

# THE COMMUNIST

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

"A Communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against all incorrect ideas and actions so as to



consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist." Mao Tsetung

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## NAMIBIAN ARMED STRUGGLE CONTINUES

"The struggle for black majority rule will continue until independence is achieved". This is the response of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) to ongoing efforts of the racist South African regime to sabotage the United Nations proposal for Namibian independence. South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha has recently announced the Pretoria regime's intention to carry out its separate election plans in December. "SWAPO will never participate in any bogus election and accept a puppet regime imposed on Namibia by the South African racists" declared SWAPO Vice President Mishake Muyongo. He called on SWAPO to join with all patriots to fight for the genuine liberation of the motherland.

### SOUTH AFRICAN RACISTS ATTEMPT SABOTAGE

The unilateral effort by South Africa to hold its own elections in Namibia is the latest attempt by the racist regime to maintain control of the mineral rich nation, granting a form of independence to Namibia that would keep control of that nation's 900,000 people in the hands of the 100,000 white minority.

Another SWAPO Vice President Daniel Tjongareo said that "one thing is sure, we will not participate in any elections held under South African auspices." SWAPO has pointed out time and time again that it will only participate in a fair election which entails supervision and control by the United Nations.

The South African move is directly against the resolutions agreed to in the UN Security Council last July, which set in motion an internationally supervised procedure designed to lead to independence for Namibia at the earliest possible date. The UN plan was based on an agreement worked

CONTINUED ON P. 7

### INSIDE:

Briggs Proposition	p.2
Factory Exposure	p.2
Railway Strike	p.3
Hua's s Trip	p.3
Sectarianism in ABDC	p.4

## 30 BILLION WINDFALL TO OIL MONOPOLIES

# GAS DEREGULATION PASSES SENATE

On Wednesday September 27, the Senate approved a natural gas bill which would hand the large oil monopolies which monopolize the natural gas market a bonanza in increased profits. Gas prices are currently up to \$1.50 per thousand cubic feet (Mcf) on the interstate market (between states) and averaging \$1.83 per Mcf on the intrastate markets (within individual states). Under this bill they would jump immediately to \$1.99 per Mcf and, depending on the future rate of inflation, could more than double by 1985 to over \$4.50 per Mcf. According to conservative government estimates the legislation is expected to add \$30 billion in additional revenue to companies producing natural gas. On the other hand it is expected to mean an 8.5% per year increase in the home heating bills of consumers.

The most important provisions of the bill would end federal price controls on newly discovered gas by 1985 while allowing large annual price increases until then pegged to the rate of inflation plus 4.2%. Also, during

the seven year interim period, federal price controls, previously restricted to gas sold on the interstate market would be extended to intrastate gas, that is gas produced and sold in the same state.

### CARTER DECLARES THE BILL A VICTORY

The government has recently been howling about the "inflationary" wage demands of US workers. It has forced arbitration and threatened to mobilize the National Guard to crush nationwide strikes by miners, postal workers and most recently, railroad workers. But a completely different tune is now being sung since it is the bourgeoisie's war preparations and billions in profits for a powerful sector of the capitalist class which are at stake. The bill does not hold down inflationary price increases for natural gas, in fact, it guarantees annual increases based on the inflation rate plus 4.2%!!! While a year ago Carter charged that "if we tripled the price of oil and natural gas, there

would be no substantial increase in the rate of exploration (for new reserves-Ed.). It would just be an enormous windfall of profit," he now claims that passage of the bill "proves to our own nation and to the rest of the world that we in this government, particularly the Congress, can courageously deal with an issue and one that tests our national will and our ability."

### CARTER'S ARGUMENT IS NOT NEW

The provisions of this bill represent a culmination of a political offensive by the energy monopolies since the artificial "gas shortage" in the late 1960's. Since then the government has consistently promoted a political campaign to convince the masses that the financial and political interests of the oil companies coincide with the "national interests" of all classes in US society.

A vital argument in this campaign is that the national interests will be served by reducing reliance on imported

CONTINUED ON P. 8

## USWA CONVENTION

# McBRIDE TIGHTENS HIS GRIP

On September 22nd the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) concluded their 1978 Constitutional Convention. Held every two years, the significance of these conventions must not be belittled by our movement.

At these conventions the policy that guides the largest industrial union in the AFL-CIO, and the organization of one of the most important sectors of the industrial proletariat, is formally accepted or rejected. It is no accident that the bourgeoisie sent its most prestigious apologists and defenders like President Carter, AFL-CIO leader George Meany, and Labor Secretary Ray Marshall to participate in this gathering. And, that the chief capitalist labor lieutenant in steel, USWA President Lloyd McBride, spared no expense to insure his hegemony in the Convention.

### McBRIDE DOMINATES CONVENTION

Clearly it was Lloyd McBride and the policies and methods by which he keeps the proud and powerful USWA subservient to the class interests of the bourgeoisie, that dominated the 1978 Constitutional Convention. McBride as a leading representative of the reactionary sector of the trade union bureaucracy peddles an openly class-collaborationist line intended to make the trade unions an appendage of bourgeois political power.

Shortly before the convention McBride in an interview



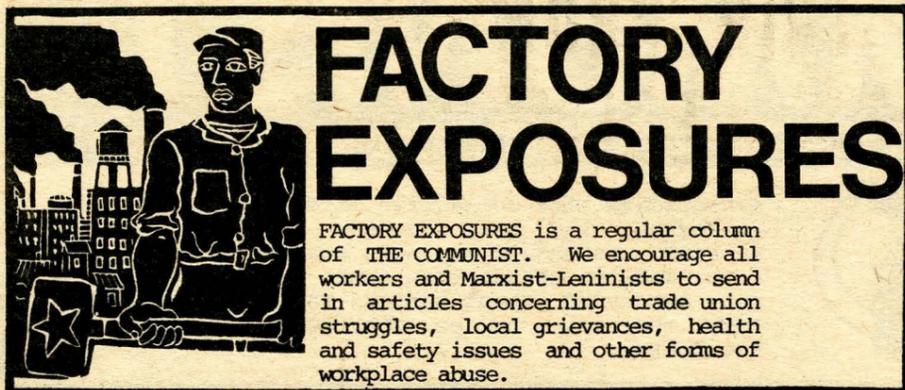
The 1978 USWA Convention drew the bourgeoisie's most prestigious apologists, including President Carter.

with the steel industry magazine "American Metal Market" summed up the views with which he has guided and molded the USWA. He said, "For steelworkers, the bottom line is to be employed by an industry that is profitable and competitive." On the question of imports he said, "You really can't quarrel with the idea that the industry needs some assistance from labor in getting government support against dumped imported steel and in planning for a profitable future." He added that the steel industry had "no choice, if it wants to remain competitive with foreign producers" but to develop and implement new technologies and increase productivity even

though this can only mean speed-ups and permanent layoffs for steelworkers. And, to make sure there was no confusion about his attitude regarding the struggle of the working class, he stressed that "relatively few steelworkers present have been involved in a protracted strike, so they don't know that the glamour of a strike is soon replaced by suffering." He added that strikes also devastate corporate earnings which would be disastrous to a steel industry struggling to regain profitability and build for the future.

Such traitorous "leadership"

CONTINUED ON P. 6



**FACTORY EXPOSURES** is a regular column of **THE COMMUNIST**. We encourage all workers and Marxist-Leninists to send in articles concerning trade union struggles, local grievances, health and safety issues and other forms of workplace abuse.

## ACCIDENTS SHOW SHAM CONCERN FOR WORKER SAFETY

The owners, driven by the general crisis of capitalism, have made speed-up the watch word of the day. One way speed up manifests itself is through raising the general level of danger on the job. All types of injuries increase, small slips and mistakes produce broken hands and fingers. In recent issues of **THE COMMUNIST**, many workers have written exposures of these rotten conditions. Recently I broke two fingers at work. What happened to me is an example of the horrible treatment workers receive under capitalism.

I was injured helping an older worker who, due to job combination, was working an unfamiliar job. He had run into trouble hooking up some steel bars. He was using chains instead of the crane's electromagnet. This was because our foreman was in a hurry. He wouldn't wait for the crane to retrieve the magnet from the other end of the factory.

Chains are dangerous on this job because you have to re-arrange the bars, which weigh 200 pounds each, by hand. Because the bars are not straight they are unwieldy and often slip. The worker had chained them in a way that would cause them to fall out once the crane

lifted. I left my job to lend a hand. I was hurrying to get back to my job and he was worried about the foreman. One bar slipped, breaking two of my fingers.

When I went to the company dispensary there was one nurse on duty. She splinted my fingers and wanted me to go back to work! A heated exchange followed and finally she agreed to send me to the hospital.

I waited to see a doctor for two hours. When I finally got to see him he said he could do nothing for me. I was the responsibility of the company doctor, he said, and I should see him and he would send me to an orthopedic specialist. I told him that the company doctor didn't come in till Monday which was two days from then. He said he could do nothing. I asked for some pain killer. He refused.

I knew the company doctor would only try to send me back to work. The only thought on my mind was to get to my family doctor as soon as possible.

I went back to the factory to change. My foreman was waiting for me. He had accident forms which he filled out twisting everything I said to

make sure that the accident was my fault. He conspicuously left blank the section of the form that says whether the accident is a "lost time" accident or merely "first aid". "Lost time" accidents are where you are injured and do not return to work. "First aid" is treatment for injury and you return to work immediately. I left the factory, stopping only at the nurse for pain medicine which she refused to give to me.

Why is the company so concerned with sending us back to work regardless of the consequences to our health? Why are they so concerned about "lost time" accidents vs. "first aid"?

First, the fact that they want to keep people on the job proves that labor is the source of profits. Capitalists claim that profits come from the money they invest or from their machinery and raw materials or from the sale of goods. Yet the truth is that it's only the labor of workers that makes machines work and that changes raw materials into a more valuable product. In short, it is only our labor that creates value and is the source of profits.



Second, the company must put forward the front that it fights for safety. Their sham concern for the well-being of workers, however, is constantly being challenged by the working class struggle for the

right to safety on the job. To meet this challenge the capitalists need to document a good safety record. Thus the capitalist fight tooth and nail to classify all accidents as merely "first aid". This "evidence" is provided to the courts, grievance hearings and other proceedings where a low number of "lost time" accidents provide a good cover to reject workers' claims of unsafe conditions.

Giving direct aid and support to the capitalists and their sham concern for safety are the reformist and revisionist trade union leaders who accept the bourgeois premise that accidents are unavoidable. Their programs, which put forward that all that can be hoped for are a few less injuries, stifle attempts to build the genuine struggle for safety. In many locals across the country these bureaucrats won't even accept health and safety grievances, much less fight for them. In supporting the capitalists and their sham concern for safety they are attempting to direct the workers' movement from the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the system which created these unsafe conditions.

The capitalists and the trade union misleaders who support them have no concern for the safety of the working class. They put forward a false front of caring while they blame accidents on the carelessness of workers. By these tactics they try to hide that it is the capitalists' drive to maximize profits that is the cause of the killing and maiming of countless numbers of workers daily. We must expose what's really behind unsafe working conditions and intensify our efforts to link the struggle for safety to the overall struggle to overthrow capitalism.

--by a worker correspondent

## DEFEAT THE BRIGGS INITIATIVE

# WITCH-HUNT LEGISLATION ON CALIFORNIA BALLOT

The Briggs initiative has qualified for the November election in California. This initiative, which will be Proposition 6 on the ballot, directs the governing board of school districts to refuse to hire or to terminate "...a school teacher, a teacher's aid, a school administrator, or a counselor...who engages in public homosexual activity and/or public homosexual conduct directed at, or likely to come to the attention of, schoolchildren or other school employees." The initiative defines public homosexual conduct to be "...advocating, soliciting, imposing, encouraging or promoting of private or public homosexual activity...."

The essence of the Briggs initiative is that it is an element in the mounting reactionary attack on the popular masses. As the San Diego Save Our Teachers/No on 6 organization has pointed out, "Any teacher, school administrator or other school employee whether heterosexual or homosexual, could become the target of a vindictive school board, colleague or student with an ax to grind, thus promoting an atmosphere of fear and suspicion. Witch-hunts would become legal...."

The fact is Proposition 6 is designed to promote public hysteria, create fear, and broaden the foundation for a deeper and more widespread attack on the people.

### A COORDINATED STRATEGY OF THE RIGHT WING

The sponsors of Proposition 6, led by John V. Briggs, a former right wing candidate for governor of California, have already spent one million dollars on the petition drive and have collected an additional one million dollars to campaign for Proposition 6. Their campaign strategy--tried and found effective in Dade County, Florida--is to link the issue of homosexuality in the minds of the voters with sexual influences on children. Their objective is to play upon one of the most widespread myths about homosexuals--that homosexuals are child molesters. In fact, studies prove that child molestation is almost always heterosexual. In any case, the initiative does not deal with child molestation. Instead, the supporters of Proposition 6 have used this issue to stir up voter hysteria. They hope the initiative will pass on the basis of fear and ignorance.

Such an appeal to emotion through demagoguery in lieu of an objective presentation of facts exposes the technique used by reactionaries to promote fascist ideology. They aim to gain momentum by making one disfavored group at a time the object of mass hysteria.

Such a scenario goes hand in glove with the bourgeoisie's overall attack on the broad masses of toiling and

impoverished people, an attack that is becoming more ferocious as war preparations are intensified.

Briggs is a central figure within reactionary circles of the organized right wing. He had developed close ties with Anita Bryant's anti-homosexual crusade in Dade County and with the reactionary forces opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment. He is presently a co-sponsor of an initiative to expand the number of crimes that would carry the death penalty in California, Proposition 7, on the November ballot.

Viewed in this perspective, his claim to "preserve family unity" with Proposition 6 is clearly designed to preserve the reactionary form of the family based on private property and the domestic slavery of women.

### THE HYPOCRISY OF THE BRIGGS CAMPAIGN

Here is the fundamental contradiction of the Briggs initiative. It proposes to use repression against homosexuals in order to "preserve" and "protect" a reactionary form of the family that is itself a source of homosexuality. Homosexuality is a reflection of and a response to the monogamous family based on private property and domestic slavery in class society, and a reflection of and a response to the male chauvinism which has its source in this form of the family.

The hypocrisy of the campaigns of Briggs and Anita Bryant and others like them is that they use repression against an inevitable effect of the reactionary policies they demagogically promote.

As communists we oppose Proposition 6 for the same reason we oppose religious persecution. We oppose homosexuality and encourage the struggle against it through education and persuasion. But we also oppose the persecution of homosexuals because this persecution is a component part of a broad and reactionary attack on the people.

### RESISTANCE BUILDS TO PROPOSITION 6

Throughout California a strong organizing drive is developing to work for the defeat of Proposition 6. Every teachers union in the state has publically denounced the proposition and is actively working for its defeat. The state AFL-CIO has also taken a position against the initiative. And groups like Save Our Teachers/No on 6 in San Diego, made up of teachers, professionals, students and workers, have been active in mobilizing anti-Briggs forces, speaking to community groups, leafletting and organizing rallies to oppose Proposition 6. Communists should support this resistance to the Briggs attack.

# HUA KUO-FENG'S TRIP PROMOTES STRUGGLE AGAINST HEGEMONISM

Chairman Hua Kuo-feng of China recently completed a historic two week trip to Romania, Yugoslavia, and Iran. The purpose of this trip was to promote friendly relations and to build unity between China and the countries and peoples of Romania, Yugoslavia, and Iran in the common struggle against superpower aggression, expansion and hegemonism. Chairman Hua's trip was an important contribution to building the worldwide united front against the superpower drive for hegemonism, and thus strengthened the factors that put off the outbreak of war between US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism.

In particular, his trip dealt a sharp blow to Soviet hegemonism, the latecoming imperialist power and the more dangerous and ferocious enemy of the people of the world. While worldwide opinion was generally favorable to Hua's historic trip, the Soviet revisionists loudly accused him of "incitement toward a new world war" and turning the Balkans into a "powder keg". But these attacks only served to expose the USSR which is the real war monger in the region, having concentrated over 600,000 troops in Europe.

## COMMON THREAT OF SOVIET HEGEMONISM

Yugoslavia and Romania have long been the subject of Soviet hegemony because of their strategic location in Europe, the focus of superpower contention. These countries are located on the southern flank of the Soviet Union and stand directly in the path of Soviet expansion over all Europe. They share a common view against the increasing war policies of the revisionist leaders in Moscow.

Both Romania and Yugoslavia have resisted Soviet attempts to dominate them. Romania shares a large common border with the Soviet Union, but was the only Warsaw Pact country to oppose the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. In spite of revisionist attacks, Romania has maintained friendly relations with China. In 1971 President Ceausescu met with Chairman Mao and Premier Chou En-lai, cementing the friendly relations that have existed between the two countries.

Yugoslavia has maintained a consistent independent position from the Soviet Union. It is not a member of the Soviet controlled Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) nor is it a member of the Warsaw Pact. Yugoslavia also supports the non-aligned movement, and has aggressively taken up defense of national independence and state sovereignty for all countries whether big or small.

Because Europe is the focus of superpower contention, the two superpowers have amassed there the largest military arsenal ever seen by the world's people. Speaking at a banquet in his honor in Romania, Hua focused on this aspect,

"Europe has once again become the focus of rivalry between the big powers whose wild dream is to dominate the entire globe. The people of all countries are awakening to this new danger of war, and have arisen to combat the forces of war in diverse ways."

Iran also shares a long land border with the Soviet Union. Historically it has been the victim of Russian aggression as the tzars had their eyes on

Persia and its warm water ports on the Persian Gulf as an outlet to the Indian Ocean. The present social imperialists in Moscow also seek access to this strategic route. In addition, Iran's rich oil supply is vital to Western Europe, and is the third largest supplier of imported oil to the US. Facing the common problem of extensive borders with the Soviet Union, China seeks to strengthen Iran's independence and security from superpower aggression as an important aspect in the struggle against Soviet preparations for war.

## BASIS EXISTS FOR UNITY

Discussions between Chairman Hua and the leaders of all three countries showed that a strong basis exists for building unity in the area of international affairs, especially questions concerning the maintenance of world peace, the safeguarding of national independence and security, and the opposition to imperialists, colonialists, and hegemonists and their policies of hegemonism and war.

Chairman Hua at the farewell banquet in Romania expressed what is the common view of all the parties in response to the intensified tendency of redividing the world into spheres of influence and the danger of a new war.

We share the view that countries, big or small, should be equal, that big nations should not bully small ones, strong nations should not oppress weak ones, and that the affairs of a country should be managed by its people, and international affairs should be settled by all countries concerned through consultations on an equal footing. We are both opposed to power politics, to diktat, to division of spheres of influence and to the use and threat of force. We hold that aggression, control, interference and subversion perpetrated by any country against any other countries should be roundly condemned and firmly opposed.

The talks also demonstrated the commitment of all the countries to continue developing friendly relations and many sided cooperation in economic, scientific, technological and cultural areas. This reflected the perspective of Chairman Mao, who during his lifetime said it was important for China not to be conceited and not to shut the door on other countries.

In Romania Chairman Hua and President Ceausescu signed agreements to form an inter-governmental committee for economic and technical cooperation to develop cooperation in industrial production. They also agreed to open shipping routes between the two countries.

In Yugoslavia the leaders concluded bilateral economic, scientific and technical agreements. In Iran the two governments signed a cultural exchange agreement and also agreed to expand trade and develop scientific, technological and economic cooperation.

Strengthening bilateral relations between third world countries and between second and third world countries on the basis of equality is an important step in defending national independence and promoting unity against superpower hegemonism. It objectively serves to promote development independent of superpower aid which aims to subjugate



Chairman Hua, accompanied by Prime Minister Manescu, greets the workers on a visit to the Constanta shipyard in Romania.

the economies of second and third world countries to their own imperialist needs. As the Chinese comrades have pointed out,

"They (the countries and peoples of the second and third world - ed.) must persist in safeguarding their independence, interests and security mainly by relying on themselves, redouble their efforts to support each other on the basis of equality and unite with all the forces that can be united to carry the struggle against hegemonism through to the end." (PEKING REVIEW #45, 1977,p.35)

## PROMOTE UNITY BETWEEN SECOND AND THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

With the intensification of Moscow's global strategy for

domination, the anti-hegemonic forces the world over must get united to form the broadest possible united front to wage unflinching struggle against superpower aggression, and in particular Soviet aggression wherever it rears its ugly head.

Chairman Hua's trip is a good contribution towards building the united front in deeds as well as words. By consolidating ties between the countries and peoples of Romania, Yugoslavia and Iran with China, the common struggle against superpower hegemonism gains strength. It is this unity between the second and third world and all progressive and freedom loving people in the world that is the main obstacle putting off the superpowers' imperialist war plans.

## WORKERS ATTACK MUTUAL AID PACT

# 330,000 RAILWAY WORKERS STRIKE!

In late September over 300,000 railway workers went out in a nationwide strike to support the 80 day old strike of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC) against the Norfolk and Western (N&W) railway system. Over 70 major railways were shut down in 42 states, holding up shipments of auto parts, coal, food, and other vital freight and affecting commuter travel. Faced with this tremendous demonstration of the power of railway workers to cripple the nation's economy, the federal government quickly moved in to stop the strike for a 60 day "cooling off" period.

## ATTACK ON JOB SECURITY

The 4,600 BRAC members who work for the N&W went out on strike on July 20 primarily over job security. 1,500 clerical jobs had already been lost to computer technology. Most of the other 24,000 workers in the N&W system honored the pickets, giving their fellow workers staunch support in this struggle to stop job elimination through automation.

This struggle of the railway clerks is not only shared by railway workers throughout the country, but also by thousands of other workers as automation replaces labor and under capitalism swells the ranks of the army of unemployed. For example, pressmen and other workers are now on strike in New York City over the plans of that city's three major newspapers to cut the labor force

with new technology.

## N&W STRIKE HAD SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The N&W serves a total of 14 states, moving a variety of goods; one of its major shipments is coal. Together it and the Chessie System move some 70% of the coal produced in Virginia and West Virginia. The N&W normally moves about 1.5 million tons a week.

But for 61 days N&W did not move coal. Then starting September 12, the company tried to pull together crews of supervisory personnel who were given up to \$2,000 bonus checks for running the trains. This was a feeble attempt to undermine the striking workers. The scab crews were only able to move 25% of the normal amount of coal. This significant reduction resulted in mine shut downs.

## MUTUAL AID PACTS -- WEAPON OF THE BOURGEOISIE

However, the strikers were fighting not only N&W, but also 72 other railway companies who banded together in 1959 in the Service Interruption Insurance pact. This is a fund into which all the companies pay. When one is struck, it receives financial aid. N&W received \$800,000 a day, \$6 million a week, from the insurance fund during this strike.

The airlines also have a mutual aid pact. During the

Develop idea of "unity" as united who can be

# UNITY IN WORDS -- SECTARIANISM IN DEEDS

ATM/IWK and CP(ML) 'UNITE' TO EXCLUDE WC(ML) FROM ABDC



It is a fine thing to call a newspaper UNITY and to initiate a Committee to Unite Marxist-Leninists. It is not so fine, however, when these public proclamations of high-sounding proletarian goals are betrayed by bourgeois maneuvering and become a hypocritical cover for sectarianism in practice.

Manipulating the leadership of the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition (ABDC), the August Twenty-Ninth Movement (ATM) and I Wor Kuen (IWK), now the League of Revolutionary Struggle (M-L), have "purged" the Workers Congress (M-L) from participation in the coalition because of our open and principled challenge to the weaknesses in the leadership they have provided to the organization. They were assisted in this by the shameless collaboration of the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (CPML).

Of course, nothing of their views was put in writing, so members of the ABDC, Marxist-Leninists and others concerned with the struggle for equal rights of women and oppressed nationalities are left to guess at the basis for such drastic action by three groups who have taken such pains to cultivate a reputation for unity.

However, justifications given for the decision expose the contempt of the 'unity trend' for a principled struggle to overcome differences in work.

They have moved to exclude the WCML from the ABDC because we openly responded to a public slander on our ABDC work by the ATM/IWK with a polemic in our newspaper sharply critical of the leadership they have given to the coalition. They feel abused. But instead of using their newspaper to defend their views, they drive us from the coalition by bureaucratic maneuvering.

More significantly, they think our national proposal for anti-Bakke work is "disruptive". It is apparently disruptive to openly challenge their own narrow conception of the coalition's future. To be frank, we did not consider the ABDC to be the private property of ATM/IWK and do not find it peculiar to expose a plan of work which in our view diverts the coalition from a correct path and disperses its forces.

Certainly we have also been excluded because we have differences with certain aspects of the principles of unity of the ABDC. For us, this exposes fundamental differences in how we view open struggle in mass work. We think that differences in a mass organization are a sign of health and push the work forward. We would find it unusual to work in a mass organization where there was not a wide range of different and conflicting views.

But ATM/IWK have a different view. As one person commented after going to an Executive Board meeting of the coalition, "I got the feeling that there shouldn't be any questions, much less a difference of opinion." In sum, we are "purged"

for insisting that the present principles of unity do affect the work of the coalition and should be taken seriously, for proposing a national plan of work inconsistent with the comfortable narrowness of the present principles of unity, and especially for holding the ATM/IWK responsible for justifying this narrowness.

## DISRUPTERS OF UNITY UNDER THE SIGNBOARD OF UNITY

We conclude that the "unity trend" has made the ABDC a tool of their own spiteful sectarianism. The decision to expel cannot even claim the pretense of democracy and is completely inconsistent with the principles of mass work.

"We are not afraid of open opponents, we are only afraid of secret opponents. Such people do not speak the truth to your face, what they say is only lies and deceit. They don't express their real intention. As long as a person doesn't violate discipline and doesn't engage in secret factional activities, we should allow him to speak out and shouldn't punish him if he says wrong things. If people say wrong things, they can be criticized, but we should convince them with reason. What if they are still not convinced? They can be allowed to reserve their opinions. As long as they abide by the resolutions and the decisions taken by the majority, the minority can reserve their opinions. It is advantageous to allow the minority both inside and outside the Party to do so. If they are allowed to reserve their incorrect opinions for the time being, they can correct them in future. Quite often the ideas of the minority turn out to be correct. Such cases are common in history. In the beginning, truth is not in the hands of the majority of people, but in those of a minority."

MAO TSETUNG, TALK AT ENLARGED WORKING CONFERENCE, 1962 (Peking Review #27, 1978)

For one thing, the mechanism of the decision was a jumble never satisfactorily explained anywhere. Basically, the National Office of the ABDC made the decision and then conducted a telephone poll of representatives of the Executive Board of the coalition in selected chapters in order to get the appearance of a vote favorable to the decision. But this poll was made without the knowledge, consultation, discussion or decision of the membership of the chapters concerned.

Exactly who was polled is also a mystery. In Chicago, the chapter was told that Atlanta, Boston and New York approved the decision as well as other chapters in California. But San Diego was told that Atlanta, New York and Boston were not polled because the WCML did not have work there. Yet San Diego was also told that chapters such as San Jose, Sacramento and others were polled even though the WCML has no work in these chapters, and, in any case, San Diego itself, a chapter where the WCML does have work, was not polled. In Los Angeles, the membership was told that the Chicago chapter supported the decision when in fact no chapter vote was taken in Chicago because the expulsion would have been decisively defeated. In Chicago, the chapter was told that Los Angeles supported the decision, although it was told this more than a week before the L.A. chapter had met on the question.

In short, as the leadership of the ABDC in Los Angeles admitted, the decision of the National Office to purge the WCML was a decision made by the small staff of that office and not by the membership of the ABDC. The National Office then said one thing here and another thing there as fit their view of the circumstances.

Of course, in those chapters where ATM/IWK possessed a clear majority, the decision of the National Office was taken up for ratification. But the example of a chapter like Chicago where many independent persons have taken up ABDC work demonstrates more clearly the methods of these disrupters of unity under the signboard of unity.

In Chicago a prepared statement supporting the decision was read by the two representatives of the Executive Board. Then the WCML was given brief time to respond. Next steering committee members were asked to express their views. However, those without ties to the "unity trend" had not been previously notified of the mat-

ter and were unprepared. None supported the decision. Then organizations were allowed to state their views -- CPML, Communist Youth Organization (CYO), Getting Together (the newspaper of ATM/IWK), and the National Lawyers Guild (NLG). The only independent organizational representative, from the NLG, stated that the action was a surprise to the Guild, that it could not be said that the Guild had full unity around the principles of unity though this did not bar work in the coalition, and that there did not seem to be a basis for the suspension.

Rank and file members of the chapter who then sought to speak were refused. Instead, the statement was again read and other members of the chapter independent of the WCML, including steering committee members, were identified by name and told either to submit their self-criticism to a representative of the National Office or be excluded along with the WCML. The basis for this was that they had from time to time supported the positions of the WCML.

The meeting was then adjourned and the "unity trend" together with a few supporters walked out. In contrast to the handful who left, a large majority of the meeting stayed behind to condemn the sectarian character of the action taken, to denounce it as totally inconsistent with the work of a mass democratic organization, to denounce the challenge made to individuals

not members of the WCML as a witchhunt which turned the principles of unity into a loyalty oath, and to lay the basis for a new organization outside the framework of the ABDC which would continue the work that had been begun in Chicago in defense of affirmative action programs.

Even in chapters such as L.A., where ATM/IWK had clear hegemony, independent forces such as the East Wind Collective and the Carlos Montes Defense Committee also refused to support the decision.

## THE ROLE OF THE CPML

The CPML gratuitously joined in the initiative of the ATM/IWK and carried it one step further. According to the CPML, which claims to be a tireless worker for Marxist-Leninist unity, the WCML is "Trotskyite". Other than this, the CPML's role in the purge can best be described as two-faced. For example, while the CYO, the CPML's youth organization, wrote last fall that "We think our (ABDC) principles of unity are too narrow" (SUM-UP OF ANTI-BAKKE WORK, By: Unidos Bookstore and Communist Youth Organization), they voted in favor of a decision to exclude the WCML because of differences we have with the principles of unity-- i.e. that we think they are too narrow. Or again, while the CPML newspaper calls for united action with the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision (NCOBD) and even urges one common coalition, practical efforts made by the WCML to work for common action with the NCOBD were characterized by the CPML as "capitulation to the NCOBD". And though the CPML pretends to make a staunch defense of Chairman Mao's theory of the three worlds, the WCML's efforts to prevent vulgarization of the concept "third world" by the ABDC were labeled by the CPML as "disruptive discussion on a minor point."

As for the label "Trotskyite" -- it is true that the CPML does not call us "Trotskyite" everywhere. In fact, on the West Coast they propose "joint work" with our comrades. Joint work with "Trotskyites"? Apparently this is not actually the CPML's view. What is certain is that their policy of assigning labels to the WCML either reflects conscious efforts to split our organization (which they have justified before as "breaking down the democratic centralism of smaller organizations") or the loose autonomy characteristic of a social democratic organization which cannot pursue a consistent policy. It may reflect both. What is also certain is that neither policy is characteristic of a genuine Marxist-Leninist party.

We challenge the CPML. We think that the cause of the proletariat must depend on the masses of the people and that Communists must use the democratic method of persuasion and education when working among the labouring people and must on no account resort to commandism or coercion.

MAO TSETUNG, ON CORRECT HANDLING OF CONTRADICTIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE (Selected Works, v. V, p. 391)

have our newspaper. Based on the science of Marxism-Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought, let us see you make the charge of Trotskyism in print. You owe to those in your own organization who propose joint work. Of course you will not do so because you cannot do so. Honest comrades and friends therefore know how to judge your petty slanders.

## THE CONDITIONS WHICH GAVE RISE TO THE "PURGE"

The conditions which gave rise to the sectarian purge of the WCML from the ABDC were the economist politics of the ATM/IWK. Mired in the narrowness of their own conception of united front work, unable and unwilling to overcome the regional limitations of their work or the restricted character of their outreach to meet the needs of the broad masses of people affected by the Bakke decision, the ATM/IWK was forced to move organizationally on any force that represented a serious challenge to their leadership. It is because they lag behind the needs of the struggle that they were forced to engage in this sectarian maneuvering.

"By unity we mean uniting with those who have differences with you, who look down on you or show little respect for you, who have had a bone to pick with you or waged struggles against you and at whose hands you have suffered. As for those who see eye to eye with you, you are already united with them, so the question of unity doesn't arise." MAO TSETUNG, PARTY UNITY AND PARTY TRADITIONS (Selected Works, v. V, p. 318)

## TWO VIEWS REGARDING THE STRUGGLE FOR UNITY IN A MASS ORGANIZATION

What is exposed here is the way in which a narrow conception of Marxist-Leninist theory and of our tasks gives rise to a stance of "all struggle, no unity." Unwilling to use Marxist-Leninist theory to mobilize, organize and transform their work to meet the scope of the tasks required, like petty trade union bureaucrats, they attempt to defend the narrow framework they control against efforts to go beyond it. They suppress any challenge to their leadership by commandism and coercion, even at the cost of driving activists from the united front. As a result the coalition is reduced more and more to a few Marxist-Leninists and their close sympathizers. In other words, what is exposed is how narrowness and tailism can give rise to sectarianism and a policy of 'ruthless struggle and merciless blows'.

Obviously in our effort to overcome these errors we must direct our main attention to the right opportunism which is the root cause rather than the "left" opportunist consequences which emerge in this or that situation. We speak here of main attention. Of course the struggle must be waged on both fronts.

## THE CLASS BASIS FOR THE SECTARIANISM OF THE ATM/IWK

The bureaucratic character of the way in which the purge of the WCML was carried out exposes the class roots of the sectarianism of the ATM/IWK. It resembles nothing so much as the way in which a trade union bureaucrat will move to tighten his grip on the trade union as a mass organization and manipulate the organization to eliminate any challenge to his leadership. In this case the action of ATM/IWK reflects the opportunist maneuverings of the petty

bourgeoisie which fails to place its confidence in the mobilization of the large masses and the correctness of its line. As Lenin says, in every capitalist society the proletariat is inevitably connected with the petty bourgeoisie by a thousand ties and it must fight against subjection to such influence, particularly in the period of the formation of workers parties (LCW, v. 20, p. 208).

It is neither differences over the principles of unity, nor discussions promoted by the WCML over the direction of work that have limited the ABDC. It is the fear of mobilizing the masses on the scale really demanded by the attack on affirmative action. The class viewpoint of the petty bourgeoisie is quick to respond to that attack, but inadequate to mobilize a response on the scale required. The petty bourgeoisie is no match for the reactionary bourgeoisie. On the other hand, it is the class viewpoint of the proletariat which has the vision and stamina to mount a defense against such an attack and to carry it through to the end.

As we have said, what is at issue in the action of the "unity trend" to purge the WCML from ABDC work are two views regarding the struggle for unity in a mass organization. The WCML does not pretend to function as philistine diplomats who, like the CPML, call the principles of unity "too narrow" before ATM/IWK join the "unity trend," but then maintain a discreet silence on the matter afterward and do nothing to educate the masses of people who may be wrongly influenced by the activity and literature of the ABDC.

## WE WILL ALWAYS SUBMIT TO THE MAJORITY DECISIONS OF MASS ORGANIZATIONS, IN WHICH WE WORK, AND HAVE DONE SO IN THE ABDC, BUT WE WILL ALSO

struggle openly to influence that majority, especially when we think it has decided incorrectly. And we will certainly use our newspaper as a weapon in that struggle.

We notice that other organizations do not view their newspaper in that way. That is their affair. For us, a Marxist-Leninist newspaper, particularly in a period of party formation, is a vehicle to discuss policy and draw lessons for the proletarian and democratic movement. We do not view it as a "photographer of facts," even if the camera angle is from the left. It is inconceivable to us that a genuine vanguard party of the working class would participate in a mass organization, but not evaluate openly the activity of that body and of the political trends which influence its activity in the pages of its newspaper and other publications.

## WCML NATIONAL PROPOSAL TO BUILD THE ANTI-BAKKE MOVEMENT

We think the basic outlines of our national proposal to build the anti-Bakke movement remain valid and constitute the essential lines along which we must proceed in order to build a big, unified movement to defend and expand affirmative action programs. The main points of this proposal are as follows:

1. nationwide, we must organize a broad mass movement to defend and expand affirmative action programs for women and oppressed nationalities;
2. in the immediate period ahead we must pay special attention to affirmative action in the field of employment rights, as typified by the need to defend against the "Weber" attack in steel;
3. all national and local forces must be organized into a single, broad based, democratic coalition;
4. we must rely on the direct action of the masses;
5. while focusing mainly on affirmative action, we need to play a good role in giving support to the overall struggle for equal rights of women and oppressed nationalities.

This proposal is more fully explained, and contrasted with what passes for a "national plan" of the ABDC in our article "National Proposal to Build the Anti-Bakke Movement," THE COMMUNIST, v. IV, no. 20, September 11, 1978. Reprints of this article are available without charge from the WCML.

"At present, there are some comrades who are very afraid of the masses initiating discussion and putting forward ideas which differ from those of the leading organs or the leaders. Whenever a problem is being discussed, they suppress the initiative of the masses and don't allow them to speak out. This attitude is abominable."

MAO TSETUNG, TALK AT ENLARGED WORKING CONFERENCE, 1962 (Peking Review #27, 1978)

that the effect of Bakke on women is only secondary, or that oppressed nationality US students are third world students, or that the UC Regents remain one of the two main targets of the anti-Bakke movement even following the US Supreme Court decision in Bakke, or that the principles of unity of a mass organization can be used like a loyalty oath, etc. etc. For challenges to obvious errors like these, we were purged.

## THE QUESTION OF PARTY BUILDING

In April we wrote that we would not join the unity call of the CPML because the conditions to form a new party had not been prepared (THE COMMUNIST, v. IV, no. 11, April 24, 1978). In our view the sectarian maneuvering of the ATM/IWK and the CPML in acting to exclude the WCML from ABDC work proves the correctness of our analysis on this point in practice. It reflects opportunist errors which must be overcome if we are to prepare the conditions for a new revolutionary party in the U.S.

Nonetheless, in spite of the fundamental errors which have been exposed in the approach of the "unity trend" to mass work, we share a common perspective with the League of Revolutionary Struggle (ATM/IWK) and with the CPML which we will not ignore. These organizations also support the present leadership of the Communist Party of China, support its vanguard role in international struggle today and support Chairman Mao Tsetung's theory of the differentiation of the three worlds. Even on this score we have fundamental differences-- most notably on the direction of the main blow in international struggle -- however, the theory of the three worlds concerns how we view the alignment of international political forces and is therefore a fundamental line of demarcation for revolutionaries.

Therefore we do not reject the struggle to unite and to build a new revolutionary party on a genuine proletarian footing, purged of the dross petty bourgeois opportunism which still corrodes our movement and determines actions such as that taken by the "unity trend" in the ABDC. While our differences on important issues represent decisive differences of class stand which cannot be conciliated, our responsibilities for struggle are immense and we must show ourselves large enough to rise to the task or be swept aside by the torrent of history. For our part, in spite of our contempt for unity in words that covers sectarianism in deeds, we will struggle to expose such errors on the basis of Marxism-Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought and persist in the struggle to prepare the conditions for the party unity of all U.S. Marxist-Leninists, including comrades in the League of Revolutionary Struggle and the CPML.

Of course we will conduct that struggle openly, in full view of all comrades in the movement.

# STEEL CONVENTION

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

whose only purpose is to undermine the struggle of the working class in the face of an intensifying economic crisis must inevitably breed resistance within the ranks of the USWA. McBride and his cabinet fully realized that the convention had to be utilized as an arena for restricting, dispersing, and crushing the forces of opposition.

Thus they made the key issue at the 1978 Constitutional Convention McBride's consolidation of power.

## MCBRIDE CONSOLIDATES HIS POWER

McBride has been consciously preparing the conditions for the consolidation achieved at the recent convention since he took office in 1976. In the last two years he has taken steps going beyond even the most high handed methods of his predecessors -- former USWA presidents Phillip Murray, Ray MacDonald, and I.W. Able.

For example, on the international staff of the USWA there are 80 some employees known as "exempt" employees who are the technicians and public relations figures, the various resource people. Many of them have worked themselves to these top positions over the years and historically have been outside the pressure of the changes of leadership. However, when McBride took office he told all of them to submit letters of resignation. With these resignations in hand, McBride now has this body of people to serve as his cabinet totally dependent on his good graces for their jobs.

In addition he has brazenly cut into the autonomy of the District Directors such as overriding their decisions concerning the hiring of staff. Also, his opposition to the right-to-ratify has reflected a zeal in attacking the democratic rights of membership that has surpassed even Able. And, he has flaunted his intentions to try and take away the right of membership to vote directly in the elections for international officers.

## BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL OF CONVENTION

In carrying out his consolidation at the convention McBride skillfully utilized the control by the incumbent bureaucracy over the composition of the delegates and the issues to be discussed and decided.

The convention had 3,786



delegates. Probably close to 25% of these were members of the staff and technicians of the union. The staff with few exceptions represents the staunchest defenders of the bureaucracy. They are mostly workers 40-50 years old who leave the shop floor for a higher salary -- \$25,000, a car, and a complete range of benefits. On the convention floor this organized force "knows the ropes" and has strong influence on the new and less experienced delegates.

In addition, two thirds of the USWA membership is in small locals of less than 250 members and many have only 25-100 mem-

bers. These locals often don't have the money or interest to send delegates to the convention so members of the staff pick up their voting credentials.

With the staff and its contacts solidly behind him, McBride had the organizational muscle necessary to achieve his objectives.

Utilizing his bureaucratic control he was also able to carefully pick the issues and policies to be debated at the Convention. He put aside the objectives that would consolidate the broadest opposition and rigorously pursued the provisions that would strengthen his own power and undermine the



opposition.

The two issues that would have confronted McBride with the broadest opposition were the right-to-ratify and the question of direct voting for international officers. The first day McBride announced that the convention would not discuss the taking away of the right of members to elect their leaders through direct vote. On the right-to-ratify issue, which had received wide discussion prior to the convention including the gathering of thousands of names on petitions, McBride proposed that it be taken up in the basic steel Industry Conference rather than at the convention. By gaining approval for this proposal, he had succeeded in defusing a significant sector of his opposition.

On the other hand McBride extended the union officer retirement age from 65 to 70. He increased the salaries of the international officers and the District Directors by \$5,000 plus a retroactive cost of living which meant an additional \$3,600.

Another important victory for McBride was to pass restrictions on fundraising for the election of international officers. These restrictions deepen the advantage of incumbents like McBride who have the

fundraising capabilities of the entire international structure at their own disposal. Under the restrictions passed it would also be easy to frame and deprive someone of their office who has campaigned and won.

## GOON SQUADS AND RED-BAITING

In addition to these tactics McBride was not above using basic goon-squad tactics and red-baiting in order to squash his opposition. On the first day staff men beat up someone selling the CPUSA's Daily World. Also, the "Revolutionary Communist Party" (RCP) showed up on the first

day with a picket line of 30-40 people (demonstrating their own weakness), and McBride forces taking advantage of the situation, sent in about 100 staff members who tore up the picket signs and banners and chased the RCP down the boardwalk after roughing up a few of them.

There also was a series of leaflets put out by phoney groups which defended the reactionary, chauvinist, and anti-communist views of the McBride administration. One leaflet with pictures of Sadlowski at a conference in Prague, Czechoslovakia titled "Sadlowski and his Communist Pals in Prague" was put out by the "Steelworkers to Defend the Free Trade Union Movement." Other leaflets putting forward anti-communist and reactionary

views were put out by the "Steelworkers Know-Your Ducks Committee", "The Steelworkers Truth Squad Against Anti-Union Plotters", and "Steelworkers To Keep Outside Money Out."

## OPPOSITION AT THE CONVENTION

In spite of the McBride steamroller that dominated the USWA Convention, there was opposition on several fronts.

In the face of the growing economic burdens and hardships that steelworkers face due to the intensifying economic crisis, McBride's class collaborationism has given rise to wide spread discontent and resistance among rank and file steelworkers. Most recently this opposition has surfaced in a mass way in the strike in the Northern Minnesota Range and the right-to-ratify petitioning. This discontent and opposition was manifested on the Atlantic City convention floor on several levels.

Even within his own Executive Board McBride is faced with opposition on issues like the right-to-ratify and his proposals on financing elections. On this latter issue 11 out of the 25 district directors opposed it in an Executive Board meeting. Louis Wampler, Director of District 33 in Minnesota and James Balanoff of District 31 spoke openly against it at the Convention.

Of course, the opposition within the Executive Board which varies in strength and militancy with different issues merely reflects the desire of those within the leadership ranks to seize the reins of power only to ride the same horse in the same direction.

Several districts now include significant opposition to McBride's policies. They include District 31 in Chicago, District 33 in Minnesota, District 15 in Pennsylvania, and District 6 in Canada. District 31 is the most outspoken sector of the opposition with consistent criticism and proposals coming from the big mills as well as from some of the smaller locals.

However, the role of Sadlowski and his Fightback Organization at the Convention was very limited. In fact, despite the fact that he was openly red-baited by name and challenged, Sadlowski himself never once spoke from the floor of the Convention. More significantly, he made no effort to mobilize potential opposition.

For example, one president from a local that nominated Sadlowski and voted 90% for him in the election stated that he had never heard a word from Sadlowski's Fightback and no effort had been made to organize or even communicate with him or his local about the Convention.

The most consistent effort to organize the opposition came from the CPUSA and its National Steelworker Rank and File Committee. They clearly had a presence and influence on the Convention floor, outside on the Boardwalk through distribution of the Daily Worker and Political Affairs, and among the delegates.

But, the bankruptcy of the revisionist efforts to organize opposition to McBride was exposed by their stand and view on two basic issues. First, the revisionists fail to take up in a militant and direct manner the attack on Affirmative Action that is quietly taking place through the Weber Case.

Secondly, the CPUSA's support for Soviet Social imperialism decisively compromised the revisionist influence. Pretending to be progressive and in the interest of the working class and at the same time to support a country that now enslaves other nations as well as its own people requires acrobatics anyone can see through.

Another figure in the "opposition" was Brian Weber, the plaintiff in the well known Weber Case. Weber who is a delegate from a 1,500 member local in Louisiana, rose to speak against a mild resolution in support of affirmative action. There was no outcry against this attack from any sector despite widespread consciousness -- especially among the bureaucrats -- of the damage that the Bakke-Weber attack on affirmative action can do to the struggle for equal rights.

## NO MARXIST-LENINIST INFLUENCE

It is significant that none of the self-declared M-L parties played any discernible role at the convention. This is not because these groups are not in the shops represented by the USWA. Members of the various "anti-revisionist" organizations have been in the steel mills for the last 8-9 years or longer.

What is exposed here is the failure to apply in practice the line of fighting for communist leadership of the trade unions. It reflects the failure to break with all the forms of opportunism that prevent us from transforming the unions into conscious political weapons of the proletariat in the struggle for state power. Too much of our movement is still content to remain a small voice of opposition rather than the determined and victorious political force needed to run McBride and his like out of the trade unions.

One source of this shortcoming is characterized by the belittlement of the Convention itself, by organizations like the CPML and the RCP who are content to write it off as a "spectacle" or a "booze, bets, and B.S. party" when they should be summing up for the entire movement their work at the Convention. Which of the self-declared vanguards has used their work around the Convention to provide the sober assessment of our movement's strengths and weaknesses that is needed if we are to advance on the task of winning the trade unions to communist leadership. We must begin now to chart a course that will enable us to use conven-

CONTINUED ON P. 7

# NAMIBIAN STRUGGLE

CONTINUED FROM P.1

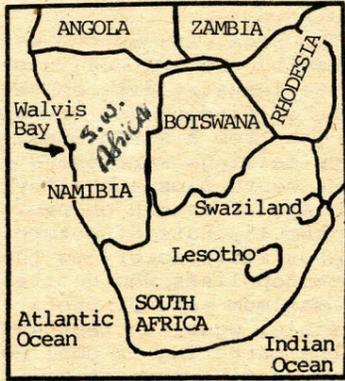
out between SWAPO and the United States, Britain, West Germany, France and Canada. It followed 15 months of negotiations and was supported by the efforts of Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana and Nigeria to develop a framework for a ceasefire in the 11 year armed struggle of the Namibian people against white South African rule, for an end to control by the white South African minority, and for the establishment of an independent Namibia through free elections under the supervision of the United Nations.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) has denounced South Africa for planning their own elections in Namibia, and have called for a mandatory oil embargo against the Pretoria regime.

## SOUTH AFRICA ILLEGALLY OCCUPIES NAMIBIA

South Africa illegally occupied Namibia, known also as South West Africa, since 1915 under a League of Nations mandate which the United Nations declared invalid in 1965. South Africa has maintained control despite UN resolutions denouncing the extension of apartheid to Namibia and condemning continuing South African administration as illegal.

The main aspects of the UN proposal are for 1) a ceasefire between the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and the South African Army, 2) a reduction of South African forces from 20,000 to 1,500 during the transition period, 3) use of UN troops to maintain order during the transition period, and 4) free elections to establish an independent Black state of Namibia.



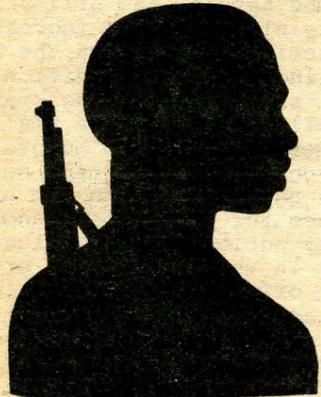
WALVIS BAY- TARGET OF SOUTH AFRICAN DESIGN

A second UN resolution supported the Namibian claim to Walvis Bay and stated that "the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia must be assured through reintegration of Walvis Bay into its territory." This statement, although ambiguous in steps for implementation, is a major cause for South African attempts to wreck the independence proposal.

In August 1977 the South African regime unilaterally annexed Walvis Bay into its Cape Province. This attempt to forestall Namibian independence was in response to the growing strength of SWAPO in leading the armed struggle of the Namibian people, and the recognition that this struggle would eventually force South Africa out of Namibia. Walvis Bay is Namibia's only deep water port and is essential to the territorial integrity and economic viability of the Namibian nation.

In responding to the UN resolution on Walvis Bay, former South African Prime Minister John Vorster made clear his imperialist design, claiming that Walvis Bay is part of South Africa. "No decision by the UN or any other body could deprive South Africa of it"

SWAPO and the Namibian people reject this position of the South African racists. Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO and recognized by the UN as the spokesman for the Namibian people, addressed the Security Council and declared, "Walvis Bay was and would forever remain an integral part of Namibia" Nujoma has also expressed his people's determination to continue the armed struggle if the South African regime does not accept the negotiated settlement.



# STEEL CONVENTION

CONTINUED FROM P.6

tions like the one in Atlantic City to run traitors like McBride out of the workers movement and to advance programs calling for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST TRADE UNION LEADERSHIP

The dominance of bourgeois ideas and actions on the convention floor in Atlantic City cannot become an excuse for our isolation from the struggle. In fact, it mandates that we double our efforts to win the leadership in our locals that will enable us to take up the battle with labor traitors like McBride and sweep to the side the reformists and revisionists who hold back and strive to stifle the growing outrage of the working class.

What is clear from the convention in Atlantic City is that our opposition -- the reactionary trade union leaders -- are tightening their grip

on the unions and intensifying their efforts to maintain them as a faithful appendage to bourgeois political power. But, their conciliation with the intensifying capitalist attack on the basic interests of the working class has given rise to a growing opposition by the rank and file. And, the current social democratic and revisionist leadership of this rank and file discontent is being exposed as incapable of meeting our adversary head on and effectively taking up the battle. It is only leadership, armed with orthodox Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought that can meet the challenge laid down by the current crisis and lead the struggle through its complex twists and turns. We must become intolerant of those within our ranks who continue to lower the prestige of M-L and instead take up the struggle of our class in the manner that is required to win the trade unions to communist leadership.

## ARMED STRUGGLE - BASIS FOR INDEPENDENCE VICTORY

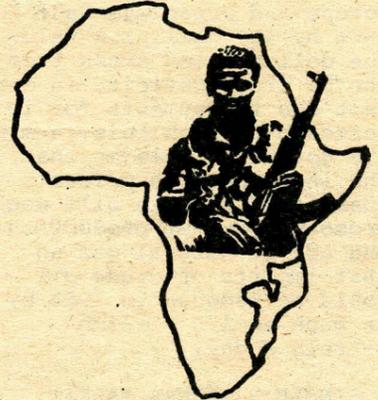
It is the protracted struggle of the Namibian people that has forced South Africa into a defensive position. After voting for the UN resolution, Chen Chu, the Chinese representative outlined what steps would actually bring peace and independence to Namibia

We sternly condemn the South African racist regime for its illegal occupation of Namibia, and we have always held that the South African racist regime must immediately, totally and unconditionally withdraw all its military and police forces as well as administration from Namibia... This is the only correct guideline and means for the settlement of the Namibian question.

It is necessary under the present circumstances for SWAPO and the Namibian people to heighten their vigilance a hundred fold and take action to prevent the South African racist authorities from sabotaging Namibian independence. All countries which uphold justice should continue their support for the armed struggle of the Namibian people. Chen Chu emphasized the impor-

tance of international support for the just demands of the Namibian people.

The South African racists will never shun evil and do good and become Buddha overnight. Therefore, in order to achieve genuine and complete independence the Namibian people have to carry on arduous and unremitting struggles, guard against and frustrate the schemes of sabotage and troublemaking on the part of the South African racist regime, and forestall the control and interference particularly by that superpower which styles itself as the "natural ally" of the African people."



# RAILWAY STRIKE

CONTINUED FROM P.3

recent 109 day airline pilots' strike against Northwest Airlines, that company received \$108 million. It was able to make \$20.5 million in profits during the second quarter of that year even though it was shut down two-thirds of the time.

This type of pact is a weapon the bourgeoisie is using to deal with the growing resistance of working people to new crisis motivated attacks. Since the companies don't lose money when shut down by a strike, they are in no hurry to negotiate and can try to break unions.

## UNION TAKES STRIKE NATIONWIDE

This certainly was the case with the M&W which wouldn't even make a serious offer. So on September 26, the BRAC escalated the strike to all the railway companies in the mutual aid pact. At least 330,000 railway workers honored the BRAC picket lines, shutting down all the major railways and over two-thirds of the nation's rail traffic. The effects of this powerful tactic were quickly devastating for the economy. For example, the auto industry depends on rail transportation as one of the chief means to move raw materials, parts and finished cars. After only four days, auto plants across the country were near shut down because of part shortages.

## MEDIA COMES TO AID OF CAPITALISTS

Media coverage of this strike was another example of who the news industry serves. For example, while the disruption of commuter traffic made the front page in Chicago newspapers, information about the issues of the strike was hard to find. Even in Virginia and West Virginia where the strike was based, readers couldn't find the issues explained in their local papers.

## STATE INTERVENTION

When the bourgeoisie is put on the run as in this strike, it calls in more than the media, it calls in the state. It has a law, the Railway Labor Act, which is similar to Taft-Hartley and is designed to coerce workers back to their jobs when they threaten the interests of private property. One day after the nationwide

strike began, President Carter, who can no longer masquerade as a friend of labor, ordered a federal mediator. This didn't bring a settlement. Announcing that "we have almost a complete shutdown of rail service in our country", he then invoked the Railway Labor Act to order striking railway employees back to work on October 2nd for a 60 day "cooling off" period. The President has appointed a three man panel (made up of a professional arbitrator, a law professor and an economist/lawyer) to review the issues for 30 days. Then there is another 30 days for both sides to consider the panel's recommendations after which the union can go on strike again. If it does, Carter has already threatened to go to Congress for emergency legislation to end the strike.

The BRAC refused to obey the back to work order until a federal judge ordered that there would be no company reprisals against striking workers. Any workers furloughed during the 80 plus day strike must be called back during the 60 day period.

Government intervention against striking workers is nothing new. The example of the miners and postal workers is still fresh in our minds. It's especially nothing new to railway workers. In 1971 Congress imposed a binding settlement after railroad signalmen had walked out for 2 days and in 1975 President Ford used his powers to block a nationwide strike of railway clerks.

The state has historically served the capitalist class by intervening in labor struggles with back to work orders, injunctions limiting pickets, binding arbitration, police protection for scabs, etc. In this strike the state is backing up the capitalists' power to run their companies in the most profitable way possible--at whatever cost to the workers. In response to mounting attacks, all working people should support the fight of railway workers to protect their jobs and livelihood.



# GAS DEREGULATION

CONTINUED FROM P.1

crude oil from the OPEC countries. The US is gearing up its military machine in light of growing contention with the USSR and a modern military machine cannot be run without oil. But the OPEC countries are not seen as stable sources of oil because their oil could be cut off through political embargoes or Soviet military intervention. Further, a reduction in oil imports would help stabilize tense relations with US allies in Western Europe and Japan who have been hurt by the declining value of the dollar which stems from the US trade deficit, in large part due to payments for imported oil. With this in mind, the government claims that the increased gas prices guaranteed by this bill would promote domestic production and use of natural gas so that imports of crude oil would be reduced in 1985 by as much as 1.5 million barrels a day.

## A SINGLE NATIONAL MARKET

In the May 7, 1977 issue of THE COMMUNIST, the article "Carter's Energy Plan" stated, "The implementation of Carter's recent energy plan will mean an increase in the role of the government over energy regulation and control....The US imperialist bourgeoisie is not leaving the question of oil and gas supplies up to chance, nor to the vacillations of the 'free market system'... Centralization such as this is a precondition for imperialist war."

Does this analysis fit the facts today? In an important respect the present legislation confirms it. Under the current bill centralization will be promoted by extending federal regulation over the intrastate market during the seven year period prior to full deregulation. This will have the effect of creating a single national market for all natural gas. At the present time the interstate market is federally regulated while the intrastate market is not. This has created a dual market with different prices in interstate and intrastate markets. Gas available for sale has concentrated in the higher price intrastate system. Thus while industrial areas in the eastern and midwestern areas of the country suffered plant shutdowns and gas rationing during the harsh winters of recent years, the intrastate market had a surplus of nearly a trillion cubic feet of gas. This disparity is incompatible with the smooth functioning of a nationwide capitalist economy. It is also a hindrance to war preparations. Thus by extending federal regulation to overcome differences in the intrastate and interstate market, the present legislation will establish a single national market for natural gas when deregulation does arrive in seven years.

## HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT REGULATION OF NATURAL GAS

The poverty of the claims of the reformists and revisionists that a bourgeois government can "fairly" administer the monopolies, that the interests of the masses can be guaranteed short of socialist revolution, is revealed in the history of ineffectiveness that characterizes federal control over natural gas prices.

## NATURAL GAS ACT OF 1938

Natural gas developed into an important and profitable fuel source in the 1930's as technological improvements such as acetylene-welded pipelines, corrosion preventives and new ditch-digging machinery

enabled natural gas to be transported across the country from the producing regions to the industrialized areas in the east. The utilities and oil companies moved swiftly to gain control through their financial and political power. In order to do so they made use of every device including bank pressure on loans, spying, strong arm tactics and bribery. Inadequately regulated by either federal or state bodies, they crushed independent producers and established territorial pacts to drive up the price of natural gas.

In response to public outcry, the Natural Gas Act of 1938 was passed, which extended federal control through the Federal Power Commission (FPC) over interstate pipeline construction and rates, and over prices charged by local gas companies to consumers. However, this did not include regulation over prices charged by gas producers, the well-head gas price. This weakness was based on the pretense that the producers were competitive and that the three areas--production, pipelines, and local gas producers--were independently owned and operated.

According to this view, control of prices at one end of the chain would be reflected in prices at the other. But this view reflected a conscious blindness by the federal agency over the actual monopolization that existed. Instead of competition, ownership of gas reserves was concentrated in only a few companies, which resulted in artificially high prices which were passed along the chain. And as the producer and pipeline operator were often the same, operating under different corporate names, the effect was to escape regulation and bring in immense profits.

## THE PHILLIPS DECISION

Finally after nearly two decades of open abuse, government controls were extended over the producers of gas for the interstate market. This took the form of a Supreme Court decision in a suit brought against the Phillips Petroleum Company by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. But again, enforcement was purposefully ineffectual. Regulation was limited to the increase of prices on existing contracts, but not on the sale and delivery of new gas reserves. As a result, between 1954 and 1959 gas well-head prices nearly doubled.

## DEREGULATION NARROWLY DEFEATED

Despite the weaknesses in federal control, the oil monopolies campaigned heavily for deregulation. In 1956 both the House and Senate passed a deregulation bill. Eisenhower, who had openly supported this bill, was forced to veto it when public furor developed over disclosure of massive "contributions" by the oil companies to the political campaign funds of many House and Senate members.

On this same wave of public sentiment federal regulation was strengthened soon after by the Supreme Court's CATCO decision. This ruling said that the FPC's policy of establishing rates on a company by company basis was ineffective and that area rates had to be set up. In fact the FPC had been buried in bureaucratic procedure which prevented any effective regulation. But more roadblocks remained. While the first area rate was established in 1965, covering the Permian Basin of west Texas and New Mexico, court

cases prevented implementation of this plan until 1968, when the Supreme Court affirmed the FPC's area plan. At this time an area rate was also established for southern Louisiana.

## PROFITS STILL ENSURED BY REGULATION

The area rate method established by the FPC used composite industry data on the costs of finding and developing gas from a given area. Price ceilings were based on these costs plus a healthy 15% rate of return on profit. But the 15% rate of return was not satisfactory to the oil monopolists who desired the maximum rate of profit possible, equal to that gained in the marketing of coal and oil. The five largest oil companies, at the end of fiscal year 1974, had an average rate of profit of 19.3%, which reflected higher rates of profit for oil and coal than for natural gas. From another perspective, in 1972 natural gas had a lower cost per energy unit than oil or coal. The average cost to utilities was 31¢/million BTU for natural gas, 34-38¢/million BTU for coal and 40-68¢/million BTU for heating oil. In other words, they can increase the price of natural gas from 10% to 15% without losing its competitive edge over coal or heating oil.

## SHORTAGE CREATED

In order to give new life to their campaign for deregulation, the oil industry claimed that the 15% rate of return was not adequate to finance exploration and development of new gas reserves. It was no accident then that in 1968, the same year that the area rates were finally approved, industry reports on reserve figures took a sudden nose dive. Government estimates have always depended on industry figures and it passively echoed the claims of "gas shortage" like a sheep being led by the nose.

There is a lot of evidence to the effect that the natural gas shortage is phony. For example, for years annual gas reserve additions were composed of about 30% new discoveries and 70% extensions and revisions of old reserves. In 1968 the data released by the industry on the extensions and revisions on old reserves showed a net loss of 642 billion cubic feet! This trend continued in 1969, leaving the year end estimates of 4.5 trillion cubic feet about 1/2 of what it would have been if the previously normal rate of reserve additions had continued as it had in the past.

The industry did not only resort to lying about reserve figures. It also decreased the number of development wells sunk in relation to exploratory wells. Development drilling had previously been more frequent, and is what turns

probable reserves into proved reserves. Similarly, only 7.7% of the 117 offshore leases bought in 1970 are currently in production, while nearly 60% are not yet classified. Both these examples suggest that the oil companies have been hiding reserves and holding back production in anticipation of higher prices. From their perspective the present gas bill is well worth the wait.

## LESSONS OF FEDERAL REGULATION HISTORY

The brief history of federal regulation shows it to be at best a puny effort, characterized by legislation consciously designed with loopholes guaranteeing its ineffectiveness. While regulation formally began in 1938, it did not cover interstate gas producers until 1954. Even then, effective area rates, which still insured a minimum 15% rate of profit, weren't finally implemented until twelve years later in 1968 when the industry campaign for deregulation took form. Now, ten years later, that objective is virtually insured. Even during this ten year period of "effective" rates, the price of natural gas has risen substantially. The present ceiling of \$1.48/million cubic feet for interstate gas is seven times that of the top price in effect in 1970.

Over 50 years of government regulation, millions upon millions of taxpayers' money spent on running countless government agencies, hundreds of court cases -- and the results are negligible. Why? Because the government has remained firmly in the hands of the oligarchs of finance capital whose wheelings and dealings and rapacious pursuit of profits the government is supposed to control. Regulation of monopolies by a government which serves the interests of monopoly capital can never meet the needs of the broad masses of people.

## OPPOSE THE CAPITALISTS' ENERGY PLANS AND WAR PREPARATIONS

The natural gas bill will certainly result in increased economic hardship for the US working class. In addition, it will affect the living standard of allies such as the small farmers who rely on natural gas to run their irrigation equipment and who have to pay higher prices for fertilizers and other agricultural chemicals. Thus in the face of the present offensive the conditions are being created for a broad and decisive movement of resistance. The capitalists want to see the masses of people accept these attacks in the name of the "national interest" We must expose the truth and organize resistance on the basis of the genuine interests of the broad masses of people, bringing to the forefront the leadership of the working class.

The next issue will be November 13



The plan of the Workers Congress (M-L) is to fight for a newspaper modeled on Lenin's ISKRA as the main link in the fight to prepare the conditions for a new Communist party. While we discuss questions from our own definite point of view, our columns are open to all Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary workers for topical exposures, polemics, and reports on their work.

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