

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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Notes from Nicaragua--Part Two: "Neither the FSLN nor the capitalist parties have a solution"

Below is the second installment of the report from the MLP, USA delegation that visited Nicaragua in July. For part one and the joint statement of the Marxist-Leninist parties of Nicaragua and the U.S., see the August 1 issue of the Workers' Advocate.

On July 5, 1979, two weeks before the final triumph of July 19, the working people of Jinotepe rose in insurrection and liberated their city from the hated National Guard of the Somoza dictatorship. We travelled to Jinotepe on the day of the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the insurrection.

Nearly the whole town, some 10,000 people, came out for the festivities. Part of the crowd pressed in to hear the speeches of commandante Henri Ruiz and other Sandinista (FSLN) officials. If there was little fire among these listeners, there was at least respect and interest in what the FSLN leaders had to say. Most were not paying attention to the speakers at all; they were taking in the afternoon holiday, enjoying the parade or the sweet things to eat.

What we saw in Jinotepe gives the lie to the whole Reagan/Bush propaganda. The people of Jinotepe are clearly not groaning under the weight of a hated tyranny. They are clearly not cringing in fear of the "totalitarian" commandantes. Quite the opposite. The FSLN leaders move as relaxed and easily among the people as government leaders almost anywhere. They are supported by some, respected by many more, and tolerated by the overwhelming majority. This is the same majority that rose in revolution and smashed the Somoza dictatorship. And there is an acceptance of the FSLN as a participant in that revolution and for defending the revolution from the efforts of the CIA to overthrow it.

However, we saw something else that was striking in Jinotepe: the fires of passion for the FSLN are cooling. This began several years ago and this year it has gone further. The Jinotepe celebration was a far cry from the combination of jubilation and militancy that we saw at such FSLN events five years past. It was more like the typical

political rally one might expect on an official holiday.

The FSLN is undermining its own support

The economy is the biggest wound that is weakening the FSLN's support. The masses have faced economic hardship before. But today even the minimal reforms promised by petty-bourgeois Sandinism are awash in the sea of capitalist economic crisis. The workers are struggling to survive in the face of hyperinflation, layoffs and unem-

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Justice for Yusuf Hawkins!

Build a fighting anti-racist movement!

From the August 28 issue of *New York Workers' Voice*, paper of the MLP-NY:

Anger over the murder of Yusuf Hawkins has grown over the past week, spilling onto the streets of Brooklyn. Several hundred people demonstrated in Bensonhurst over the August 26 weekend and another 1,000 attended Yusuf's funeral services, voicing outrage at this latest racist murder. But most significantly, about 7,500 demonstrated on the evening of August 31 in downtown Brooklyn and engaged in a militant confrontation with the police at the foot of the Brooklyn Bridge. About 24 police were injured and 4 protesters were arrested.

Yusuf Hawkins, age 16, was killed solely because of the color of his skin. A black youth answering a used car ad became the latest in a long string of New York City-style racist lynchings. The papers even keep scorecards to record the toll.

By now, it is well known how Yusuf was killed on the night of August 23 for being the "wrong" black. How he and his friends had the bad fortune to think they had some

right to walk on Bay Ridge Avenue in a white enclave, while a gang of 10-30 white racists gathered with bats and guns to meet the "right" black man, the new boyfriend of a neighborhood girl.

She, after all, had been repeatedly warned about her "nigger boyfriend," and told, "we don't want other kinds around. She was warned." (*Newsday*, Aug. 25, 26) "The right thing," according to racist logic is, "if you're black and you want to avoid trouble, you don't come into this neighborhood at night." (*Daily News*, Aug. 27)

The victim's father, Moses Hawkins, said in disbelief, "He's supposed to be able to go to all 50 states with no problem. This isn't 1889. It's 1989. This isn't Alabama, 1956. This is New York, 1989." (*Daily News*, Aug. 25)

And yet, Mayor Koch says, "Racial relations are far better than in many other cities...[only] not good enough." (*New York Times*, Aug. 25) Obviously, they were not good enough for Yusuf Hawkins. They were not good enough for Willie Turks, killed just a few miles away for the crime of buying a bagel. They were not good enough for Michael Griffith, just down the Belt Parkway, who wanted to find the nearest gas station.

In each of these cases, witness after witness testified that these neighborhoods were simply "off-limits" to blacks. And these three killings, unfortunately, are barely the tip of the iceberg.

And yet Ed Koch says that, "this is more than a case involving bias. It is a spurned lover." (*New York Times*, Aug. 25) What a vile and perverted statement. If only Hawkins had been the "right" black--the new boyfriend--well then, the case would have been marked up to "Romeo and Juliet" and another black "troublemaker" would have been carted off to the morgue!

It will not be enough to convict Hawkins' many killers and send them away forever; they are just the lowest form of thug that racism breeds. It will not be enough to send Koch packing from City Hall; responsible as he is, Koch is only a prominent representative of the racist capitalist system.

To gain justice for Yusuf Hawkins, we must build a broad and militant mass movement, embracing working people of all races and nationalities. The anti-racist movement must confront the whole of racist society, reaching to Bush and his Supreme Court--who legitimize racist practice--as well as the Koches, police and racist gangs who incite and carry out the terror.

We cannot rely on the police and the courts who are hand in glove with the racists. After all, these are the same government officials who killed Eleanor Bumpers and Michael Stewart, who let the Howard Beach killers off lightly with just a few years in jail.

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This racism must be stopped. It is time to build up a fighting movement of the masses to confront the racist

terror and bury it forever. ■

Condemn the assassination of communist militant Gholam Keshavarz by the Islamic regime of Iran!

We have just received news that comrade Gholam Keshavarz of the Communist Party of Iran was assassinated in Cyprus by the thugs of the Islamic dictatorship. He falls as a victim of the latest terror campaign of the mullahs in the wake of last year's cease-fire in the Persian Gulf war. In this terror campaign, the regime has already murdered thousands of political prisoners in Iran's jails and it has set its guns on opposition figures abroad.

The Iranian regime represents a brutal tyranny. It is a tyranny bred by capitalist barbarism. And today, under its new chief, Rafsanjani, its efforts at stabilizing Iran for imperialist and capitalist exploitation are being welcomed by the capitalist regimes of East and West. Yesterday, the revisionist traitors of Moscow greeted Rafsanjani with a red carpet treatment. Today the Western European powers are busy rebuilding bridges. Meanwhile, conditions are being prepared for tomorrow's rapprochement with Washington.

But terror will not silence the revolutionary underground in Iran. The cowardly murder of comrade Gholam Keshavarz will only end up adding more fuel to the fire burning in the hearts of millions of Iranian toilers who yearn for the overthrow of the despotic dictatorship of the Islamic mullahs.

The Marxist-Leninist Party sends its condolences to the comrades and fellow fighters of Gholam Keshavarz. We reprint below a statement from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iran and a message delivered by a representative of the Marxist-Leninist Party to a memorial meeting held in New York. ■

Statement of the CC of the CP of Iran on the assassination of comrade Bahman Javadi (Gholam Keshavarz)

On Saturday, August 26, 1989, comrade Gholam Keshavarz, a well-known figure in the Iranian communist movement, who had gone to visit his relatives in Cyprus, was shot by the agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the city of Larnaka. Unfortunately, a few hours later, he died in a hospital. One of his relatives was seriously injured in this incident.

Comrade Gholam Keshavarz was a long-time revolution-

ary, a well-known figure of resistance in the Shah's prisons, and one of the first cadres of Unity of Communist Militants [one of two major organizations which founded the Communist Party of Iran in September 1983]. He was also one of the participants in the founding congress of the Communist Party of Iran, as well as an outstanding cadre of this Party. He held various important positions in the Communist Party of Iran, including membership on the Central Committee of the Party in its second term.

During recent years, comrade Gholam was mostly active outside of Iran. Most recently, he was active as a member of the Constituent Committee of the Federation of Iranian Refugees' Councils. During his political life, comrade Gholam was a sincere and consistent militant in his struggle against capitalism and for the emancipation of the working class. He gave his life for this cause.

The Islamic Republic of Iran added another dark page to its history of savagery. But these criminal acts cannot prevent the struggle that comrade Gholam was an active part of. Our fight is a part of the great working class movement against the existence of capitalism and the Islamic Republic, a clear symbol of its barbarism. Our fight will continue until this system is demolished and replaced by a society of freedom and equality.

We extend our condolences to the family of comrade Gholam Keshavarz and all his fellow fighters. And we are certain that the grief of losing Gholam will increase our hatred for the Islamic Republic and will strengthen our will to fight against this system.

Down with the Islamic Republic regime!
Hail the memory of comrade Gholam Keshavarz!
Long live Freedom, Equality, and the Workers' State!

Central Committee of Communist Party of Iran
August 27, 1989

(Translated by "Supporters of CPI in New York".) ■

MLP statement to memorial meeting for comrade Gholam Keshavarz held Sept. 9 in New York

Comrades and friends,

Several years ago some comrades of the MLP and of the CPI were engaged in a lengthy and wide-ranging discussion. The debate raged on and the room filled with smoke until a break was declared to allow the participants time to reflect. Our comrades gratefully accepted the invitation of a comrade of the CPI to accompany him on a little walk. And walk they did, for the next four hours, scrambling over boulders and up hills, descending by paths no foot had ever trod, until the sun hung low in the sky. That comrade was Gholam Keshavarz and this is how our comrades will always remember him: perched atop a boulder in the middle of a stream, quietly holding forth on the theoretical sins of populism and what it meant in practice in the Iranian revolution.

It seemed typical of Gholam that no room was ever quite big enough to hold him—he'd had his fill of confined spaces in the prisons of the Shah. And while he took active part in many a meeting, discussion and debate, it was not for love of the sound of his own voice, but because of the importance he attached to Marxist-Leninist theory as a guide to action. For Gholam was above all a man of revolutionary action. Finally, he was as well a man of the party, a man to whom the program and organization, life and work of the party were not just abstractions but the stuff life was made of.

Marxist-Leninist, man of action, man of the party: this is how we remember Gholam Keshavarz.

* * *

To a certain extent Gholam's personal history paralleled that of the revolutionary movement in Iran. Gholam came into the movement at a time when the populism of the Fedayee was gaining in popularity. Focoism and disappearing into the remotest countryside became the fashion of the day. Gholam took up the fight against the Shah wholeheartedly, but by the time of his imprisonment he had serious questions about the banner he had been fighting under. He studied these questions in prison and emerged from prison as a critic of focoism and populism, committed to laying the foundations for a communist party.

In the struggle against the Shah, populism tended to blur and confuse the aspirations of different classes. This left the populist forces bankrupt and programless in the complicated situation which followed February, 1979. What attitude to take toward the new regime and the mullahs? Toward the bourgeois sectors which were speculating on the revolution?

Marxist-Leninist forces emerged who insisted on a strict accounting for the aspirations of different class forces, who insisted that the toilers must have independent organization and politics, and who insisted that the building of a communist party must not be left to chance but rather be the foremost task of the Marxist-Leninists. These positions struck a chord with a large section of activists who were searching for a program. The unity and organization of these forces brought about the founding of the CPI in 1983.

The history of the past decade shows that only this

tendency based upon the class independence of the toilers was capable of passing through the various stages of revolutionary aftermath and reactionary war without disorientation and crisis. The strength of this trend, of CPI and Komala, is the greatest legacy left to us by those who fell in this period.

* * *

The assassination of Gholam Keshavarz is but one act in a wave of atrocities being committed by both the Iranian and Iraqi regimes in the aftermath of their bloody war. Inside Iran the regime has taken to mass slaughter of political prisoners, while stepping up its campaign of assassination against opposition trends abroad. The Iraqi regime for its part has intensified its war against the Kurdish people, turning poison gas and artillery against unarmed villages. We must condemn these atrocities and mobilize public opinion against them.

The atrocities of these regimes are monstrous, but they are not inexplicable. The politics of the cease-fire continue the politics of a reactionary war which claimed the lives of millions. Yesterday the regimes sent their populations into battle as cannon fodder to slaughter each other; today they are turning their guns against their own populations and especially against any sign of opposition. This is not a sign of strength; on the contrary, the regimes are in a race against history.

The war has left a legacy of destruction and economic crisis. The cease-fire carries with it the danger of an upsurge of mass struggle. It is not so easy for the regimes to return to business as usual. This is why the Iranian regime has made its first priority an assault against any opposition forces capable of contributing to such an upsurge or of capitalizing from it. The regime is carrying out these desperate acts not because it is confident in its position but because it is afraid.

Of course this does not mean that we can afford to be overconfident, or sit back and wait for history to sweep away these reactionaries for us. On the contrary, these regimes are capable of great crimes against the toiling masses and against the revolutionary forces, and history can bring us not only advances but setbacks as well. But amid these real-life horror stories, it is well worth remembering that it is the class struggle which is the motive force of history, and that it is precisely for this reason that the Iranian regime must fear a Gholam Keshavarz.

* * *

Comrades and friends, the Iranian regime is a striking expression of the barbarism which arises of a society based upon exploitation. Our answer to the crimes of the Iranian regime must be to persist in struggle. We extend our condolences to the family of Gholam Keshavarz and to all his comrades. In his memory, and in memory of all those who have fallen, we persist in the fight against oppression and exploitation and for the emancipation of the working class in Iran, in the United States, and throughout the world. ■

May Day 1989 in Iran

From the June 1989 issue (No. 15) of Bolshevik Message, paper of the Communist Party of Iran--The Committee Abroad:

6,000 workers hold May Day rally in Sanandaj

For the third year running the city of Sanandaj in Kurdistan was the scene of magnificent May Day celebrations. Several ceremonies were held in different parts of the city culminating in a rally in the city sports hall.

In the days leading up to the First of May it was apparent that preparations were underway for the holding of ceremonies. In the working-class districts there was activity in the air; people were talking about this day, the radios of the Communist Party were listened to, and even, in some working-class areas, groups agitating and preparing for this day were starting to form.

Meeting in the sports hall

Workers had earlier asked the Employment Office to let them use the sports hall for holding the May Day ceremonies. But right up to the noon of May 1st the authorities had refused to reply to the workers' request. In the afternoon of this day groups of workers began marching towards the sports hall from various parts of the city. By 3 o'clock a large crowd had gathered outside the hall. Soon the gates were opened and the workers filled the hall. Slogans and placards were put up: "Workers of the world, unite!", "Long live May Day, the international workers' day!", "We, industrial workers, want May Day to be declared a holiday!", "Workers of Kurdistan express their support for the struggle of Palestinian workers!", "Long live workers' militant unity and solidarity!", "Our emancipation depends on our unity!" Most of the placards were signed: "Workers of Sanandaj".

In a short time about 6,000 people had filled the sports hall. The ceremony began with the playing of the Internationale.

Then the [agenda] was announced. The first speaker took the floor. He talked of May Day and its history. Emphasizing the international character of the working class and its day, he said: "This day provides a great opportunity for us workers to show our united power to everyone. It allows us to drive home the fact that all the wealth of this world is the product of our labor." He ended his speech amidst the applause of the audience.

The next speaker talked about general assembly and the need for workers' unity. He referred to the day's meeting as an example of the general assembly of workers of Sanandaj. Concerning the question of unemployment, he

said: "In the first place we should have jobs and if the state cannot provide work, every unemployed should be given unemployment benefit. According to state statistics, there are only 10,000 people out of work in the whole country. But we know that this is not true, since in our city alone over 10,000 are without work."

Another speaker attacked the injustices done to women. He talked of the problems of women workers and said that workers should be in the forefront of the fight to achieve equality for women.

The last speaker was a 15-year-old worker. He described in detail how the children of working-class families are driven to work like slaves.

A resolution in 23 articles which had been printed earlier was distributed among those present. It was read out and approved enthusiastically article by article.

The resolution, in its introduction, states:

"We send our greetings to all on the occasion of May Day, the international workers' day and the day of the manifestation of unity and solidarity of workers of the world, irrespective of nationality, race, religion and sex. We commemorate this historic day together with our class comrades throughout the world. We are celebrating this day at a time when workers, raising the slogan of "Workers of the world, unite!", are going to clearly state their demands and aims, relying on their immense and united power. They are advancing with ever greater power in the direction of achieving their demands. This is the day when workers of the world unitedly renew their pledge. It is not only the day of remembrance of the general strike in the U.S. and of the bloody crushing of the Chicago workers, but also a day in which we express and insist on our expectations and demands. We are thus issuing a resolution in 23 articles."

The resolution lists many workers' demands including:

- *the recognition of May Day and declaring it a national holiday;
- *equal rights for women and men in all fields;
- *prohibition of child labor below the age of 18;
- *rise in wages according to inflation and the expenses of a family of five;
- *determination of the minimum wage on the basis of inflation and the expenses of a family of five by the workers' genuine representatives;
- *a 40-hour working week with two consecutive days off;
- *prohibition of all over-time and night work except in the socially vital branches where double wages and bonuses should be paid;
- *prohibition of all contract and piece-work;
- *prohibition of all expulsions and cuts in wages by the excuses of the employers;
- *unemployment benefit for all those unemployed, women and men, who are ready for work;
- *creation of jobs for all women and men above the age

of 18;

- *suitable housing and health service;
- *rise in the annual holidays from 12 to 30 days;
- *creation of nurseries and creche facilities; ...

March through the city

After the meeting, the participants began marching through the streets. As the line of marchers moved along, the initial six thousand workers and workers' families were joined by more and more people. At the beginning some traditional slogans were chanted but soon they were replaced by workers' slogans, such as: "Unite, unite, workers unite!", "Long live socialism!", "Freedom, equality, workers' rule!", "Release the political prisoners!", "Long live the Kurdish people's movement!", "Long live Komala, whom workers support!"

On this day the Islamic Republic's military and paramilitary forces had been put on alert. But neither during the meeting in the sports hall, nor during the march did they dare intervene.

The march through the city added to the enthusiasm which had been aroused on this day. The news of the rally, the passing of the resolution and the march soon spread in the city. Many small workers' gatherings were still on in various quarters of the town, and fires in the nearby mountain, lit by the workers earlier on, marking this day, were still burning.

May Day Celebrations in other cities

Metal workers' assembly in Tehran

On the evening of the First of May workers gathered in the consumer cooperative building. The ceremony began at six o'clock in the evening. Some workers' families had come to the meeting with flowers. A card bearing a red flower

and the words "Greetings on May Day, the International Workers' Day" was distributed among the participants. Slogans such as "Wages must be raised according to inflation", "A labor law must be passed", "The first of May must be recognized as a holiday", "United we stand, divided we fall" had been put up on the walls.

After the opening ceremony and the playing of music, speeches were held. The first speech was on the history of May Day. Later, short reports were given about the activities of the cooperative, the funds and the climbing team. Some workers told their own memories for the audience. An old worker recalled a successful workers' struggle in which he himself had taken part.

The last speaker emphasized the need for workers' unity. He said: "Wherever workers have been united they have forced the governments to back down. Look at Poland, for example. Although I do not agree with Solidarity and those who follow the Pope and the Church, but since they were united they finally forced the government to recognize the union. In Moscow they have arrested workers' leaders; in Turkey May Day is banned. Why is this the case?" The speech of this worker ended amidst the applause and shouts of "unity, unity, unity" of the participants.

At the end, some poems were read out and flowers were distributed among the participants.

Workers' gathering in Mahabad

Several days before May Day the walls in this town had been [covered] with slogans calling for the holding of this day. There was activity in working-class districts in preparation for this day. Leaflets were distributed in a main working-class square and in several workplaces. On the eve of May Day bonfires were lit in some areas.

On the morning of the First of May the regime's armed forces had been put on alert; streets were patrolled and the city were militarized. Nevertheless work was stopped in many workplaces and ceremonies were held in working-class districts. ■

A new revival of the working class movement in Bangladesh

Below we reprint two leaflets from the revolutionary movement in Bangladesh. They deal with a class-wide campaign by the workers that was launched in the spring of this year.

Nineteen labor organizations have joined together in a Workers' and Employees' Unity Council and begun a struggle for a 5-point platform of demands. This platform includes calls for a living wage, for protection against inflation, for jobs for the unemployed, and for the abolishing of repressive laws against political and trade union activity.

This is the second time this decade that such a class-wide movement of the workers of Bangladesh has broken out. In 1984, another united campaign was launched by over a dozen trade union centers, seeking trade union rights and an increase in the minimum wage. A 48-hour general strike was prepared for May 22-23. But at the last minute, the labor officials connected to the bourgeois and reformist parties came to an agreement with the Ershad military regime and called off the strike. The reformists and the government trumpeted this agreement as a "great historic victory" for the working class. But revolutionary activists in Bangladesh denounced the agreement as a "great historic betrayal." (The activists had given conditional support to the campaign, supporting the workers' movement while criticizing the narrowness of the demands which resulted from the domination of union leaders of bourgeois and reformist political tendencies.) The agreement split up the public and private sector workers, granting something to the public sector workers but nothing to the private sector workers. Later on, even the concessions to the public sector workers became a dead letter in the hands of the government.

This time around, revolutionary activists in Bangladesh are more favorably inclined towards the demands of the Unity Council. They have been active in the campaign for the 5-point platform. In the leaflets below, they raise to the workers the need to build the struggle with vigilance against the danger of a similar betrayal as that of May 1984. And they point to the importance of the workers using this campaign to step forward with a more forceful role in the general struggle against the despotic Ershad dictatorship.

The first leaflet is from the Democratic Revolutionary Front of Bangladesh, the second is from the Bangladesh Trade Union Federation (TUF), which is part of DRF. TUF is not a trade union proper but an organization of revolutionary militants among the workers in the factories and unions. Translation by the Workers' Advocate staff.

Advance the laboring people's movement under the leadership of the working class

Appeal of the Democratic Revolutionary Front for the April strike

The Workers and Employees Unity Council has called for a 24-hour general strike across the country on April 24 with the goal of achieving its 5-point platform of demands. This strike is very important, because this is the first time since 1984 that the workers themselves have independently taken the initiative to spread the movement nationwide and they are trying to stand up for their demands stronger than before.

This independent initiative of the workers today is not only necessary for the working class of this country, it is even more important for the purpose of advancing the general democratic movement and directing it along correct lines in the interest of all the laboring masses.

When in 1984 the high tide of the movement appeared widely across the country, it was the workers who came forward as the basic force of the movement. Basing themselves on their strength, they had given a call for a 48-hour general strike beginning on May 22. Confronted with this call, it wasn't only Ershad's military regime which got scared; so did the political parties of the rich and the many labor leaders in their tow. To thwart that general strike, a conspiracy was cooked up between the government, the political parties and blocs of the rich, and the bootlicking labor leaders in their ranks. Some of those people today occupy ministerial seats in the Ershad military regime.

The agreement that had been reached with the government on May 21, 1984 may have achieved a few of the workers' demands but overall it was against the interests of the working class. Through that agreement, the workers did not get what was owed to them. Workers, what is more,

you already know that the agreement has still not been fully realized. In the last period, you have been able to get some idea of why you were betrayed despite the high tide of the movement back then, despite all the preparations that had been made to undertake the general strike. But you will have to grasp this better. Because if you do not consciously stand up against the danger of betrayal, your struggle and efforts will again be frustrated and confused because of understandings reached between the government and the rich people's political parties--no matter whether that frustration or confusion be temporary and only for a short time.

The revised list of demands that the Workers' and Employees Unity Council has put forward before the workers today is more democratic and takes account of the interests of the workers more than any platform raised in the past. It is the workers who are to be credited for this, because you have learned through your own experience of confronting various problems and crises in your lives: that attempts to create divisions between workers of public and private-sector factories will not be allowed; that simply achieving a few minuscule demands will not create much of a change in your conditions; and that along with the fight for economic demands you will also have to play a forceful role in the struggle for democratic rights.

But this is still not enough. We believe that there are still many dangers ahead for the workers. There is the possibility of another betrayal, and because there isn't sufficient political consciousness among a major section of workers they are liable to be prey to confusion because of

plots among the political parties of the rich, their labor leaders, and the government. As a result what is most important today is for workers to understand that they have to play a vital role to confront the present situation in the democratic movement across the country. Thus they have to play the leading role in the people's liberation movement by standing up with their own organizations and movements against the parties and blocs of the rich, the owners and bourgeois, against all those labor leaders ready to betray the workers, and against the government. By rejecting trailing behind the parties of the rich, you have to stand on your own feet and provide leadership not just to the trade union movement but also to the political movement.

Until now the parties of the rich have seen fit to win a few crumbs for the workers, by controlling the workers' organizations in their interests and by threatening strikes sometimes or by begging and pleading. But while holding out crumbs for the workers, they are preparing to grab fancy feasts for themselves through winning seats in the national assembly via so-called "impartial" and "free" elections and negotiating for power sharing with the

military regime.

The workers have to be alert against such plots. They will have to strongly resist betrayal by means of agreements such as the infamous May agreement of 1984. From where the workers of Bangladesh have arrived today through their various experiences, it is not only that they have to fight their own economic demands. They have to transform this struggle into the working class political struggle. Through this struggle, they have to free themselves from the politics, the political goals and program of the wealthy, bourgeois and owning class. Through this struggle, they have to give leadership to and organize the political struggle with the aim of a revolutionary transformation in the social, economic and political fields.

We are appealing to the fighting workers of Bangladesh to keep this goal in mind as they work for the success of the 24-hour general strike called for April 24 to fight for the 5-point platform of demands.

Central Executive Committee,
Democratic Revolutionary Front,
Dhaka, April 20, 1989■

TUF's appeal on May Day

Unite in the movement for the 5-point platform of demands! Resist all schemes for compromise!

On May 1st, 1886, blood was shed in the American city of Chicago in the fight for 8 hours of work in a day and for a living wage for that work. The history of the workers' movement had until then not seen such a successful and strong effort in unity and class combination among the workers. Ever since that movement, the workers of the whole world have been observing May 1st as the symbol of working class union and struggle.

It isn't only the working class which is observing May Day. Today the owning and exploiting class around the world is also organizing various events in the name of observing May Day. But it has become clear to all conscious working people that the exploiting class observes May Day only to deceive the workers, to blunt and nullify the efforts of the workers to unite and fight.

In 1972 the Awami League government declared May 1st an official holiday and since then the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party, which held power in the late 70's] and even today's lackey despotic Ershad government have carried on with this setup. But while the lackey exploiters observe May Day through various fraudulent programs and declarations on state radio, TV and in the newspapers, what do we see in reality?

We see on one hand that the laboring masses cannot even maintain a life of bare subsistence despite working 12 to 14 hours a day. On the other hand we see every day that prices of necessities go up in leaps and bounds, every moment the laboring people are insulted and oppressed in inhuman ways. Several tens of millions of people are

unemployed, the employed have no job security, and there are no trade union or political rights for the workers. And from 1972 on, various repressive laws have been put in place so that workers cannot organize the struggles and movements to attain such basic rights.

Fighting friends,

from the moment of its birth, TUF has been trying to build up the resistance to the anti-worker activities of the state apparatus of the imperialist-lackey owning class. It has been working to achieve a living wage in exchange for 8 hours of work a day. It has been fighting so that all who are able to work can get work and to attain the basic democratic rights of the working class. But not only the bourgeois parties and blocs in and out of power but also the "labor leaders" who lick the boots of the rich have been opposing the interests of the working class by creating splits and confusion among the workers by means of various kinds of plots and false issues.

Laboring friends,

today it is a hopeful sign that 19 labor organizations of Bangladesh joined in the Workers and Employees Unity Council have been trying to build up a united movement for the 5-point platform of demands. The 5-point platform, although it is not put together in a scientific and comprehensive way, contain several very necessary demands for the laboring people of Bangladesh today. Although real liberation for the working people cannot come without capturing political power, in today's conditions we consider it to be our task to forcefully fight for the 5-point platform.

We believe that only through movement and struggle can such demands be achieved. We also believe that there may be attempts to drown out the survival demands of the workers and employees in the noisy talk of free and impartial elections by the parties and blocs of the rich and the imperialists. Besides, in the course of the struggle it is also likely that we will come across various schemes on the part of the government and plots of betrayal by other go-betweens. That's why today on May Day TUF appeals to all workers, employees and working people of Bangladesh: be alert against all threats of betrayal and conspiracies, build up a conscious and militant united movement, and raise your voices:

- *We demand a living wage for 8 hours of work.
- *To maintain real wages, rationing and cost of living allowance must be given.
- *Democratic rights for the trade unions must be granted.
- *We demand work and job security for all!

*All repressive laws on trade union and political activity must be scrapped.

*The 5-point demands of the Unity Council have to be fulfilled!

Central Committee,
Bangladesh Trade Union Federation (TUF)
May 1, 1989 ■

The Bangladesh comrades of the Ganatantrik Biplobi Jote (Democratic Revolutionary Front) can be contacted at:

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Chicago cop Jon Burge sued for torturing suspects Down with police brutality and torture!

Below is the lead article from the August 17 issue of Chicago Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Chicago:

The Chicago Police Department has a national reputation for corruption, brutality and racism. In past issues of the *Chicago Workers' Voice* we have reported on many of the police shootings of youth in Pilsen and Little Village. Now it seems that some of Chicago's "finest" have routinely tortured and beat suspects in order to force confessions or to gather information.

Jon Burge, then the Lieutenant in charge of the Violent Crimes unit on the South Side, with some of his associates, used electroshock torture applied to the ears, nostrils and genitals of Black crime "suspects"; they put plastic bags over their victims' heads until the victim passed out and on at least one occasion they tied a victim to a hot radiator and then electroshocked him so that he burnt his chest on the radiator. Burge's partner in many of these torture sessions was Joe Gorman, a Chicago cop infamous for helping to murder Black Panther leader Fred Hampton with a submachine gun in 1969.

All of this came to light when one of the torture victims, Andrew Wilson brought a civil rights lawsuit against Burge. It also came out that many other victims of Burge's torture had filed complaints with the States Attorney of Cook County (then Richard Daley), with the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Police Department's Office of Professional Standards. At least

ten men filed complaints about incidents of torture that took place between 1973 and 1982. And how did all these "guardians of justice" respond to complaints of torture in Chicago? They did absolutely nothing at all! In fact, Jon Burge was promoted to Commander of Detectives.

This is not really a big surprise of course. After all, when has the capitalist justice system in the U.S. protected the workers, the poor, or minorities? And considering the fact that some of the world's best known torture experts have gotten their training from the C.I.A., it's really no wonder that some of the torture manual techniques have found their way into U.S. police procedure. Police throughout the U.S. feel free to gun down people they "suspect" of being criminals especially if those people are "suspiciously" Black or Latino. It was only 3 weeks ago that Chicago Police answering a call in the housing projects, killed a Black man as he was coming downstairs from his apartment. The police claimed that the man was armed and they thought he was a suspect, but it turned out he was only armed with a cigarette lighter and had nothing to do with any crime! And in the past 3 weeks 2 people have mysteriously died while in police custody!

The first civil rights trial against Jon Burge ended with a hung jury after the judge refused to allow testimony from Burge's other victims, or from experts on torture. The judge did however allow any kind of testimony about the criminality of the plaintiff, Andrew Wilson, in effect putting the victim of torture on trial. (Wilson was originally

arrested for killing two policemen.)

The second trial of Jon Borge is going on now. An organization called Committee to End Police Abuse and Torture is calling for people to come to the trial. They are also organizing a protest on August 17 at 10:30 a.m. at 11th and State when the Police Board will have its next meeting.

The police and politicians from both the Democratic and Republican parties, from George Bush to Jesse Jackson, are all talking about the "War against Crime" and getting tough on criminals. But the deep social and economic crisis that causes street crime doesn't go away because our neighborhoods are turned into military zones and the police are given a free hand to beat, torture, and arrest people. The U.S. has a larger percentage of its population in prisons than any of the other so-called Western powers. And those prisons are centers of officially sanctioned abuse. Workers, poor, and minorities are all "suspect" to the capitalist ruling

class, and their loyal servants act accordingly--with shootings, beatings, and a legal system that always favors the rich and powerful. We need a movement that meets every instance of police brutality, and racist attacks with protest and a united struggle of all the workers and poor. ■

Update on the torture case

30 people took part in the demonstration on Aug. 17 against police brutality and torture mentioned above. Many of them had been coming to the police headquarters on business, such as other cases before the Police Review Board.

Since then, the second civil rights trial against torturer Jon Borge ended on Aug 22. It ruled that there was torture--but didn't find anyone responsible for it and awarded no damages. There will be an appeal. ■

Boeing apartheid--time to challenge a decades-old system

Reprinted below is the August 12 leaflet of the MLP-Seattle:

From the start of Bill Boeing's aircraft business in 1916 through to the mid-1940s, the company refused to hire blacks. Boeing's Jim Crow policy was part of the non-union situation where the aircraft workers had virtually no rights and their jobs depended on the whim of management.

In the 1930's, a movement to unionize and fight against exploitation developed among industrial workers throughout the U.S. The 1934 West coast longshore strike was hard fought and won by the workers. In Seattle, one worker and one policeman were killed in the battles of this strike, and black longshoreman were a major force in the fierce clashes with police at pier 41.

These developments scared Boeing management. In 1936, it maneuvered to block the organization of its employees into a militant union by signing a sweetheart agreement with the International Association of Machinists (IAM). This deal brought no significant changes. Very few workers were even enrolled into the union, Boeing recognized the union without a vote being taken, wages remained the same poverty level \$.40/hour, and Boeing's ban on hiring blacks remained. Among the conservative, anti-worker policies of the IAM which Boeing liked, was its exclusionary clause

which restricted membership to whites only. Anyone who joined the IAM had to recite a secret oath swearing that he would never recommend for union membership anyone who was not of the white race.

In October 1939, a young black applied for a Boeing training program. He was told at the plant, and the director of personnel later confirmed, that the policy of Boeing was to "neither hire nor train Negroes." Following this incident, activists in the black community began organizing against Boeing's Jim Crow. On July 11, 1940, the IAM's ban on blacks was discussed at a meeting of local 751. A unanimous standing vote of the union members passed a resolution that the local accept blacks as union members. The IAM bureaucrats would not tolerate this. One vice president of 751 who supported integration was fired, and in April 1941, IAM president Harvey Brown put local 751 into receivership to block integration.

The racism of the Boeing company was so thick that it continued to resist integration, even during the severe labor shortage caused by World War II! Communists and other black community activists organized protests against Boeing's Jim Crow policy. The main organization among the aircraft workers pushing this struggle was the Communist Party, which was attempting to organize the United Auto Workers union at Boeing. At first, Boeing allowed a

small number of blacks to work there only if they paid \$3.50 for temporary work permits. Activists organized mass picketing of the Boeing plant and eventually forced Boeing to drop the temporary work permits. By the end of the war Boeing agreed to hire blacks, and it was not until 1948 that the IAM dropped its ban on black union membership.

Once Boeing began hiring blacks, a system of discrimination on the job was put in place. Very few blacks were hired and they were put mainly in the lower paid jobs and kept there. And there was discrimination in job assignment even in the lower paid classifications. For example, older workers have said that for several years in production shops, black workers were not allowed to drill holes. Boeing used the near nonexistence of seniority rights to get rid of most blacks at every major layoff.

What has changed since 1948?

Today the systematic racial discrimination remains basically the same. Boeing used the 1970 layoff to decimate its black employees and thus successfully blocked the pressure for changes that came from the black struggle of the 1960s. The Reagan-Bush years have brought an ongoing elimination of affirmative action regulations. This has set up a situation where the government allows the companies to do what they want "in good faith." At Boeing, this means that the company massively discriminates in good faith. The main difference that has come in the 70s and 80s is production of tons of "equal opportunity" propaganda. But behind the phoney front of "equality", Boeing continues to practice discrimination policies that may not be as severe, but are carried out just as systematically as the notorious apartheid system in South Africa.

Boeing makes profits through the subjugation of black workers at Boeing. Similarly, it profits from, and shows its support for the racist South African regime with its \$500 million airplane contract recently signed.

Main features of Boeing apartheid

**Labor grade.

It is easy to tell the labor grade of most Boeing shops or work areas. All you have to do is walk in and look around at the color and sex of the workers. If a quarter or more of the workers are black or Asian, or more than half are women, then the shop is most likely grades one through three. If there are a handful of blacks, Asians and women, then it will most likely be grade four. If the shop is almost entirely white male, then it is grade six or higher.

Every Boeing plant has shops with low wages and hazardous working conditions, and these shops are kept filled with women and minority workers. For example, the wire shops, composite shops and sheet metal chemical preparation shops. At the other extreme are upper labor grade shops like facilities, machining, etc. At the A-3250 machine shop at Auburn, for example, over 95% of the

grade eight or higher workers are white male. Of course, the deburr and paint area of A-3250 (grade three) has many women and minority workers.

Of the 90 current apprentices, there is not a single black male, only a handful of other minorities and women, vast majority white male.

Probably more than 90% of the black IAM workers at Boeing are in labor grades 1 through 4.

**Work assignment.

In most Boeing shops of all grade levels there is discrimination in work assignment. Usually the most skilled and most pleasant jobs are reserved for the relatives and other arbitrary favorites of management. Black, Asian and women workers are usually kept out of these jobs--instead they are assigned to the most menial and unpleasant ones.

**Harassment.

Often the supervisors maintain a generally higher level of harassment of minority and women workers. The forms of this harassment run from petty nagging, to conspiracies to set up workers to fail at work assignments, to write-ups and firing for absenteeism, etc. Usually the supervisors claim that this treatment has nothing to do with the victim's race or sex.

On the other hand, there are cases of open racist harassment of black and Asian workers, such as writing racial slurs, etc. This occurs only at certain shops. It is more frequent at plant 2 (Seattle). These incidents are usually carried out secretly. Every time workers complain of these attacks, the personnel department jumps into action--by condemning the victims as "troublemakers" and "overly sensitive", and threatening them with transfers or other punishments until they shut up.

**Ban on black workers talking.

Management generally tries to keep conversation among workers in grades 1-4 to a minimum while on the job. But for black workers in the lower labor grades management attempts a complete ban. It is a nearly universal practice that when a supervisor sees black workers talking to each other during working hours, he will immediately run up and attempt to stop the discussion and force them back to work.

**Hiring and layoffs.

Boeing has been on a hiring boom for several years. Just recently there have been larger numbers of blacks coming into the assembly and fabrication jobs. This makes the discrimination in hiring look less bad than it really is. But the historical practice of Boeing is to use the 5% retention loophole and the facts of most minorities having less seniority and fewer upgrades, to wipe out the bulk of minority workers with every layoff. (By blocking most black, Asian and women workers from upgrades, Boeing takes away the possibility of these workers surviving layoffs through transfers to different shops.)

Fight for contract language against Boeing apartheid

No amount of clauses in the labor contract are going to stop Boeing's discrimination policies. This decades-old entrenched system can really be challenged only with an ongoing mass movement of workers that includes a fight inside each shop. It was a mass movement that opened up Boeing and the IAM to blacks in the 1940s, the same thing is needed today. However, certain contract language could help undermine Boeing apartheid and help spur on mass resistance.

Contract demands:

1) Integrate the upper labor grades now!

A contract clause should require Boeing to immediately promote or hire some reasonable percentage of black, Asian and women workers in the grade 6 and above shops. This requirement would shake up the whole system of keeping certain workers down.

2) Abolish EA--all upgrade by seniority bidding only!

The EA system is nothing but favoritism put on paper. It works to pit all workers against each other--for the benefit of a small number of management favorites. This system of favoritism is also one of the main tools for discriminating against blacks, Asians and women. The only way to undermine the favoritism is to remove all management input to the promotion process. Posting job openings company-wide for all workers to request them, and filling them with the highest seniority workers would accomplish this.

3) Equalize seniority percentages and abolish retention!

Any measures against Boeing's discrimination will have little effect in the long run unless something is done about the lower seniority level of minority and women workers due to the company's prejudicial hiring and layoff practices. Boeing might be forced to make changes now, and then simply layoff most blacks during the next downturn, like it did in 1971. The seniority system needs to be changed so that during layoffs, an equal percent of whites, minorities and women is laid off. A 5% layoff, for example, would mean that 5% in each race and sex with the least seniority would be laid off. This would prevent Boeing from resegregating the company during a downturn.

Publish the statistics on minority and women's wages at Boeing!

Boeing has plenty of rhetoric about "equal opportunity" and pictures of the very few minority and women workers in every company publication. It has a handful of black and women executives that chatter about how great Boeing has

treated them. The federal government makes propaganda films hailing Boeing's "affirmative action." But we have a pile of B.S. Publish the statistics of the wage rates and job classifications of the black, Asian and women workers at Boeing compared to those of white males. With the pressing of a computer key, Boeing could furnish these facts. The union could easily compile these statistics. The federal and "state "human rights" offices could demand such information. None of them do because it would immediately spur the anger and struggle of the rank-and-file workers against Boeing apartheid.

The IAM does not represent black workers

During its centennial celebrations last year, the International Association of Machinists bragged about being the only major union "with origins in southern labor." It failed to elaborate just what this meant. This union not only barred blacks from joining for its first 60 years, but at first sought to restrict membership to individuals who had "Southern traditions and quality"; i.e. were white, anglo-saxon and protestant. Until the mid-1890s, the IAM bureaucrats resented the signing up of northern Irish Catholics!

After the membership forced the IAM hacks to admit blacks in 1948, the union began to posture as if it was for equality. But this huge lie is shown up most clearly by the fact that the IAM bureaucrats have never challenged Boeing's racism. With every case of racist harassment or firing, the union officials isolate the case from the rest of the workforce and leave it up to the grievance procedure or the whim of Boeing. To our knowledge, the union has never even informed the membership about cases of discrimination, let alone organized a struggle against the policies.

Just look at the Baker machine that controls D-751. No black or woman can remain long in "team 751" or "the family" as the Baker clique calls itself, unless they give up any opposition to Boeing apartheid. Take Art Ortega, for example, Baker's token minority business rep. This "minority for hire" makes it his job to shuffle discrimination cases under the rug. Mr. Ortega handled the rash of firings of black workers in the Renton wire shop last year. He told the unjustly fired workers to keep quiet and Boeing would eventually give them their jobs back. For most, "eventually" has not yet arrived.

The 751 Aeromechanic recently ran two racist cartoons. The June '89 issue had an anti-Asian cartoon ridiculing Japanese persons speaking broken English. The July '89 issue had an anti-black cartoon depicting a black person as a scab. These were not printed "by accident," as Baker's flunkies claim. The printing of these cartoons is a friendly gesture towards the handful of racist scumbags among the workforce, and an encouragement to them.

A fight against Boeing apartheid will not come from the fat and happy IAM officials. It is up to the rank-and-file workers to build this movement. ■

Vindicated in court, postal worker Mark Mitchell is fired anyway

Below is the lead article from the Aug. 21 issue of Detroit Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit. Other articles on the Mark Mitchell case can be found in the February 15 and May 15 issues of the Workers' Advocate Supplement.

Arbitrator upholds firing of Mark Mitchell The fight against management abuse will not stop

Don't expect justice from the Post Office. The arbitration ruling has found that postal management did the right thing by firing letter carrier Mark Mitchell last fall.

This ruling is an outrage and an insult--not just to Mark but to all postal workers! It shows that postal management, and its flunky arbitrators, believe that harassment of workers must be Standard Operating Procedure at the Post Office.

Mark Mitchell-- A Victim of Supervisor Persecution

As our readers know, Mark is a young black man who used to be a letter carrier at Royal Oak. Last October 25, Mark was hounded all morning and then grabbed by a widely disliked white 204B [supervisor in training] named Dave Lerner. Mark had had enough. He defended himself from Lerner. For this, he was suspended and then fired. He was also charged with felony assault. Meanwhile Lerner was promoted.

The Court Found Him Innocent, But Arbitrator Reverses the Verdict

Mark had his day in court in April, and he was found innocent. But the Post Office did not see that as reason to give Mark his job back.

His case was finally heard by an arbitrator in July, and her verdict was issued the first week of August.

The arbitrator ruled that she was "convinced that (Mark) threatened and harassed the Acting Supervisor without provocation." She claimed that it was Mark who was the aggressor and said that Lerner was merely carrying out his supervisory duties.

She ruled that Mark acted in a "threatening manner" in two incidents under contention. In the case where he took his personal knife back from Lerner who had confiscated it. (This was a knife Mark routinely used for cutting bundles.) As well as in the fight which began when Lerner grabbed Mark.

Never mind that the supervisor had singled Mark out for

harassment all morning. Never mind that the supervisor had taken away Mark's personal property which he used as a work tool. Never mind that the supervisor grabbed him first. Never mind that a court verdict found Mark innocent--and capitalist courts are hardly known for being friendly to workers in conflict with management.

Arbitrator Says It's OK for Supervisors to Grab Workers

Clearly the facts did not matter to the arbitrator. What is more, the arbitrator suggested that it is perfectly OK for a supervisor to "grab" or "put his hand on" a worker! She claimed that this wasn't a threatening gesture, that Mark hadn't been injured from it, etc.

But the issue isn't how much physical pressure the grabbing involved. The issue is that it was part of a series of persecutions from the supervisor.

We have to ask though--what right does a supervisor have to grab a worker? They outlawed such conduct even in the military.

This stand of the arbitrator shows that she agrees with postal management that the Post Office should be run with a prison-guard type of mentality.

Why Such A Ruling?

We are often told that the arbitration system is an impartial mediator between management and labor. The case of Mark Mitchell shows that this is not true. And it's no secret why.

The rules of the game are management's, and the arbitration system upholds such "management rights" as the bottom line. Indeed, the arbitrator in Mark's case stated in her ruling that Mark's "behavior adversely affected management's ability to supervise and maintain control of the work force; this conduct cannot be tolerated." Clearly, for her, upholding management rights to "control the work force" must take priority over all else and management can resort to any oppressive methods.

We Can't Rely on Grievance-Arbitration To Win Justice

This example draws home that postal workers cannot rely on the grievance-arbitration system to fight harassment from management.

The grievance and arbitration system is supposed to allow workers a way to solve their complaints against management. But obviously this system has not been able to make much of a change. Harassment and persecution by management is a feature of daily life for postal workers.

Indeed, the fact that the post office is run along harsh

lines is even being acknowledged in the capitalist press. For example, there have been recent stories about stress on postal workers in the newspapers and on the *Inside Edition* TV show.

To postal workers the issue isn't whether or not there is harassment. We know well enough. This issue for us is: how do we fight back?

The postal union leadership promotes that the grievance-arbitration system is sufficient. They've also been telling us that things are getting better under [USPS head] Anthony Frank.

But what does Mark Mitchell's case show? The abusive supervisor Lerner was promoted and Mark was fired, because Post Office higher-ups stand behind Lerner in the view that slavedriving is the proper way to instill discipline in the work force. And the arbitrator also upholds this.

Thus harassment is not just a quirk of some evil supervisors, but part and parcel of management policy. This is because management is trying to impose a harsh productivity drive against the workers. They want to get more work out of fewer workers.

The Marxist-Leninists Say: We Need Mass Struggle to Fight Harassment

Unlike the union leadership, *Detroit Workers' Voice* says we can't deal with abuse from supervisors by looking for justice from someone higher-up. Instead, we have to look towards organizing the workers' struggle. We have to serve notice on management that workers won't take abuse and harassment any more. We have to wage our struggle with the watchword that "An injury to one is an injury to all."

The struggle to defend Mark Mitchell was a good step in building up such a fightback against harassment. This remains the case, despite the negative ruling by the arbitrator. We may not have been able to win Mark's job back, but look at what happened.

Mark's firing was met with loud protest from his fellow workers. Not just at his station, but across the metro area. In Detroit and in the suburbs. Not just among letter

carriers, but across craft lines. Support came from both black and white workers. Workers signed petitions. They wore buttons in his defense. They put up stickers. Leaflets discussing the struggle went far and wide. And postal workers and workers from other industries took part in a spirited picket in front of the Fort Street postal headquarters on one of the coldest days last winter.

This took place mainly on the initiative of rank-and-file postal workers and *Detroit Workers' Voice*. This campaign showed that among postal workers there is a burning desire to fight back against harassment. There is a strong feeling of solidarity to stand by the side of a victimized worker. By organizing, spreading and developing this sentiment further, postal workers have the ability to organize a powerful resistance to management abuse.

Detroit Workers' Voice and rank-and-file workers did a lot. Also Mark's immediate stewards stood by him. But the top leaders of Mark's union local (National Association of Letter Carriers), who have control over bigger resources, didn't work to build the mass struggle. And the APWU [American Postal Workers Union] and Mail Handlers Union leaders didn't lift a finger in support of Mark. Why couldn't the union leaders have organized pickets and demonstrations, for example? It's because the leaders of the postal unions worship the framework that the grievance-arbitration system is a sufficient means for workers to win justice from management. They do not believe in mass struggle by the workers.

But daily life and the ongoing experience of working class struggle show that it is mass struggle which is the workers' powerful weapon against management. And to organize such a struggle, we cannot look toward the bankrupt union leaderships. Workers have to build up independent rank-and-file organization of their own. *Detroit Workers' Voice* is dedicated to that cause. The struggle in defense of Mark Mitchell has been an important step in advancing the notion of mass struggle and solidarity. It has also been a step in building up ties among postal workers which will contribute towards independent organization of the rank-and-file. ■

Police at the telephone strike, and at the abortion clinics: A comparison

From the August 11 issue of Boston Worker, voice of the MLP-Boston:

Since the NYNEX strike began police have been arresting 15 to 20 strikers a day for blocking scabs or otherwise obstructing the entrances to phone company facilities. The police respond immediately and in force to any action of the workers that might hurt phone company operations. In

Quincy there was a police officer who failed to force workers to move away from the door of the building. The phone company called his supervisors and in 5 minutes his sergeant was there telling him to get tough. That is how the government responds to help the capitalists in any strike.

On July 22 about 200 anti-abortion fanatics staged a sit-in in front of an abortion clinic in downtown Boston, to

prevent women from going in. The police were called. But instead of clearing a path to the door they ordered the clinic closed for "public safety". (Have you ever heard of them closing down a company during a strike for "public safety"?) When a crowd of pro-choice people showed up and began making noises about clearing a path to the door, the police threw up barricades to protect the sit-in fanatics. It was only when the pro-choice crowd grew large enough that there was a danger that they might break through

police lines and clear the door themselves that the police opened a path to the door.

These two cases show that the government is a government of the rich which militantly protects their interests against the workers and doesn't want to respect any rights of women, of workers, of ordinary people. The two cases also show that the only way the working people can have any rights is by uniting and militantly fighting for them. ■

About the protest at Chrysler headquarters: Why communists fight for the laid off, while union officials sit around

The article "Chrysler workers march against layoffs" appeared in the August 1 issue of the Workers' Advocate. Among the organizers of this march was a group of Jefferson Assembly plant workers which was influenced both by the Marxist-Leninist Party and by the PULL caucus in UAW's Local 7. The PULL caucus consists mainly of out-of-office former local bureaucrats, displaced by the present Local 7 President, Aaron "Breeze" Taylor, and his "Progressive Caucus". Among other things, the PULL group aims to get all those it influences to do everything through the local union apparatus (even though this apparatus was controlled by the rival "Progressive Caucus") and to refrain from open attacks on the union bureaucracy, local or international. Below we carry articles from Detroit Worker Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit, dealing with the attitude of the Local 7 bureaucrats, both the "Progressive" Caucus and the PULL caucus, to the demonstration.

The first article is taken from those in the July 29 issue of Detroit Workers. And the following articles are from a later issue in August.

The march on Chrysler Headquarters was organized by different forces from the plant. This includes supporters of the Marxist-Leninist Party (MLP), which puts out the Detroit Workers' Voice. The MLP and the other forces came together to protest the speed up and layoffs.

Local 7 bureaucrats were upset by the protest and tried to wreck it. Among other things, they spread lies that this was a communist march. They pressured workers not to go and not to unite with the communists.

But all that this anti-communism got them was a sharp question from the rank and file--why are the communists fighting for the laid off while our own union officials are sitting around twiddling their thumbs?

Class solidarity...

One reason is that the MLP stands for the unity of all workers, while the UAW bureaucrats are splitting them up.

The march on Chrysler Headquarters is not the first time the MLP has helped Jefferson workers organize protests. Back in 1987 the MLP mobilized Jefferson workers to join the pickets against GM plant closings. And in December, when this round of layoffs hit Jefferson, the MLP organized the black-armband protest in the plant. In 1988, the MLP took part in the march against the attempt to eliminate ACUSTAR parts plants [Chrysler was going to sell off its own ACUSTAR parts subsidiary, see the Workers' Advocate of March 1, 1988] and against the closing of Kenosha assembly. And twice that year, the MLP brought workers from Great Lakes Steel, post offices, hospitals and other worker places for pickets at the Freud gate to protest the layoffs and the job combination at Jefferson.

Working class unity is a hallmark of communism. The first communist manifesto, written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, declared: "Workers of all countries, unite!" The MLP follows this policy. It encourages U.S. workers to unite with their class brothers and sisters in other countries. And it seeks to organize the employed and unemployed, the workers from different plants, and the workers from different industries to stand together as a class.

Or splitting laidoff from the employed?

UAW bureaucrats, on the other hand, help the bosses split up the workers. They blame foreign workers for the layoffs in the U.S. And, in the name of helping the capital-

ists be more "competitive," they join in pitting worker against worker in the U.S.--whether it be Chrysler workers against GM workers or Jefferson workers against Kenōsha workers.

They even try to split the laid off from the employed at the same plant. Local 7 officers have been telling the employed that the hard pressed laidoff workers have it easy, getting paid for doing nothing, they just have to cut their standard of living. Then the hacks turn around and tell the laid off not to worry over the killing speed up in the plant, maybe it will force the old guys to retire so the laid off can have their jobs.

It's the capitalists (not the workers) who, in their drive for profits, cause layoffs and overwork. The workers must unite to fight them. That is why the MLP supports the struggles of the Mexican, Korean and Japanese workers against their capitalists. That is why the MLP brings out workers from other industries to support the auto workers. And that is why it is organizing the laidoff to support the fight against speed up, while mobilizing the employed to join the fight for jobs or full pay for the laid off. ■

Why communists fight for the laid off, while union officials sit around--part 2

Aaron "Breeze" Taylor and his Local 7 crew oppose rank-and-file action to fight the layoffs and speed up at Jefferson. For example, they spread anti-communism to wreck the June 20 march on Chrysler headquarters.

But the march took place anyway. And many workers saw that the Marxist-Leninist Party (MLP)--which puts out the Detroit Workers' Voice--took an active part in it. Together with other forces, the MLP helped organize this and other protests. These actions forced Chrysler and the UAW hacks to come to an agreement to put an additional 400 laidoff workers in the job bank.

Now workers are asking, why are the communists fighting for the laid off while our own union officials are sitting on their hands?

For the class struggle or "teamwork"?

One reason is that the MLP stands for class struggle--for the working class fighting against the capitalist class--while the UAW leaders advocate "cooperation", "teamwork", and "joint programs" together with the capitalists.

Which is correct?

Concessions don't save jobs

Take the Chrysler bailout back in 1979, for example. The UAW hacks claimed that if workers co-operated with Chrysler, gave it concessions, then jobs would be saved. The MLP argued that concessions don't save jobs, they only weaken the workers' movement and lead to more take-back

demands from the capitalists.

Since the 1979 concessions deal, Chrysler has closed some 20 plants and eliminated the jobs of over 40,000 workers. No jobs were saved, but Chrysler came back to the workers time and again demanding more concessions.

The MLP could see this tragedy in the making back in 1979, before it took place, because the MLP bases itself on the science of Marxism-Leninism. The first communist manifesto, written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, declared: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." And today, "Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other"--the working class and the capitalist class. For the working class to defend itself and advance its own cause, it cannot cooperate with the capitalists. Rather, the workers must stand up and fight against the capitalists.

Rank-and-file action

Following the policy of class struggle, the MLP has worked consistently to organize rank-and-file action against Chrysler. Back in 1985, for example, Chrysler and the UAW leaders were trying to extend the old concessions contract to impose another sellout deal. So the Party took action and, together with a network of militants at Jefferson, organized the early walkout that helped bring out the Chrysler-wide strike. This is the only national Chrysler strike in the last decade that actually beat back some concession demands and won the workers some benefits.

But the UAW hacks never learn. In 1987, it was Wolfe Lawrence and the PULL caucus that controlled Local 7. They argued that giving concessions in a new "Modern Operating Agreement" would save jobs by getting Chrysler to build a new plant. But that agreement has only led to monstrous job combination, speed up, and the elimination of second shift. Now some of these same PULL leaders are trying to act like innocent lambs. They whine that Chrysler reneged on the promise to operate two shifts, but forget to mention they sold that lie to the workers. Worse still, while claiming to support protests for jobs they've opposed taking those protests to Solidarity House [the UAW's national headquarters] or continuing to build up a militant movement of the rank and file to fight back.

The MLP, back in 1987, pointed out that concessions would only lead to more speed up, job combination, and the loss of jobs. It declared then, "Make Chrysler pay for the new plant," not the workers.

The issue is the same today. If jobs are to be saved, if the speed up is to be stopped, then the workers can't trust their fate to the union bureaucrats, whether it be Breeze's "progressive" team or the PULL caucus. The rank and file has to take action on its own to fight against Chrysler.

That is why the MLP helped organized the march on Chrysler headquarters. And that is why the MLP declares: We must keep up the fight! March for jobs at Labor Day, march on Solidarity House, get organized for job actions at

plant! ■

Job bank blues

After much protest, Chrysler and the UAW leaders were forced to begin putting 400 laidoff Jefferson workers in the Job Bank, where they get full pay and benefits to work "nontraditional" jobs.

But immediately, Chrysler began to abuse the program.

In the first place, as a number of workers in the Job Bank were brought into the plant, Chrysler laid more employed workers off the line. We have been unable to get an estimate of the size of the lay off. But it's clear that Chrysler's trying to save some of the money it's paying out on the Job Bank by laying off additional workers. A protest stopped this practice in at least one department. But the UAW hacks only acted when the rank and file got angry.

As well, Chrysler is using Job Bank workers to fill jobs on the line while it sends other workers into training for the "modern operating contract." The MOA is just a high-falutin name for a contact of job combination, speed up, and further job elimination. It is disgusting that Chrysler is using laidoff workers to help them put into place a contract that will lead to even more lay offs.

Of course, the biggest abuse of all is that only a few hundred of the laidoff are being put in the Job Bank, while another 1700 laid off workers are seeing their unemployment, supplemental unemployment, and other benefits run dry.

The UAW leaders are doing nothing to fight these abuses. It's up to the rank and file--both the employed and unemployed--to unite and fight back. We must put a stop to the job combination and speed up. We must have jobs or full pay and benefits for all laid off. ■

Liberal Democrats for repression: The Detroit mayoral primary

Campaigning is underway for the primary elections that will cut down the number of Detroit mayoral candidates to two. The main contenders are very liberal Democrats like congressman John Conyers and city councilwoman Erma Henderson, and more ordinary liberals like present mayor Coleman Young and, probably, Tom Barrow. Below we reprint several of the articles from the Sept. 4 issue of Detroit Workers' Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit, with one paragraph restored that had been cut for space. This issue was widely distributed at the Detroit "Labor Day" parade of the Michigan AFL-CIO, and its the lead article "This Labor Day build the fight for jobs!" contained criticism of "the union officials leading the Labor Day march."

Mayoral candidates out to save profits, not jobs

The leadership of the Detroit AFL-CIO has endorsed Coleman Young for mayor. But what has he done to save jobs?

Oh, yeah, he has billboards around the city claiming, "6,000 jobs saved at Chrysler and GM." But the figures just don't add up. If Young is talking about the building of the two new auto plants in the city, then he has conveniently forgotten to mention the 2,400 workers that are laid off at Hamtramck Assembly or the 2,000 laid-off at Jefferson Avenue Assembly. Nor does Young mention the tens and tens of thousands of jobs lost as dozens of plants closed down while he was mayor.

If Young's billboard said "Hundreds of millions of dollars saved for the auto billionaires", they wouldn't be wrong.

Mayor Young helped put pressure on Jefferson Assembly workers to give concessions to Chrysler, but he refused to pressure Chrysler or GM to guarantee a single job at the new plants. Instead, he has handed out over \$500 million for the building of the Jefferson and Hamtramck plants, and handed them millions and millions more in tax abatements.

Unfortunately, the job plans of other major candidates are no better. They never even consider taxing the rich to help out the workers and poor. Oh no, they want to give the wealthy monopolies even more tax breaks. When Young was criticized for his handling of the two new plants, Conyers piped up, "You can't throw tax abatements around." But he was quick to add, "Nor can you eliminate the concept of tax abatements as a serious, ongoing proposition." Meanwhile, Barrow has come up with his own plan to waive 90% of corporations' income tax for two years to supposedly lure jobs to the city.

These politicians are in the capitalists' hip pockets. They're out to save profits for the bosses, not jobs. It's up to the workers to take the fight for jobs into their own hands by building mass struggles against the capitalists. ■

Abandoned houses? What about the homeless?

A *Detroit Free Press* survey estimates that over 40% of the 15,215 vacant buildings it found are "sound" and could be lived in. Coleman Young's Housing Department admits that 4,340 apartments are empty in its 43 housing projects. Yet there may be as many as 60,000 homeless people in

Detroit. With all of these empty homes, why don't they just give the homeless a permanent place to live?

But oh no, the main mayoral candidates only debate who could tear down the vacant houses faster, while finding "creative ways" to evict more people.

Just last month, Young's police evicted five squatters who had taken over a home. And Young's Housing Department called for evicting a family for putting security bars on their front door at the Charles Terrace housing project; threatened to evict a woman in the Brewster-Douglas housing project for letting homeless protesters use her phone; and levied fines against tenants, and threatened to evict at least one, for not cleaning floors and walls outside their apartments in the Jeffries housing project.

Meanwhile, the liberal Democrat John Conyers is taking a cue from the right-wing Bush government. Bush has evicted hundreds of poor people in Washington D.C. on their landlords' say-so that they "might" be using drugs. And Bush's housing director, Jack Kemp, has called for evictions all over the U.S. against poor people who are even "suspected" of using drugs. In the name of fighting drugs and crime, they are attacking the poor. But Conyers doesn't mind, he's added their program into his own "crime-fighting" plan for Detroit.

Oh yes, Young and the others also talk of building or rehabilitating homes. But these are \$100,000 condominiums. In fact, Young wants to tear down the 1,037 unit Brewster-Douglas projects and replace it with 250 "gentrified" apartments. That may "restore the neighborhoods" but the homeless and poor working people will be left out in the cold. **No more evictions! Homes for the homeless!** ■

In the name of "fighting crime"

More repression against workers and poor

Cries against drugs and crime have dominated this year's election campaign. But we are yet to hear a single candidate seriously address the crises with unemployment and layoffs, homelessness, wretched schools, and other brutal conditions under capitalism that have hatched up the disease of social crime. Oh sure, the liberal candidates will whine about their concern for the youth, or racism, or jobs. But instead of tackling these problems, they just follow the lead of Bush's "war on crime" and call for more police and repression against the workers and poor.

Revising STRESS

Reverend Butler, a black Reaganite who's running for city council, has come right out and demanded the STRESS ["Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets"] Squad be revived. This special undercover police operation was notorious for arbitrarily gunning down black youth. It was so hated by the masses that Coleman Young rode into office sixteen years ago on the promise of disbanding it. But

Butler wants it back. And other major candidates, while decrying Butler's proposal, are offering plans for essentially the same thing done in another name.

Tom Barrow, for example, calls for the formation of a special force of 100 "untouchable" police officers, selected by the mayor to attack drugs. And John Conyers calls for a "drug task force" of heads of city agencies combined with expanding undercover police operations. Meanwhile, Young says these things are all unnecessary because he already has plenty of special undercover police operations and has put lots of additional police on the streets.

The proposal to revive STRESS shows the reality behind the calls for more police by all the major candidates. Throwing more police—who themselves have been shown to be deeply corrupted by the wealthy drug lords—at crime is like having the fox guard the hen house. Instead of helping our youth avoid crime or get free of drug abuse, instead of helping poor and working people find a new life, these politicians are just building a police force for the rich to harass and trample on the masses—just like STRESS did.

No help for the youth

With the rotten schools, high unemployment, police abuse, and racism all around, what kind of future do our youth have to look for? No wonder some turn to drugs to avoid dealing with the harsh realities. No wonder some are dragged into crime in the hopes of getting rich quick.

But will Coleman Young tax the rich to rejuvenate the schools or create decent jobs or give the youth some glimmer of hope? He won't even add funds for drug treatment. Instead, Young wants to sweep the young people off the streets and throw them into military-style boot camps. President Bush liked this militarist scheme so much he put it into his strategy for a "war on drugs."

Meanwhile, John Conyers has stolen Bush's plan to take away drivers' licenses and evict poor people from their homes if they are caught, or sometimes even "suspected," of using drugs. And Erma Henderson wants a law to jail parents if their kids are caught in an illegal act.

More repression is all these candidates have to offer. And there is a reason. As the capitalist economic crisis develops, the rich fear that working people and rebellious youth may rise in struggle. The politicians, both Bush and the liberal Democrats, stand on the side of the auto, steel, and other big-time capitalists. In the name of a "war on crime" they are busily finding ways to keep the working class and youth under foot.

The drug and crime wave won't be ended with more police and jails like the politicians say. The masses will have to find the solution in their own way. By rising to fight for jobs, and housing, and a decent education and against racism and police terror. By drawing the youth into this struggle, providing them with new inspiration, ideals and hope for the future. This is the way the masses will push aside the plague of drugs and crime, along with their basis in the criminal exploitation of the capitalist system. ■

Correspondence:

CPUSA's Revisionist "Ideological Conference" of July 14-16

A supporter from Los Angeles sent in the following letter denouncing the CPUSA's revisionism. The recent CPUSA conference promoted Gorbachev's advocacy of class collaboration under the banner of world problems being common to all classes. But it tried to give a somewhat "left" coloring to this by waffling on whether the monopoly capitalists might be part of this unity, saying that "The question is whether the corporations are willing to pay the price of giving up such profits. To this point, they have shown no inclination to do so. Monopoly capital has shown no interest in giving up its profits or modifying its ideology to fit society's interests." (Emphasis added.)

Furthermore, the CPUSA Conference dealt with the problem that, taking the revisionist ideology to its conclusion, "anti-working class concepts" that "downgrade or deny the role of the working class and to dilute or reject the significance of the class struggle" are being expressed among their circles. The CPUSA conference strove to maintain the facade of class struggle while upholding its traditional reformism and Gorbachev's new rhetoric as well.

August 3, 1989

Dear Chicago Comrades,

Enclosed is a reply to the latest ideological drivel from the CPUSA revisionists. I think it is important to hit them hard on these issues and reach into honest but misguided rank 'n filers in their ranks. ...

Gus Hall's 'Dialectical' Revisionism

On July 14-16 the revisionist "Communist Party" USA held an ideological conference. The purpose of this conference was no doubt to remind their honchos that despite their work to become semi-official footmen for the "left" wing of the capitalist Democratic Party and to pursue their careers in the lower bowels of the sold-out/bribed AFL-CIO trade union bureaucracy they still must put up some kind of veneer of Marxism to have any credibility among working people.

With their groveling liberal politics, the revisionists know they must find some new types of political camouflage to deceive increasingly skeptical and righteously angry working people. In an excerpt from their ideological conference reprinted in the July 27 *People's Daily World*, the revisionist party "chairman" Gus Hall attempts to don a Marxist disguise. He states:

"Basically the interests of each class differ from the interests of society as a whole. But as the productive forces, technology and society develop, some variations

within this structure take place. The key words are 'variations within this structure.' The interests of monopoly capital increasingly tend to run counter to the interests of society as a whole, even though there are moments when the interests of monopoly capital and society do coincide--in specific aspects, in some area."

No Marxist would play fast and loose with the term society but would get to the essence of what kind of class rule any "society" represents. Any genuine Marxist-Leninist organization would seek to clarify amongst the working people the fact that monopoly capital has effective political and economic control over this "society". It is sheer sophistry and perversion of Marxism to describe any modern society as Hall does as standing above the class struggle.

Trying to develop new apologetics for class collaboration with the Democratic Party leaders and the sold-out AFL-CIO hacks, Hall bellows:

"...The new areas where working-class interests and the interests of the whole society coincide are:

- *Saving the world from nuclear disaster;
- *Putting an end to and cleaning out the pollution of racism;
- *Ending the pollution of the environment;
- *Curing illnesses such as AIDS and drug addiction.

...It is unnecessary to counterpose the interests of the working class and the interests of society as a whole."

Is that so? Hall's fantasy world here turn the bloated capitalist parasites and their military brass hats into men of peace. The capitalist bosses who make billions from racial divisions of the working class are going to help clean out the pollution of racism? Sure Gus, and shrimps will whistle! The monopoly corporations as part of "society" are going to cough up near one trillion dollars [referring to Hall's own figure, "in the trillion dollar range"] in stolen loot (profits) to clean up the old toxic waste dumps and polluted rivers and forests and air? Right Gus, and pigs will fly! As concerns drug addiction and AIDS, Hall knows full well that in a capitalist society like the USA relief is based on the ability to pay exorbitant medical costs. Also the capitalists and their government are up to their elbows in the lucrative drug business. They have a big ideological and economic interest in promoting the transport and sales of narcotics. Hall knows this too, but to deceive people into voting for the Democrats, he has to hide the Democrats' bi-partisan deals with Bush, to play down the class struggle of the workers and lie about how "it is unnecessary to

counterpose the interests of the working class and the interests of society as a whole". The class struggle is an objective law of class-divided society and by its very nature the interests of the working people are counterposed to the capitalist class rulers of "society."

Aware that the opportunist tailing of the Democrats and trade union hacks who promote concessions and chauvinism is exposing the rottenness of CPUSA politics to the working people and aware that the centripetal forces of these activities are pushing the revisionist party to open adaptation to the liberal bourgeoisie, e.g. "softpeddling the class struggle", keeping socialist ideology "under our hat." Hall lashes out at the rank-and-file elements trying to blame "some comrades" for the damage that his rightist adaptations to the liberal imperialists in the Democratic Party and the sold-out trade union hacks have intrinsically produced. Hall is trying to put up a smokescreen to cover up the results of decades of revisionist betrayals by the CPUSA. The rejection of the working class by a section of the ranks of the CPUSA as the only inherently revolutionary force in society is a direct result of the abandonment of revolutionary principles, organization, strategy and tactics. Today the traditions of the early CPUSA from 1919-1935, traditions of a fighting party of class struggle and socialism are upheld proudly by the Marxist-Leninist Party-USA.

Fraternally,
[a Los Angeles supporter of the MLP]■

From New Zealand

May 16, 1989

The Editor
Workers' Advocate

Dear Comrade,

It gave me much pleasure to read the discussion (reported in the April 15 Supplement) following a speech on *The Marxist-Leninist concept of SOCIALISM* made at the conference of the Marxist-Leninist Party. It is many years since I have seen evidence that rank and file party mem-

bers have been encouraged to discuss the fundamental issues of Marxism-Leninism. I have been attempting to initiate such discussions for many years without much success.

I am enclosing copies of a series of radio talks that you might find useful additions to the discussion taking place in your MLP, USA. [Not included in the Supplement.] They discuss some important economic questions affecting the development of revolutionary forces in capitalist society generally, and in New Zealand in particular. As my eyesight is failing (I am in my 81st year) these talks are read for me once a fortnight over Wellington's ACCESS Community Radio station.

I believe that the articles speak for themselves but add my credentials as a matter of interest perhaps. I joined the Communist Party of New Zealand in 1932 after finding myself unemployed and participating in the activities of the Unemployed Workers' Movement that was led by the New Zealand section of the 3rd International. I became especially interested in the Marxist-Leninist theories communists were popularizing from the soap box and in private meetings.

It took some considerable time to come to the conclusion that the decisions of the 7th World Congress of the 3rd International had laid the basis for the re-emergence of social-democratic ideology in our party. During this time I found myself in conflict with the line of the everchanging leadership of the Party and was expelled or suspended many times. The final break came when a liquidationist group dissolved our Wellington Branch and the national leadership refused to authorize me to rebuild a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist branch in this city.

Since then I have been forced into the contradictory position of having to describe myself as an INDEPENDENT MARXIST-LENINIST. This has not however precluded me from taking part in all the big spontaneous movements that have erupted from time to time. These have included the anti-apartheid movement, the anti-Viet Nam [war] movement and numerous local struggles of the people in this suburb.

Will close this rather rambling epistle with revolutionary greetings,

Yours for a classless society.

[Name omitted, Wellington, New Zealand]■

Notes from Nicaragua--Part Two

Continued from the front page

ployment. At the same time, the urgent needs of the working people are neglected.

The government has cut back or eliminated the food

subsidies, the free medicine, the educational programs, and other reforms that made poverty more bearable. Meanwhile, the people can see that this harsh austerity doesn't extend to the wealthy; the FSLN is bending over backwards to come up with cheap credits, hard currency, and other

incentives to quench the profit thirst of the capitalists and plantation owners.

The economic crisis and the FSLN's policy towards it is the subject of our next installment, but here it should be noted that this is a critical breach in the trust and support among the masses for the FSLN.

In the political sphere as well, the vacillating and compromising policy of the FSLN tends to undermine its own support among the people. This comes up sharply in the context of the so-called Regional Peace Process of the Central American presidents.

The zig-zags of the negotiating process have been pushing the working people to the political sidelines. They leave the masses feeling politically helpless, unable to affect the big political and economic decisions about Nicaragua because these decisions are being taken in the back rooms of the U.S. embassy, or by the reactionary presidents of other countries, or by the capitalist and state capitalist powers of Western and Eastern Europe.

Then just look at the decisions that are being taken. The land reform is halted. The former chiefs of Somoza's National Guard are given amnesty and their property is returned to them. The political parties on the CIA payroll are given full rights to organize for a new contra dictatorship. In short, the gains of the revolution are being negotiated away and it is the bloodsoaked enemies of the revolution who are gaining the most from the negotiations.

It is therefore not surprising that the FSLN is facing severe difficulties even keeping its own members mobilized. The FSLN's own policy of national harmony and reconciliation cuts against militant mobilization. Why struggle and sacrifice against the enemies of the revolution when Daniel Ortega greets the contra assassins as brother Nicaraguans and welcomes the contra chiefs with open arms?

The propaganda of the FSLN is also increasingly passive and limp. In years past, the walls of Managua were plastered with drawings of barricades and rifles and FSLN appeals to arm the people, to defeat imperialism, and other militant slogans. But for the 10th anniversary of the revolution, the FSLN plastered the walls with valentines and the slogan "Never has there been so much fatherland in the heart."

The impact of these things is broader than just the FSLN's followers. They have demobilized and depoliticized the masses who created the revolution. When the despised National Guardsmen were let out of jail and began to repossess their property, there was no outcry. It was accepted fatally, almost with indifference.

The "United Opposition" -- Crabs in a Basket

One would think that the right-wing parties would easily exploit this situation. The economy is comatose. The passionate mass support for the FSLN is cooling. The rich and the capitalists support the right-wing. They are given millions of dollars from imperialist sources around the

world—from the CIA to the West German Adenauer Foundation. Their views are spread by the way of the catholic church, numerous radio stations, and *La Prensa* newspaper, the largest paper in the country.

Moreover, all the legal doors have been opened to them; the FSLN has given the Nicaraguan reactionaries more rights and privileges than the opposition could expect almost anywhere. Despite their open and declared links to the contra mercenaries, the FSLN gives them a free hand inside the country. What other government would be so generous to political leaders linked to an armed insurgency? After all, the contras continue to kill, rape, kidnap and burn. According to Nicaraguan Defense Ministry, the contra war cost 614 lives in the first six months of this year. Yet the contra politicians are being given the red carpet treatment.

With these advantages the right wing is gaining political strength. During our stay, the capitalist opposition organized a rally of 1,000 people in the town of Leon. This may not sound like a large number, but given the low participation in all political activity these days this was a sign that the bourgeois opposition is a force to contend with.

Nonetheless, it is not the force that one might expect, nor what the U.S. State Department would like it to be. The so-called "Unitary Nicaraguan Opposition" (UNO) has a shortage of unity, organization and popular support.

For one thing, the right-wing parties lack cadre. They may have money and a lot of other things, but they lack the people for extensive political organization. This means, for example, none of the capitalist parties have a presence in all the regions of the country; they are generally restricted to a few of the major towns.

Some of what would be their organizational cadre are still in the contra camps in Honduras. Many more are in Miami or Los Angeles, and after years of exile many of these are becoming more Miamian or Californian than Nicaraguan. Life is not easy in Nicaragua, and those who do return tend to hold up in the isolated pockets of air conditioning.

The right-wing bloc is also crippled by splits and internal strife. From 16 or 17 last year, now there are 21 legal parties as the bourgeois parties split and multiply like bacteria. There are four Conservative parties, four Liberal parties, four social-christian parties, and three social-democratic parties. A number of these divisions make little sense and are connected to foreign sponsorship. For example, the contra boss and former chief of Coca-Cola operations, Adolfo Calero, is head of the Conservative Party faction sponsored by the Republican Party in the U.S. Among the social-christians, different party chiefs are sponsored by different factions of West European christian democracy, and so forth

Factions are also produced by the logic of the class struggle in the country. For example, among the Liberals, there is a party of the Somocista old guard (the Liberal Party was the party of the Somoza dictatorship); there is

the powerful Independent Liberals (PLI) led by Virgilio Godoy, a standard-bearer of the so-called "democratic" bourgeois opposition both in the days of Somoza and today; and there is a new Liberal party that has split from the PLI in search of a more conciliatory policy towards the FSLN and a more concealed reliance on the CIA and the contras.

From time to time; the FSLN succeeds in exploiting such contradictions. For example, when the U.S. Congress recently approved millions of dollars of so-called "secret" funding for the capitalist opposition, the FSLN charged that any party that accepted such funds was a lackey of the U.S. Despite some uncomfortable squirming, all the parties of the right wing bloc declared in favor of being payrolled by the CIA. This included the Socialist Party, a pro-Soviet revisionist party allied to the right wing (and that some time ago also began shedding its communist rhetoric). But this was too much for the old SP leader "Chagüitillo", who was forced out, creating another rift in the SP.

Presently the "Unitary Nicaraguan Opposition" is dominated by the ultra-reactionaries (who, by the way, have a firm ally in the other pro-Soviet revisionist party, the so-called Communist Party). Until a few days ago, the UNO forces had not been able to come up with a candidate for the upcoming elections. They were searching for a candidate who would be both acceptable to the "ultras" and not be discredited by being too closely linked to the Somoza dictatorship or to the contra war. Such an animal is hard to find. They finally settled on Violetta Chamorro of the reactionary, CIA-backed *La Prensa*.

The "Unitary Opposition" is united by the desire to overturn the revolution and set up a new pro-U.S. regime of super exploitation. But beyond that it remains a tangle of acronyms. It looks like it has a ways to go before it becomes the coherent and organized force that can unseat the FSLN at the polls. This is why the Bush administration is crying foul about the upcoming elections. Washington would have preferred the elections postponed to gain more time to rig the elections in the good ol' CIA style.

Workers Organize Despite the Crisis

The mainly indigenous community of Monimbo in the city of Masaya was one of the hotbeds of the 1979 revolution. There we talked to a member of a tailors' cooperative about the political situation. She expressed the view that "neither the FSLN nor the parties have a solution." And hers is a widely held opinion. It is hard to mistake the signs that among the working people there is a lot of disenchantment with both Sandinism and the capitalist political parties.

Meanwhile, the other factor in the Nicaraguan political equation--the working class movement--is going through a painful phase. Over the last year, the power of the workers' movement has been hit especially hard by the economic crisis, with lay offs and closings in the private sector and a

massive "compactacion" (work force reduction) in the state enterprises.

Take public construction. From the time of the anti-Somoza struggle the construction workers have been a revolutionary and active force. Last year the construction workers were in the van of a strike movement against starvation level wage controls and other burdens on the workers' movement. But for now such strikes are over; the "compactacion" has virtually shut down all major construction projects.

At the Corona vegetable oil plant, at the Macen textile factory and other big enterprises, the militant workers have been the first out the door. This has weakened the struggles and the independent organizations of the workers.

This spring there were important strikes of the teachers and the taxi drivers. But the most important sectors of the workers' movement have faced dispersal and heavy pressure from the FSLN bureaucracy.

The capitalist opposition has also been doing its part against the workers' movement. Last year the right wing and the fake communist (revisionist) trade union centers came together in the Permanent Council of Labor (CPT). The CPT raised some expectations that it was going to champion the economic interests of the workers--against wage controls, against the anti-worker labor law left over from Somoza, etc. But the promises of the CPT quickly evaporated as the workers realized that the CPT was being used as a platform for the reactionary slogans and pro-contra politics of the bourgeois opposition.

Thus, the workers face dispersal, bureaucratic pressures and right-wing trickery. The most advanced, revolutionary workers are countering this with independent organization. They are building up their Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua (MAP/ML), their Workers Front (Frente Obrero or FO) trade union center, and their Committees of Popular Struggle (CLPs) in the working class barrios.

The Marxist-Leninist workers are organizing to defend the independent interests of their class and the revolution. They are organizing the mass struggle against the starvation wages, the abuses of the capitalists and managers, and the austerity cut backs that are making it so difficult for the workers to live and work. They are also organizing to liberate the masses from the reformism of the FSLN and to confront the offensive of the CIA-sponsored capitalist opposition. The mass struggles in the factories, fields and barrios are the focus of the work. And this is reinforced with legal and electoral work.

At this time, the MLPN is laying plans for taking part in the upcoming elections. It is striving to rally the militant workers behind a platform of mass struggle for the pressing needs of the workers and peasants.

It is also making use of its seat on the Council of Political Parties. One of the MLPN's deputies in the national assembly was recently elected to this council by making use of the contradictions among the bourgeois parties. As vice-president of the council, which is supposed to enforce the laws and rights of political parties, the

MLPN comrade has been speaking out against the legalization of the contra's political parties and other rights that the FSLN has been granting the counterrevolution. He has also been protesting the curbs on the rights of the workers and exploited.

El Pueblo Is Back on the Streets

Indeed, the concessions and rights that are granted by the FSLN tend to be slanted towards the rich and powerful, while the workers and downtrodden face repression and neglect. A case in point is the newspaper *El Pueblo*.

In the heat of the revolutionary days of 1978-79, *El Pueblo* emerged to challenge the domination of the capitalist press. It was a daily with a wide circulation in the workers' barrios. It was the workers' voice of the mass struggle and insurrection.

After the victory over Somoza, *El Pueblo* supported the wave of struggle for workers' control over the factories and the other revolutionary struggles of the workers and peasants. This was not acceptable to the coalition government that existed at that time between the FSLN and the

bourgeoisie. *El Pueblo's* offices were closed down, its property confiscated and its editors jailed for many months.

Today, *El Pueblo* is back on the street. It is the voice of the revolutionary masses. It brings the news of what is happening in the factories; it reports on the issues facing the barrio committees; it tells the truth about the capitalists and their U.S. imperialist sponsors.

So far *El Pueblo* is coming out three times a week. It still faces an uphill struggle. Unlike the CIA-funded *La Prensa* it suffers from shortages of everything a paper needs. Nor does it get the preferential treatment in terms of supplies, hard currency, etc., that the FSLN grants capitalist enterprises.

In fact, the government has refused to return the confiscated printing press and other essential equipment. How can such a thing be explained? After all, even the National Guard torturers who have been let out of prison are being given back their confiscated homes and other property. Yet the workers are denied their printing press.

Such are the contradictions that the revolutionary workers of Nicaragua face in these days of the so-called Regional Peace Process. ■

From the Nicaraguan Workers' Press: Directors of ANDEN say no to teachers

Part one of Notes from Nicaragua, in the August 1 issue of the Workers' Advocate, pointed out that: "There have been cutbacks in the schools too. In May there was an important strike of school teachers who simply cannot survive on their hunger wages. Most of the trained teachers have left the schools for better employment, and those who are left have little training or experience. Many students are falling through the cracks."

The article below is from page one of the May 23 issue of El Pueblo and has been translated by the Workers' Advocate staff:

The National Executive Committee of ANDEN [the National Association of Teachers] issued a communique in which they declare that they're unable to give an answer to the wage demands sought by the teachers nationwide.

The Executive Committee of ANDEN condemned the strike because "it creates conditions for destabilizing the process" and accused as instigators "splinter groups of pro

imperialist misleaders and rightists who want to obtain political benefit from the just demands of the education workers."

The directorship of ANDEN committed itself simply to negotiate for improved medical benefits, to expand the AFA package and to work on the writing of the general education law.

Finally, in the memorandum addressed to the educational workers and the people in general, the directive of ANDEN committed themselves to strengthening the "science of teaching" which "aims to continue developing the initiative, creativity and talent of teachers to find alternative solutions to the educational problems in subsistence education."

This point was strongly criticized by the educators who can't see how the directive of ANDEN will develop the initiative, creativity and talent of teachers who barely make enough money to buy food. ■

Because of Low Salaries: 1000 teachers resigned in April

From page one of the May 23 El Pueblo, translated by the Workers' Advocate staff.

In the face of grave problems for teachers nationwide, the principal directors of the CST [Sandinista trade union

association] called an emergency meeting to discuss possible solutions to the crisis. It was a hasty attempt to defuse tensions in the teachers' association.

The low salaries provoked a massive exodus from the teaching profession in April. Up to 1000 teachers quit their jobs. This in turn provoked a profound distrust between the teachers who had decided to carry out diverse protests in defiance of the government--and their related organizations. The situation of the teachers' salaries is an embarrassment in a situation already under pressure because nearly 90% of teachers in the classrooms are new, inexperienced teachers who have replaced those who have retired.

Rank-and-file teachers explained that this situation affects students who in one school year may have as many as three professors teaching the same material over and over again.

Guillermo Martínez, Secretary General of ANDEN [the National Association of Teachers] reported that the teachers' resignations have demoralized the students, many of whom have chosen to withdraw without giving any explanation.

Martínez indicated that more than three thousand teachers had graduated in educational sciences, but that they were not working in the teaching profession because of low salaries. They prefer to look for work in other sectors at better pay.

In spite of official criticism of their strike, the teachers maintain their demands of salary increase, transportation subsidies and price guarantees for basic products through agreements with agricultural cooperatives.

Martínez indicated that they ought to expand the AFA package, to improve medical benefits, to decentralize the budget and to demand an incentive policy as a form of shifting a little of the disadvantageous salary situation off the backs of the teachers.

Nevertheless rank and file teachers have interpreted this proposal as payment in kind that does not necessarily resolve the teachers' economic crisis. "The demands of the teachers are just and they have no cause to interpret our struggle as rightist maneuvers!" declared one teacher demonstrating readiness to support a strike planned by the teachers at the Instituto Maestro Gabriel. ■

Against the social pact

Below is an editorial from the June 17 issue of El Pueblo. It refers to Alfredo Cesar, who joined the Sandinistas at the time of the revolution and became one of their leaders. But later he became a top leader of the CIA-organized contras. He was the contra negotiator last year at the Sapoá meeting, which was the first contra-FSLN meeting under the Arias plan. On the date described in the following article both Cesar and a delegate of the FSLN were attending a meeting of the Socialist International in Stockholm, Sweden]

For ten years the FSLN has been an observer in the social-democratic Socialist International. This fact clearly identifies the dominant ideological tendency in the Sandinista Front and explains their drive for political alliance with the likes of Alfredo Cesar, who not only shared their same ideology in 1979 but was united organizationally with the FSLN in the ranks of their top leadership.

Today again, the Sandinistas come together with Alfredo Cesar in a meeting in Stockholm, Sweden. This new political event is not just a simple confirmation of the ideological agreement of the FSLN with Alfredo Cesar, [and other social-democrats, such as] Carlos Andres Perez [President of Venezuela], Oscar Arias [President of Costa Rica], and Alan Garcia [President of Peru]; it is a dangerous situation for the course of the Nicaraguan

revolutionary process. It opens a new door to interference and meddling.

In Stockholm the Sandinistas are going to encounter a number of pressures that remain intense because of their differences with the other social-democratic forces in Nicaragua. They are going to be under pressure to put the finishing touches on a new social pact for Nicaragua.

The actual division between Cesar and the FSLN will very probably remain intact because the Socialist International has an interest in this tactical division. But it is quite certain that the FSLN is going to be forced to see and to accept the outlines of the social pact which the international current of social democracy is preparing for Nicaragua.

For the defense of national sovereignty, and for the defense of their livelihood, the people of Nicaragua must reject this pact. The social-democratic model for Latin America is like that of Carlos Andres Perez's Venezuela--where the people are dying from hunger and repression. [Many oppressed Venezuelans rose up in revolt, and hundreds were massacred by the social-democratic government, at the end of February. See the article "Workers and poor revolt in Venezuela" in the March 1 issue of the *Workers' Advocate*.--ed.] ■