proletarian Party

And why are they so excited? Well, they begin their central editorial by exclaiming that the changes in the revisionist countries prove:

"The age of the all-knowing, all-powerful Marxist-Leninist Party is over. That almost mythical image of the Communist Party -- originated by Lenin, thrust onto the world stage by the Bolshevik revolution, rigidified by Stalin and held sacred by millions -- is rapidly disappearing."

"Mikhail Gorbachev, with his calls for openness and restructuring in the Soviet Union, is decisively moving the Soviet party away from the authoritative dogmatism which once claimed to rule the communist world."

The Guardian doesn't give a damn that Gorbachev is trying to skin the Russian working class. Why, Gorbachev is vindicating their pet peeve against the Leninist concept of the vanguard party of the working class.

It doesn't matter to the Guardian that it was only because the Russian working class built up the Leninist, Bolshevik Party through the tortuous years leading up to the revolution that they were able to advance on the path of socialism. The Leninist party was the guiding star that organized the working class to take an independent stand from the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties; that inspired the working class with its own strength; that brought consciousness to the workers' movement of its final aims; and that brought the workers the discipline not only to overthrow

the capitalists, but to carry forward the class struggle in all the twists and turns that was involved in building the new society. The building of the Leninist party is a key lesson we must learn from the October Socialist Revolution if the U.S. working class is to be organized and the class struggle successfully led forward.

But just as the Guardian decries centralized planning in the economy, they denounce the working class for building a centralized political organization. The Guardian wants to ban the Leninist party concept, to liquidate the very task of party building. And so they look to Gorbachev and shout "Hurray! The old dogmas are gone."

Denouncing Capitalism in Russia to attack the October Socialist Revolution

The Guardian's liquidationism is not the only way the issue is arising right now. There is another section of opportunists who will denounce Gorbachev's reforms and who will condemn capitalist degeneration in Russia. But then they claim that Gorbachev is just following Leninism -- or is at least the logical extension of Leninism -- and that present capitalist development actually proves that the October Socialist Revolution was itself flawed. It supposedly shows that party building, and the dictatorship of proletariat, and centralized planning, all necessarily lead to bureaucracy, to capitalism.

The RSL's Liberatarian Crusade Against Marxism

One such group is the ex-trotskyite and now self-proclaimed "libertarians" of the Revolutionary Socialist League. They have carried a whole series of articles to denounce some of the basic writings of Lenin and the whole experience of the October Socialist Revolution.

Chasing their petty bourgeois dreams of a socialism without the organization and discipline of the working class, of a socialist revolution without the working class taking state power to crush the bourgeois resistance, they end up in complete confusion. They are unable to distinguish capitalist labor discipline (in which every advance in productivity means more hardships for the workers, more job loss, more overwork) and the discipline of the working class building its own society (where every increase in the productivity of labor is used to benefit the working masses themselves by such things as shortening the working day, expanding social benefits, broadening education and cultural pursuits, and reinforcing the political power of the working majority).

Libertarians Against the Proletarian Party

In the same way they can't distinguish between the vanguard party of Lenin leading the masses and the party of today's Russian bureaucrats who, like Reagan and the Democrats, sit on the backs of the masses. Oh, perhaps it's OK for the workers to have several different parties, they say. But for them the very conception of the working class building up its own single, unified party -- a party which by its adherence to Marxism-Leninism and the class struggle sees farther than the class as a whole, is the most organized section of the class, and leads the whole class forward -- that they cry is bureaucratic. Why, for them the very idea of disciplined organization is stifling, undemocratic, and necessarily a means for running roughshod over the working masses.

Like the Guardianites these petty bourgeois intellectuals do not distinguish between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism and, on the whole, can't even distinguish between socialism and capitalism. And so, even though they denounce Gorbachev while the Guardian praises him, they end up attacking the very same Leninist principles as the Guardian does. They represent just another form of that liquidationism which is out to rob the working class today of the vital experience of the October Socialist Revolution.

Defend the Principles of Scientific Socialism

Comrades and friends, the new revisionist lows in Russia are unleashing, from various directions, another round of liquidationist degeneration in the U.S. It is giving rise to new liquidationist fads.

Comrades and friends, it's up to us, the class conscious workers, the revolutionary Marxist-Leninists, to fight back.

And how are we to fight? By going back to Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism who uncovered the basic laws of the class struggle and elaborated, from the experience of the class struggle, the basic principles of socialism. We must go back to Lenin, who defended Marxism from the Gorbachev's and liquidators of his day, developed it further with the experience of building the Bolshevik Party, and carried it forward with the experience of the October Socialist Revolution.

The liquidators are confusing the difference between socialism and capitalism. We must go back to the basic principles of scientific socialism to oppose liquidationism and explain to the workers the revolutionary aim of the working class movement. The liquidators are confusing Marxism-Leninism with revisionism in order to attack the most basic principles of the fight for socialism.

We must go back to the writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, we must study them and the experience of the revolutionary movement, learn from them, and use them to bring revolutionary consciousness and the spirit of socialist struggle to the working masses.

Some of the liquidators are aping Gorbachev's talk of reexamining history and studying what happened in the Soviet Union. But it's all from the angle of launching another round of slander and attack against the very principles of scientific socialism. They are following the fad of revisionism. They are falling prey to the anti-socialist propaganda of the bourgeoisie.

The 70 years since Great October have been 70 years in which the world bourgeoisie has not let a single day go by without coming out with another slander, another lie, another distortion to defame the socialist revolution. There is the "revenge literature", like that of Robert Conquest, which can see nothing in the revolution except atrocities; that promotes nothing but horror stories to frighten people away from looking in the face the essential features of progress by tens upon tens of millions of real-life workers and peasants waging a real-life fight to the death with the exploiters. And there are whole sections of university professors claiming to be Marxists and writing volumes to discredit the October Socialist Revolution with refined arguments against "party dictatorship over the masses" and other such garbage.

We too must study the experience of the October Socialist Revolution and of the revisionist degeneration that defeated socialism in Russia, that defeated the continuation of the October Revolution. But that study cannot be done by getting down on our knees before the bourgeois and revisionist propagandists or by day-dreaming about some nice, refined revolution where everyone dances without a ruffle into a new and more perfect world.

No, we must study the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, the subsequent constructive work by the revolutionary workers, and the eventual capitalist restoration, in the same way Marx studied the first great experiment in working class rule, the Paris commune. Marx saw the Commune for the real advance that it was for the whole working class movement. He sorted through all of the sound and fury, all of the advances and retreats of real workers waging an unprecedented revolutionary battle, and he picked out its most essential features -- like the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat -- that were lessons to help the worldwide working class movement also advance. Marx also analyzed the defeat of the commune, and showed both the objective conditions and the weaknesses in the workers' movement that

led to it being crushed.

This is how we must study the history of the building of the workers' state in the Soviet Union and of its eventual defeat. This was the second great experiment in working class rule whose lessons in building up the vanguard party, in waging insurrection, in building up the dictatorship of the proletariat, and beginning the march of socialism are far richer than that of the commune. The eventual defeat in Russia was a terrible setback, but it no more spelled the end of the working class movement than did the defeat of the Paris Commune. Rather, the October Socialist Revolution marked a new advance to learn from, to build on, to employ for the cause of the working class.

Comrades and friends, today capitalism is again in the throes of crisis. Facing its ultimate doom,

it is not only on a savage takeback offensive against the working masses, it is also trying to rob the working class of the hope for a new day, of an alternative to this capitalist dungeon, of the socialist inspiration. It is trying to rob the working class of its history and its honor, and it is especially working to sully and stain the historic advance marked by the socialist revolution 70 years ago in Russia. But comrades, we will not let this hope die; we will not let this memory fade; we will not let this experience be lost. That's why we are celebrating today -- not a wake for an idea whose time is past -- but a festival for the revolutionary experience gained 70 years ago in Russia which will help us mount the barricade of class struggle and succeed in throwing this barbaric capitalist system on the scrapheap of history forever. <>

TROTSKYISM DEFENDS REFORMISM

A reply to "Bolshevik Tendency's" newest article on our Party

Earlier this year the Trotskyite "Bolshevik Tendency", an offshoot of the infamous Spartacist League, began a polemic against our Party. They pretended to agree with some of our stands against reformism and revisionism and demanded that we take up Trotskyism as allegedly the only way to carry them through consistently. In our reply in the May 1987 issue of the **Supplement**, we showed that Trotskyism and the BT trail in the wake of reformism and revisionism. Trotskyism is one of the varieties of liquidationism (bowing down to reformism while speaking in the name of revolution and Marxism-Leninism).

The BT has replied to our article in the latest issue of their paper (1917, #4, Autumn 1987). Beneath their extravagant rhetoric, one finds that their article verifies to a T our view of their subservience to reformism.

Underneath their revolutionary phrases, BT has a definite strategy for their work. They are opposed to communist work to develop the independent political movement of the working class. They call such work "Third Period" politics, and opposition to such politics is a fundamental theme

of both their articles against us. And they take a sectarian attitude toward various struggles, such as the student anti-apartheid movement.

Instead they stake everything on shortcuts and alternatives to revolutionary work. They look to the pro-capitalist trade union bureaucrats and the mass reformist forces. Their mouths water over these forces throwing "all their resources" into mobilizing the "labor movement". They also stake everything on rapidly gaining large numbers through either taking over or splitting such forces, and they replace party-building with what they themselves call "factionalism".

To accomplish this, they have developed a system of hypocrisy and false rhetoric. They insist they are against all bureaucrats, all reformists, all revisionists -- but in practice they end up tailing after all these forces.

BT Places Its Hopes in the Pro-Capitalist Trade Union Apparatus

In #4 of its journal, BT carries many pages of articles to prove that it allegedly stands against

all the trade union bureaucrats. It allegedly stands for all sorts of revolutionary demands. And presumably this rhetoric is important for ensuring that it retains some supporters.

But, with respect to the trade unions, BT's strategy is based on constant appeals to the labor bureaucrats. For this reason, it vastly exaggerates the role of paper resolutions in the pro-capitalist trade unions. Its appeals for "labor action" and "labor solidarity" are generally appeals for the trade union apparatus to do something.

In its new article against us, the BT discusses a particular anti-apartheid struggle and states:

"Had it been possible to mobilize enough sentiment in the base to force the union leadership to sanction the action officially, militants in the local could have demanded that the full resources of the ILWU be used to bring out the rest of the labor movement, as well as the black community, in active support." (p. 18, emphasis added)

The BT has visions of the "the full resources" of the pro-capitalist trade unions be mobilized on the side of the masses. This is to be accomplished by first having the union official sanction some action, then having another resolution calling on other unions to officially support the action, and so on and so forth. The special role of the militant workers is to be a pressure group to force the union officials to pass these resolutions.

This is all a pipedream. Unless the rank-and-file develop their initiative, unless organization and solidarity independent of the trade union bureaucrats are developed, the rest of the working class and the black community cannot be mobilized.

What, for example, did the PATCO strike show? Here the strike was not only officially sanctioned, but the AFL-CIO paraded the PATCO strikers at its rallies. But this didn't mean that the AFL-CIO threw its "full resources" into mobilizing the working class for the strike. On the contrary. It continued to send AFL-CIO airline and airport workers into the airports to keep the planes flying. And the PATCO leadership itself went along with this facade, despite the fact that it eventually meant the defeat of the strike and the loss of their own positions.

Of course, BT insists that it is not relying on the trade union apparatus doing anything. Why, it was simply looking for a good way for "exposing the pro-capitalist policies of the bureaucrats to the workers." (Ibid.)

But BT's talk of exposure is hypocritical. Its agitation doesn't develop the theme that the working class will unite through throwing off the yoke of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats. Instead it constantly sets before the masses the

image of all the great things the pro-capitalist union apparatus will do. "Exposure" is at best a consolation prize in case things go badly. In practice, BT creates illusions in the pro-capitalist unions.

BT Prettifies John L. Lewis

Let's take another example. In our original article, we pointed to BT's view of how the great working class upsurge of the 1930's took place. They credited it all to the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats such as John L. Lewis. And in their reply to us, BT goes wild in defense of this pro-capitalist, strikebreaking, red-bating labor hack.

BT denounces opposition to Lewis as sectarianism. They use the simple-minded trick of identifying the working class struggle in the trade unions with John L. Lewis and other bureaucrats. And then they claim that any opposition to Lewis is opposition to the struggle. This makes about as much sense as identifying the PATCO strike with the AFL-CIO leadership and denouncing criticism of the AFL-CIO bureaucrats as a sectarian attitude towards the striking air controllers.

But it shows what's on BT's mind. It can't imagine the revolutionary activists taking up the task of raising the working class in struggle independent of the reformist bureaucrats. Leading the masses of workers in their millions? For them, this is a task that calls for the labor bureaucracy.

What actually happened in the mid-1930's?

A huge mass upsurge occurred among the working class. It upset the hidebound structures of the old pro-capitalist unions which dominated the trade union field. And this upsurge was based on two things:

1) The protracted work spearheaded over years by the CPUSA to organize a trend opposed to the bankrupt policies followed by the AFL pro-capitalist trade union leaders (work denounced by the BT as "Third Period" politics); and

2) A huge, powerful movement of the workers in reaction to the miserable conditions of the Depression.

There was no way the old AFL craft-union structure was going to keep its near monopoly on the union movement. Something was going to change. And millions of unorganized workers were coming into motion.

There were two alternatives. Either independent unions would be formed that would break through the old pro-capitalist framework. Or a section of the AFL bureaucrats, who were smart enough to see that something had to be done, would succeed in regaining control of the movement and channeling it into new pro-capitalist

unions. It would take a major struggle to determine which of these two paths would prevail; it would not just be a question of having a correct line. Unfortunately the CPUSA abandoned this struggle at a critical moment.

The eventual channeling of this gigantic movement into the hands of John L. Lewis and other pro-capitalist bureaucrats was a tragic defeat for the working class. It has put a damper on the class struggle and on revolutionary organization for decades. Yes, the working class did achieve some more-or-less industrial unions (i.e. unions based on uniting the workers by industry, rather than dividing each industry and each factory up into a multitude of competing craft unions). But an industrial union can still be a pro-capitalist union. And this was achieved by the domination of John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray etc. etc.

We have shown what happened in auto, for example, in the article **The CPUSA's work in auto and the change in line of the mi-1930's** in the March 20, 1987 issue of the **Supplement**.

The BT tries to pretend that one can support John L. Lewis and still be revolutionary. They are faced with the embarrassing fact that their line on John L. Lewis is basically the same as that of the CPUSA's notorious reformist leader, Earl Browder. So, in typical Cold War fashion, they get out of their difficulties by blaming everything on the hand of Moscow. They write that:

"Following Moscow's instructions, it [the CPUSA] supported Roosevelt and the 'New Deal' Democratic Party and then shoved the 'no-strike pledge' down the throats of American workers during World War II." (p. 19)

However, take the case of auto. It was not Moscow but John L. Lewis who shoved the Democratic Party down the throat of the UAW at the 1936 convention. When this convention refused to endorse Roosevelt, Lewis and company blackmailed the convention with the threat of the withdrawal of support if it didn't reverse its decision. (See "The CP's Work in Auto....", pp. 25-26) And so it did. And the UAW apparatus began to come down against the strike wave long before World War II. Support for capitalist politicians and betrayal of the strike movement are the inevitable result of BT-style reliance on John L. Lewis.

To have opposed capitalist politicians and to have given wholehearted support to the strike movement meant breaking with John L. Lewis. To support Lewis and company meant to be his pawns in building up the pro-capitalist unions, pawns that could be discarded when the time was ripe. That's the long and the short of it.

You can't have it both ways. Either regard

the mass upsurge as a creation of John L. Lewis and the CIO bureaucrats, in which case one is forced to support capitalist politicians and betray the strike movement, or fight for an independent movement against the wishes and actions of Lewis. Those are the only two real positions in the world. Everything else is just phrasemongering.

Naturally, to effectively oppose John L. Lewis and similar reformist labor bureaucrats, one had to take account of how their stand differed from that of the diehard bureaucrats who opposed even the CIO. Opposing John L. Lewis by no means regarding all labor bureaucrats as the same, any more than opposing the Democratic Party means neglecting its differences from the Republicans. But the oh-so-revolutionary BT can do no better than repeating by rote memory the tired old formula of the most abject reformists about the revolutionaries failing to understand contradictions among the pro-capitalist forces.

BT On Its Knees Before the Democratic Party

And while the BT phrasemongers about how it would have opposed the Democrats in the past, its record in the present isn't so hot. In our original article, we dealt with BT's praise of the maneuvers of the Democrats in the face of the anti-apartheid movement. We dealt with a particular struggle described in an article by BT's predecessor, the External Tendency in their article "11-day Anti-Apartheid Struggle on San Francisco Docks" in the **Bulletin of the External Tendency of the IST**, No. 4, May 1985. (This is the same one mentioned above in another context.)

BT replies that "We conceded nothing to either the Democrats or the CP politically and openly criticized both throughout the struggle." Nice words, but in fact their article summing up the struggle had no criticism of the role of the Democrats.

The fact is that BT is able to criticize the Democratic Party when it openly opposes the anti-apartheid struggle. But is incapable of understanding what the liberal Democrats are doing when they posture in support of the movement.

Consider this. The BT has made a career of sectarian denunciation of the militant students who get their heads bashed in for protesting apartheid. But the same BT praised the participation of a liberal congressman in the reformist "mink coat" demonstrations, designed solely for media coverage. The BT can't dirty its hands with the "moralism" of the student movement against apartheid, but everything is forgiven as soon as it is a matter of dealing with a liberal congressman.

(To be continued)

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