

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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On the struggle against national oppression at Roswell Park hospital in Buffalo

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

The Second National Conference of our Party was held last fall under the slogans "Deeper among the masses -- Build the Marxist-Leninist Party!" and "Carry forward the struggle against racism and national oppression -- Work for proletarian leadership!" The resolutions of the conference were published in the Dec. 1, 1984 issue of The Workers Advocate. The last issue of the Supplement began a series of articles on this conference in order to allow a deeper study of the valuable material from the conference on the experience of our Party and the revolutionary line for the mass struggle and party-building.

In this issue we continue the series with a speech on the work of our Party in organizing the black workers at a particular workplace both against racism and into the general workers' struggle. It shows the role of the struggle at the workplace in assisting the work in the general anti-racist movement, and vice versa; and it also goes into the question of the struggle against a black bourgeois nationalist and social-democratic trend.

Roswell Park, where we have been concentrating our work for some five or six years, employs a significant number of black workers. In fact, the largest section of ordinary working people (that is, excluding the professional strata that a research hospital employs in large numbers) are black. These black workers are concentrated in the lowest paid and hardest jobs, what are called the labor grades. And they make up roughly 80% of the membership of CSEA Local #303, which is affiliated with AFSCME nationally. It's the state employees' union in New York. This makes Roswell Park one of the largest work places in our city where black workers are concentrated. Thus, the struggle against the oppression of black people and the mobilization of the black workers for the revolutionary struggle has always been an essential and a day-to-day concern in

our work at Roswell Park. And, in our concentration at Roswell Park, we have always had an invaluable base from which to address the city-wide and country-wide struggle against black oppression.

Furthermore, black bourgeois politics has always had considerable influence among the workers at Roswell Park. Indeed, at Roswell Park there is currently an organized social-democratic trend, a trend with a definite nationalist tinge, which is headed up by a bourgeoisified section of semi-professional blacks. This trend has direct ties with the most influential black politicians in the Democratic Party in our area. Most notably the trend is connected with Arthur Eve, who is a rather important state politician in the Democratic Party from Buffalo. For years Eve was the chairman of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus in the State Assembly, and he's currently the chairman of the State Budget Committee. Thus we have had to contend directly with this social-democratic and bourgeois nationalist trend at Roswell over the years.

As this aspect of our work is not so well known, it will be valuable for us to discuss some of our experience in the struggle against national oppression and against this black bourgeois political trend. I will divide my remarks, roughly, into two sections. First, some comments about how we have approached the struggle against the oppression of black workers at the work place, and particularly the relation of concentration work to the general political movement against black oppression. The

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Because the pro-U.S. Labor Party made a concession to the mass anti-nuclear movement

REAGAN GOES ON THE WARPATH AGAINST NEW ZEALAND

The following article was written by The Workers' Advocate staff.

The Reagan administration is on the warpath because the government of New Zealand has refused to allow U.S. nuclear-armed ships to make port calls. The mass movement in New Zealand against nuclear weapons is strong. The ruling New Zealand Labor Party is actually firmly pro-U.S. imperialist and in favor of the militarist ANZUS alliance with the U.S. Nevertheless it found it necessary to make some anti-nuclear weapons promises in order to win the last elections. Now that it has refused the visit of a U.S. nuclear warship, Reagan is organizing a political barrage against the Labor Party administration, threatening military and economic reprisals, and exploring action to bring the opposition New Zealand National Party to power.

A Concession to the Anti-Nuke Movement

The stand taken by the New Zealand government headed by prime minister David Lange is a concession to the anti-nuke movement in New Zealand. This movement is quite strong in New Zealand. Port calls by U.S. imperialist warships in the past have regularly been met by boatloads of demonstrators in the harbors of New Zealand, and the same treatment is

given to port calls by British warships. Demonstrations of thousands have taken place both before and after the elections of last July demanding that the government take an anti-nuclear stand.

There is also strong sentiment against nuclear weapons in the islands of the South Pacific that the New Zealand bourgeoisie regards as its own sphere of interest. The Melanesian and Polynesian people on these islands have suffered greatly from the nuclear weapons testing of U.S., French and British imperialism. Hence the liberal section of the bourgeoisie in New Zealand feels pressure from this angle as well to make a show of opposition to nuclear weapons.

Reagan's Response: Off With Their Heads

Reagan's response to the anti-nuclear gestures of the New Zealand government is like that of the tyrannical king when told that some peasant servants have ruined his favorite purple robe. "Off with their heads." This, in essence, is what Reagan administration spokesmen announced when New Zealand refused to allow the U.S.S. Buchanan to make a port call.

Reagan's campaign of intimidation and pressure against New Zealand began last summer, immediately after Lange's election. Reagan gave Lange a six-month "grace period" in which to think about his decision. In the meantime, the U.S. government dispatched representatives from the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Heritage Foundation to New Zealand to try and talk the new government into admitting U.S. ships. The U.S. also got the hawkish prime minister of Australia, the Australian Labor Party leader Bob Hawke, to write a letter to Lange urging him to renege on his anti-nuclear election campaign promise, just as Hawke had done.

After six months the U.S. announced that the Buchanan would visit New Zealand as part of naval war games in March. Lange asked if the Buchanan carried nuclear weapons. When the U.S. refused to reply, Lange asked for some other U.S. ship, which could somehow be presented as non-nuclear, to visit in the Buchanan's place. But Reagan insisted: the Buchanan or nothing. So finally New Zealand announced that the Buchanan would not be allowed to visit.

Immediately the U.S. government launched a barrage of propaganda designed to intimidate the New Zealand government. Administration spokesmen discussed ways New Zealand could be made to "pay the cost": by cancelling New Zealand's "privileged" trading status with the U.S., thereby raising tariffs on New Zealand exports; cutting off military cooperation, the exchange of personnel and intelligence; and in Congress there was talk of trade

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sanctions against New Zealand. It has also been reported that the Reagan administration is making overtures of assistance to Lange's opposition, the New Zealand National Party, whose leader is urging Lange to give up his opposition to U.S. nuclear warships.

Reagan's idea of "democracy" was once again demonstrated for the world to see: do what the Pentagon wants or we'll smash your head in.

Meanwhile Stephen Solarz (D-NY), a leading liberal on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, scheduled his subcommittee to hold special hearings on the ANZUS treaty alliance because, he said, New Zealand's actions "raise the gravest questions...."

Reagan's Stand: Fear of the Mass Movement, and Deadly Serious Preparations for Nuclear Slaughter

Why is the Reagan administration taking such a tyrannical stand against New Zealand, which ever since World War II has been a completely docile and cooperative ally of U.S. imperialism in the South Pacific? In the first place, the Pentagon does not want to lose New Zealand as a port of call. But secondly, and more important, it does not want the **example** of New Zealand to encourage the mass struggle in other countries -- in particular, Japan -- which have major U.S. military bases.

In Japan, as in New Zealand, there is also a government ban on visits by nuclear-armed ships. But the U.S. and Japanese governments get around this with a tacit agreement -- the Japanese government does not ask if U.S. warships have nuclear weapons, and the Pentagon does not say. Nonetheless the U.S. militarists cannot rest easy with this situation, because visits by U.S. ships to Japan are invariably accompanied by large anti-nuclear and anti-militarist demonstrations.

In Australia there is also a large and growing anti-nuclear movement. In the national elections held last December, the new Nuclear Disarmament Party received about 10% of the vote. And even the militarist Bob Hawke has been forced to cut back on nuclear cooperation with the U.S.; Hawke recently cancelled an agreement with the U.S. to assist in testing the MX missile. Hawke, who personally favors the MX and nuclear militarism, was afraid of the political consequences for his ruling Labor Party.

Thus the Reagan administration is taking a stand of coming down hard on any government that gives any concession, no matter how slight, to the anti-nuclear movement. This shows both its fear of the mass movement and how seriously it takes its own vision of prevailing in a "winnable nuclear war".

The New Zealand Labor Party: Anti-Nuke Gestures But Pro-Imperialist Policy

The response of Lange's government to the bullying of the Reagan administration has been a mixed

bag of resentment, anger, and belly-crawling. Lange protested that the U.S. ought not to be "so extraordinarily heavy" on New Zealand and later suggested that the Reagan response could be "an example of that totalitarianism we are supposedly fighting against." And, in response to the Reaganite demand of how they could expect to be covered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella while refusing U.S. warships, they have replied that New Zealand does not want this umbrella.

But, while protesting Washington's bullying, Lange at the same time hastened to assure Reagan that he remains committed to the ANZUS alliance. He emphasizes that New Zealand's stand on visits by nuclear warships should have nothing to do with military cooperation with the U.S. And of course he puts no conditions on the Pentagon itself altering its plans for nuclear slaughter, to say nothing of its strategy of world domination. His entire stand is simply one of empty gestures, and he cannot see why the Pentagon and the White House are reacting so strongly to his method of subverting the anti-war struggle in New Zealand.

Indeed, in a press conference this Monday, March 11, Lange said the whole fuss could have averted if a news leak about a January meeting between him and the U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand, H. Monroe Brown, hadn't upset plans for a compromise.

What is the ANZUS treaty that Lange is so fond of? ANZUS is an aggressive military alliance between Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. that is part of the global imperialist military networks of the Pentagon. It was formed in 1951 and since then has been fully supported by both of New Zealand's major bourgeois parties, the social-democratic Labor Party and the conservative National Party. Through ANZUS, New Zealand troops have been mobilized to participate in U.S. imperialist aggression in Korea, Malaysia, and Viet Nam. Presently New Zealand maintains a garrison of Rapid Deployment Force troops in Singapore and has troops assisting the U.S. imperialist-organized "peace process" in Egypt. New Zealand is also providing support to the tottering Philippines dictator, Marcos.

Prime Minister Lange has been protesting against U.S. statements that New Zealand's anti-nuclear stand may mean the death of ANZUS. He has expressed regret about the cancellation of naval war games this spring and is upset about Washington's cutback in military cooperation with New Zealand.

Thus, despite his anti-nuclear gestures, Lange is committed to maintaining New Zealand's military alliance with U.S. imperialism. It should also be noted that, historically, Lange has not himself supported the anti-nuke policy. In 1983 he tried to get the anti-nuke plank removed from the Labor Party's platform, but was prevented from doing so by rank-and-file Labor Party members.

It should also be noted that in New Zealand there is pressure on the government to get out of ANZUS altogether. Certain Labor Party conferences and trade union conventions have adopted anti-ANZUS

resolutions. This reflects the anti-imperialist sentiment of the working people of New Zealand, who, however, are still enchained in illusions about the liberal bourgeois Labor Party. Thus there is pressure on Lange's government to maintain some stand against Reagan's bullying, despite the New Zealand bourgeoisie's commitment to imperialist alliances.

**To Carry Through A Serious Struggle Against
Nuclear Warmongering
The Struggle Must Strike At Imperialism**

The fact that the Labor Party government in New Zealand has, for now at least, refused port calls from U.S. nuclear warships is a tribute to the strength of mass opposition to militarism. But as long as a pro-imperialist and pro-capitalist party remains in power in New Zealand, the anti-nuclear position of New Zealand is not only unstable, but it reflects simply the special position of New Zealand in the U.S. imperialist network, in which it is

sideline to nuclear preparations and has been assigned other roles. For the working class of New Zealand to play a powerful role in the struggle against imperialist war, including nuclear war, it must not be content at simply dropping out of certain manifestations of U.S. imperialist nuclear warmongering, but it must actively take up the fight against U.S. imperialism. It must not rest content with the policy of gestures, but must strike at the roots of militarism and nuclear warmongering.

This requires that the working class break with the liberal bourgeoisie and work to carry out the socialist revolution which will bring to power a truly anti-militarist and anti-imperialist government, a socialist government of the working class. And the strong anti-nuclear movement of the working people of New Zealand is a powerful asset that should be used to the full in developing the revolutionary proletarian movement needed for a successful socialist revolution. []

BOSTON TRANSIT WORKERS: ORGANIZE TO FIGHT REAGAN'S CUTS!

The following leaflet was issued by the Boston Worker, newspaper of the Boston Branch of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA, on February 6, 1985.

The contract with the MBTA expires in less than two months. The MBTA has been gearing up to use the contract to further attack the workers wages, benefits and working conditions by expanding the part-time system, instituting more speed up and cutting medical benefits. Now that Reagan has announced plans to eliminate all federal assistance to the MBTA and other transit systems, the T management will certainly attempt to demand even more concessions. Already O'Leary is holding the threat of 600 layoffs over our heads. But we should not yield an inch to either the Reaganites in Washington or the ones on High St. Instead we must be organized for the coming fight.

We are hearing a lot of talk from Reagan about how we must all sacrifice to bring government spending under control. But this is another Reagan lie. Reagan is not cutting government spending. He is increasing it. What he is doing is cutting out or reducing any section of the budget that might benefit the poor or the working masses in order to help finance the gargantuan U.S. military build up and in order to pay the bankers and money speculators outrageous skyrocketing interest payments on the national debt. While Reagan makes drastic cuts in the Medicare benefits of the retired people, freezes social security and cuts out food programs for the unemployed and the poor, he is planning to increase his \$313 billion military budget another \$100 billion in the next three years. While Reagan imposes a 5% pay cut on federal workers and cuts off federal

aid to public schools and mass transit, he considers it a sacred duty to pay \$150 billion in interest (a 300% increase since 1980) to the banking magnates. In other words, the poor and working people must tighten their belts so the bankers can get their tribute and so the rich can build up their war machine to defend their investments (vital interests), put down the workers of other countries and fight with Moscow over division of the loot. Reagan calls this standing tall. We call it naked imperialism. Such is the noble cause for which Reagan wants us to sacrifice.

Of course, using budget crises to attack the MBTA workers is nothing new. This kind of thing has been going on for fifteen years and especially since 1980. We have already been wrung dry. In 1974, the T spent 25% of its budget on the wages of the workers in the transportation department (bus drivers, guards, motormen, collectors, etc.). Today this figure is only 16% and the number of workers has been cut by a third.

But while the workers have been cut back and subjected to the part-time system and all the other management rights abuses, the executives have padded their nest well. The number of administrators has quadrupled and the administrative budget has increased unbelievably. And of course, the bankers have got their share too. In 1974, the T spent 15% of its budget paying the banks. Today 24% goes to the banks -- 50% more than to the workers who actually make the T run. (Funny how you never hear about these things in the newspapers.)

Every year we have been forced to sacrifice more and more for the rich. Now we are being told we must sacrifice not only for the MBTA and its capitalist friends, but for Reagan and the Pentagon as well. It is high time for us to say "no more!" Our

wages and benefits must be improved, not sacrificed. Part timers must be made full time and the part-time system abolished. A fight for these demands should be our answer to the arrogant maneuvers of Reagan and the MBTA. Not a single concession for the Pentagon and the rich!

We must get organized now for the fight over the contract and the budgetary crisis. We cannot wait for our union leaders to organize us. They obviously have no intention of fighting. Our contract is only two months away, and they haven't so much as called a meeting for us to put forward our demands and organize. They will either accept what the T offers or try to push everything into arbitration, where the T management will get what it wants anyhow. Just like last time. We must take matters into our own hands. These leaflets should be widely circulated. Workers should link up with the Marxist-Leninist Party and keep it informed of developments. Agitation must be organized in every

lobby and repair shop to prepare our forces for a fight.

T workers:

The Reaganite offensive is not only hurting us, but it is strangling the whole working class. This offensive is supported by both the Republican and Democratic Parties. Only an independent movement of the whole working class can stand up to the Reaganites. In addition to organizing our own fight on the MBTA, we must participate in and support the strikes and protests of other workers and of the poor and unemployed. We must participate in and organize militant actions against Reagan's growing militarism and against his new Vietnam-styled war against our working class brothers in Central America. Reagan and the rich have bullied us around too long. It is time for the working class to come out on its own and use its strength to fight for its own interests. □

MORE ON THE POLICE RAIDS AGAINST DETROIT SCHOOLS

Below we carry a speech given at a meeting of friends of the MLP in Detroit on the subject of denouncing the police raids on the Detroit schools and the stepped up repression of the youth under the banner of "fighting crime". It has been excerpted and edited for publication.

The Capitalists and their Government Scapegoat the Youth for Crime

The first point to raise is the question of youth crime, because the justification for the extreme measures such as searching all the kids in a school, carrying out criminal prosecution of high school students, and even suing their parents, is all being justified on the grounds that special measures must be taken to deal with an epidemic of crime and shootings in the schools.

Now the problem of kids shaking down other kids for their Adidas tennis shoes, of drug taking, and so forth are serious problems that the working people are quite correctly concerned about. Crime is another abomination that capitalism imposes on the workers and makes a difficult life that much more difficult. And this problem is more and more affecting the children of the workers.

But the whole discussion of youth crime by the government and the capitalist news media, and the supposed "solutions" to youth crime that the government is implementing, really have nothing to do with solving the problem or even slowing it down.

One of the things that stands out when you read through tons of articles that have been written on youth crime lately is that there is a striking absence of any discussion of why this problem

exists. Most articles simply decry the problem, try to make an emotional appeal by dredging up every horror they can find, and then declare "let's get tough with the youth." A few will pontificate the problem is that parents are too liberal with their children; a few will opine that teachers aren't teaching well enough; but more than anything else you get the picture that the young people are just hoodlums, a least a sizeable minority of them are hoodlums, and we better bring the hammer down on them if we're to make the schools "safe for education".

On the Shootings of Young People in Detroit

A typical way this emotional appeal against the youth is being made is with the repetition, over and over again, of the statistics on the number of kids that get shot. Nearly 250 kids got shot in Detroit last year, and this figure is repeated over and over again, with period updates, but nothing is said about how they got shot. Rather the impression is created that kids are just banging away at each other and therefore we better get the police into the schools to clear this up.

Now there has been one exception to this. The Detroit Free Press is one of the rabid campaigners against the youth, but one article last November actually listed the shootings of youngsters that took place between July 1 and November 10 of 1984 and included a short paragraph with each describing the circumstances of the shooting. This material is very incomplete, but a study of it is interesting. It shows:

1) There were 118 shootings of kids under 17 during that period.

2) Of these, over 30 were accidents where kids got shot playing with their parent's guns in their homes or where kids got caught in a crossfire between adults shooting at each other.

3) By my count, only three took place in the schools and one of these was the incident where a policeman murdered a 16 year old.

4) Of the rest, the majority of cases were of adults shooting down young people. And take a look at a few of the incidents:

—the police shot a 15 year old who was driving a car that the police claim had a suspected robber in it. The police claim the teenager pointed a gun at them, but no weapon was found.

—a 16 year old tried to break up a fight between friends of his in front of a bar. The bar owner came out and opened up fire on the kids, wounding the youth who was trying to break up the fight.

—a 16 year old was shot by a man who accused the youth's employer, a carpet cleaner, for stealing from the man's house. Mind you, it was not the youth but his boss who was blamed for stealing.

—a 13 year old girl attempted to break up a fight between friends in front of an apartment house. She was shot down by the apartment building manager, who opened up fire when he was annoyed at the disturbance.

--and the list goes on and on.

If we look at these examples, it would seem to me that to deal with the shootings of kids, rather than have the police raid the high schools, we should have the high school students raid the police, and storeowners, and apartment building managers. This might even help the problem of youth crime because it would give the youth something satisfying to do with their lives.

Anyway, the point of this discourse is simply to show how an emotional, unthinking appeal is being made — an appeal that obliterates even questioning why youth crime exists and which turns the emotions towards repressive measures against the youth.

On the Source of Crime in the Schools

So let us now put this emotional appeal aside and take a look at why youth crime develops. There are several sources to this problem which are not too hard to figure out.

1. The deterioration of the public education system. Now it is universally accepted that the schools are going to hell. But a recent study by a liberal group called the National Coalition of Advocates for Students is quite interesting. It points to conscious and systematic discrimination against the children of the working people, against the oppressed nationalities, and women, and concludes that "state and local financing of schools adds up to a conspiracy to spend more money on rich kids and less money on poor kids."

This is, of course, the program of the capitalists ardently espoused by the Reagan government, which is again this year demanding more budget cuts

in public education. With the despicable erosion of public education, it is little wonder that we find a high drop-out rate among students, that we find growing semi-illiteracy among the youth, and that we find the students becoming disgusted with the schools.

2. Impoverishment, unemployment, and hopelessness. Along with the deterioration of the schools, the youth are facing the miseries of the impoverishment forced on their parents and of the lack of any prospects for the future. With the high rate of poverty, it is not too surprising to discover the increase of petty thievery of lunch money and tennis shoes.

What is more, with an over 50% unemployment rate for black teenagers, what future do the young people have to look to? There is not much excitement in studying hard to prepare yourself to get a job that doesn't exist. Kids are being pushed towards crime by the same capitalists who piously preach against crime.

3. The Cultural offensive of the bourgeoisie. Finally one can't help but mention the whole cultural offensive against the youth. The TV, movies, music, and so forth glory in capitalist parasitism, in gangsterism, drug taking, racism, brutality towards women, imperialist aggression and warmongering, and so forth. These are the high moral goals set for the youth by the capitalists; goals which, if Reagan has his way, will be further uplifted by prayer in the schools and sanctified as being nothing short of the very "kingdom of God". With the filth being spread by the capitalists, I am amazed that the youth of the workers do as well as they do.

Now, taken together, these are the abominable conditions facing the youth. And these are the conditions that stand at the base of youth crime. Many of the young people are just languishing; too many are being driven to suicide; and some are getting pushed into crime.

Down with the Police Raids, Fight for a Real Education and the Rights of Youth

But these same conditions are also breeding a rebelliousness among the youth, and there are some who have begun to find their way to the mass movements against imperialist aggression and war, to the mass battles against racist police terror, and to revolutionary agitation against the capitalist system. When you hear liberals moaning about the "alienation" of the youth, when you hear them decry the new "subculture" of the impoverished growing up among the young people, and when you see them cast a fearful glance over their shoulders towards the situation of the 1960s, then you know that it is not youth crime but, instead, youth rebellion that the bourgeoisie is worrying about.

That is why the government's "solutions" to youth crime do not aim at alleviating the conditions that give rise to this problem, but instead aim at

terrorizing the youth and suppressing any rebelliousness.

The oh-so liberal Mayor Young is not ignorant of the sources of crime; he will even speak of them on occasion to maintain his pro-people image; but his program for fighting crime is nothing other than more police and prisons and raids to harass and intimidate all the high school students.

Listen to Young's words at the time he announced his program of raids on the schools:

"There's a direct relationship between poverty, unemployment, hunger and crime....

"We know that one out of three persons in the city are on some form of relief; therefore, at the edge of or under the level of poverty. I don't believe there is another city of over one million [inhabitants] in this nation with problems of this magnitude. We have to recognize these as reasons for our problem. But we cannot except it as an excuse. We will not accept young hoodlums or old hoodlums, jitterbugs or litterbugs taking over the streets of the city....

"We're here collectively to deal with crime. We're here collectively to let it be known that the free ride is over. No more Mr. Nice guy. From now on its hardball."

Now what is particularly striking to me in this statement is not so much the ease with which Young dismisses the problems of unemployment and poverty and excuses himself from dealing with these problems, but his description of who it is he is going to play hardball with. Young says he's fed up not only with the hoodlums but also with the "jitterbugs and the litterbugs", that is to say, with kids who are rowdy, who don't bow down to authority, who are

becoming rebellious. And this is no slip of the tongue. Mass raids on the schools, mass locker searches, etc. aim at terrorizing all the high schools students, and this is what Young, serving his capitalist masters, wants.

Mobilize the Youth for Struggle

In conclusion, I note that the whole history of police brutality and racist terror leads one irresistibly to the belief that more police in the schools won't stop crime, but will instead be used to repress the youth. The solution to youth crime can't be found in Young's measures, in police raids or in anti-crime hysteria. It instead must be sought in improving the education system, fighting for jobs and other improvements the kids need, and mobilizing the youth themselves to take part in the struggle against the capitalist offensive.

This is what will undermine the conditions giving rise to youth crime and what will give the youth high ideals, revolutionary goals, and a hope for the future.

The bourgeoisie are themselves pulling the young people into the class struggle. Any fond hopes of parents that their children may be outside the struggle at least till they grow up is being smashed by shootings, police raids, cutbacks, the barrage of bourgeois culture, and the big stick of the bourgeoisie against the youth. The only alternative to the horrors of capitalist life is for the youth to take a conscious part in the struggle against the miserable conditions facing them, and the capitalist system that gives rise to these conditions. []

ISIDRO TELLEZ, GENERAL SECRETARY OF MAP-ML OF NICARAGUA, OUTLINES THE PRESENT TASKS OF THE REVOLUTION:

"FOR AN EFFECTIVE DEFENSE, TOWARDS A REVOLUTIONARY OFFENSIVE"

During the campaign for last November's elections in Nicaragua, the MAP-ML held a meeting to honor the memory of the comrades of the leadership of MAP-ML who had laid down their lives in the course of the struggle against Somoza. At this meeting Isidro Tellez, the General Secretary of MAP-ML, delivered a major speech giving MAP-ML's views on the present stage of the revolution in Nicaragua. This speech was summarized in the issue of MAP-ML's journal Prensa Proletaria for Nov. 1984.

Below we reproduce first the introduction from Prensa Proletaria honoring the memory of the fallen comrades, and then the summary of the speech. Translation is by The Workers' Advocate staff.

IN MEMORY OF THE LEADING COMRADES WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SOMOZA

Hernando Tellez Herrera and Leonardo Garcia Jara: two members of the leadership of MAP-ML who fell in the anti-Somoza struggle which was led by the Party through the heroic Popular Anti-Somoza Militias (MILPAS). Both were founding members and effective fighters of the MILPAS against the military apparatus of Somocism. Hernando (Commander Julio) and Leonardo were revolutionary and consistent examples of communism -- true Marxist-Leninist militants. Both were members of the Military Commission of the Party. They fell simultaneously in May of 1979: Hernando was assassinated in the neighborhood of San Carlos in Leon by patrols under the command of the lackey Pablo Aquilera, and Nayo was captured, tortured and later assassinated in the Somocista dungeons.

This was a hard blow for the Map-ML; Hernando and Leonardo had pushed forward the revolutionary struggle and reaffirmed the proletarian and Marxist-Leninist character of the MAP-ML. Their practical

legacy and their theoretical contributions are a part of the experience and understanding accumulated not only by the Party but also by the advanced proletariat of Nicaragua. In just recognition of their labor as leaders of the Party and of the MILPAS (dissolved after the 19th of July, 1979), the Central Committee organized this political event in homage to its leaders fallen in the anti-Somoza struggle.

As Hernaldo and Nayo themselves would have directed, this event served to synthesize the political vision of the present moment and to point out the immediate tasks that are required to defend the revolutionary process. The speech of the General Secretary of our Party, Isidro Tellez, is a brief but well-aimed exposition of the present problems of the revolution: how to develop an effective defense of the revolution and to pass to a major offensive against the enemies of the toilers.

The MAP-ML has published a pamphlet that contains the entire text of this important speech of the General Secretary. Here, for reasons of space, we are summing up briefly the content and principal aspects of each of the subtitles of the speech. (Copies of the complete speech are available to the public in the offices of the MAP-ML, situated [in Managua, Nicaragua] at cine Aguerri 1c abajo 2 1/2 al lago No. 620, telephone 23787.)

SUMMARY OF THE SPEECH OF ISIDRO TELLEZ

Legalization is One Method of Struggle

The (recent) legalization of the MAP-ML is an important aspect, but not essential. The essential struggle of our Party is to achieve the solidification of our ties with the working class, deeply and broadly, in order to put itself at the forefront of the class struggle and to develop the struggle in the interest of the revolution of the workers and poor peasants, in the interests of proletarian socialism and communism.

Our struggle, clear and unequivocal, is this: for proletarian socialism and communism, and this struggle we do not attempt to conceal. We are not hidden socialists and communists. We are not going to negate, for tactical reasons, negate our principal objective: **the liquidation of the capitalist system and its dominant class and oppressors, the seizure of power by the proletariat, the installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the oppressors and imperialism, for the construction of worker-peasant power and socialism, en route to communism.**

Our Particular Conditions

These grand struggles have as their theater of operations a dependent capitalist country with a proletariat relatively dispersed but of strategic

importance, especially in the sector of export crops and agro-industry; a country with a large mass of peasantry divided into levels with differences within them. Some strata of peasants show vacillation and fear and must be won over, with care, for the revolution, or in any case neutralized. We find ourselves in a country devastated not only by natural phenomena -- droughts, earthquakes, flood and plagues -- but also by the effects of the looting that the bourgeoisie and imperialism have carried on since the beginning of the penetration and development of capitalism in Nicaragua. This is a country encircled economically, politically and militarily by U.S. imperialism. A country where the bourgeoisie, favored [in the name of] mixed economy, national unity, and pluralism, has been able to take advantage to the maximum of [this opportunity to] accumulate forces to impede the advance and even push backward the victories of the great democratic and popular action which required the insurrection of the toilers and people against the head of imperialist bourgeois domination in Nicaragua, the Somoza Dictatorship.

The Counterrevolutionary Internal Front

The bourgeois opposition continues struggling (as it did strongly during the struggle of the people [against the Somoza dictatorship]) for a Somocism without Somoza, but with somocistas and neo-somocism. Towards this aim it has made advances in the internal counterrevolutionary front: the COSEP [Higher Council of Private Enterprise], La Prensa [the reactionary bourgeois daily], the Catholic hierarchy, the CTN, CUS [the two reactionary and pro-imperialist trade union centers, one consisting of Catholic unions, the other of AFL-CIO type unions, with both centers supported by the AFL-CIO], the rightist parties, and now the ex-members of the FPR like the MDN and recently the PLI [the FPR (Patriotic Revolutionary Front) was a bloc of anti-Somoza organizations including the FSLN (Sandinistas) and others. The leader of the bourgeois MDN (National Democratic Movement), Alfonso Robelo, is now a contra leader in Costa Rica. The bourgeois Independent Liberal Party has recently broken from its bloc with the FSLN and joined with the reactionary opposition.]

The Revolution Is On The Defensive

Although at the level of the fundamental struggle over the definition of the revolutionary course, the great battle between the revolution and the counter-revolution, between capitalism and socialism is still undecided, **the conflicts have already been unleashed.** What is now important is that the counterrevolutionary forces are in an offensive phase and the revolutionary forces are in a defensive phase, and **many times this defense is not effective nor has it served to safeguard forces.**

There are symptoms that the policy of the Govern-

ment of National Reconstruction will continue on the same route that it has followed in these five years since the overthrow of the Somocista dictatorship. This is a path especially of economic privileges for the big private producers, of an incapacity to control an anarchic economy which clearly shows the capitalist character of the model of the mixed economy, and a path which is putting patch after patch on the cracks that the crises and the aggressions are opening in this (according to some people, so "original") model which has shown itself, in its first five years, to be incapable of giving answers to the masses.

The Incapacity of the Model of the Mixed Economy

Without overlooking for a single moment the aggressions and maneuvers of the bourgeoisie and imperialism, the model of the mixed economy defines as a strategic method of Sandinism the conservation of and coexistence with big private property in industry and agriculture. The model of the mixed economy has assumed ... a tendency to reburden the people with a series of taxes and to relieve other taxes from the bourgeoisie. More than 80% of the taxes collected by the state are provided by indirect taxes, this is to say, by taxes that in general are paid by the people-consumers. This is the mixed economy and national unity that politically reflects the social pact between the so-called patriotic bourgeoisie and the Government of National Reconstruction.

What Is The War Economy?

The war economy is talked about -- what is the war economy? ... It is a centralization of the economy, the subordination of all the units of production and distribution of the economy to the common objective of sustaining production for the war. But the capitalists' discipline in the war economy has the aim of harmonizing their activities and protecting their interests, of having access to the extraordinary production and to the effort the capitalists impose on the toilers.

In a mixed economy, what is the war economy? It strengthens the domination of capital over labor, the subordination of the toilers to the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy. This happens unless the toilers, under the war situation, organize their forces and rein in the bourgeoisie; themselves arrange the centralization of the economy, putting aside the "rights" of the bourgeoisie and the big landholders; and impose as emergency war measures their revolutionary and emancipatory criteria against the counterrevolutionary and private profit criteria of the bourgeoisie.

In the government's logic, the war economy signifies **maintaining the mixed economy in an emergency war situation** but without touching the "rights" or profits of the enemies of the people or the associates of imperialism. A war economy, in order to be

an effective method for the real interests of the workers and peasants, of the toilers and people, **must have an anti-bourgeois, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-bureaucratic class content. This is a war economy against the enemies of the people.**

The Revolutionary War Economy Must Know How to Distinguish Friends From Enemies And To Neutralize Or Win Over The Vacillators

The proletariat, the agricultural and urban workers, the semi-proletariat, and the poor peasants are allies of the revolution and socialism. The medium and rich peasants must be neutralized, and others must be combated when they take the side of the enemies of the people. The bourgeoisie, the big landholders, the big merchants and speculators are enemies of the people as are all the agents of the bourgeoisie and imperialism, as well as the Catholic hierarchy and the reactionary union centers like the CTN and CUS. The economic speculation that embraces a part of the sectors of the petty bourgeoisie has its origin in the government's general policy of incentives for the bourgeoisie, a policy which throws big amounts of currency into the hands of the bourgeoisie, which incites inflation and the relative shortage of goods. Inflation and indebtedness are the alternatives of the Government of National Reconstruction.

More confidence in the masses! More participation of the unions! More participation of the CDS [Sandinista Defense Committees, popular neighborhood organizations formed for the defense of the revolution], and the militias in the problems of supply and combatting speculation: the people must not only organize themselves as producers, unionists, cooperative peasants, but must organize also to rationalize consumption. Let the participation of the masses be the determining factor in the struggle against the rise in the cost of living, against speculation, hoarding and usury.

Meanwhile the bourgeoisie continues serving itself, with a big spoon, from the government incentives even in this situation of war. The toilers see that the government is not capable of resolving the problems nor of giving perspectives, rather it argues that the problems will be resolved later in the course of the revolution.

The Revolution Is The Transforming Action Of The Workers And Peasants

As the right and Sandinism coincide in making the government synonymous with the revolution, the errors, failures, vices, incapacity and vacillations of the government are attributed to the revolution and included as an example of the bad and disorder that is socialism and the supposed worker-peasant power installed in Nicaragua. The revolution is not the government nor is the Government of National Reconstruction revolutionary. The revolution is the transforming action of the workers and peasants

against their enemies, solving for themselves the problems, imposing the solutions on their enemies whether they like it or not, whether they are "patriots" or not. It is the action of the revolutionary forces destroying the old productive relations and conditions and installing new productive, political and ideological conditions.

The process of institutionalization has come about fundamentally from pressure from imperialism and social democracy, the other face of imperialism, and the internal bourgeoisie. Who heard the people asking to elect a president of the republic to a six-year term or for a bourgeois-style parliament for six years (meanwhile for two years acting as a constituent assembly)? Who rules this country when elections are held only every six years?

Armed Worker and Peasant Power

We do not believe that the path of separation of powers is the path of the construction of **POPULAR POWER**; that **we interpret only and uniquely as the power of the workers and poor peasants**. Armed Workers' and Peasants, because in this life, and in this time of imperialism and of the crises of the bourgeoisie and its system, the revolution will not happen nor develop, nor be maintained and defended without arms. Ideological arms, organizational and political arms in the hands of the proletariat and the people; but furthermore, necessarily, arms of war, arms to defend the integrity of the national territory against imperialism, to suppress the armed counterrevolutionary bands, to discourage whatever intention or adventure of internal reaction. Arms of war in the hands of the people so that the experience of Grenada, where the major part of the arsenal was in warehouses far from control of the working class and people, will not be repeated in Nicaragua.

Here in Nicaragua, the imagination, the ingenuity, the revolutionary spirit of the masses will be developed, basing itself on its own forces, as did Sandino and his army in his epoch of the popular revolutionary war against the armed counterrevolutionary aggressions. For this, our party supports, defends and tries to push forward the Sandinista Popular Militias. And we accept willingly that they are called Sandinista because further than being popular they are also combative, and firmly anti-imperialist. In the future, the revolution can found the Popular Socialist Militias.

The Nicaraguan Revolution Is Part Of The World Revolution

When we talk about the revolution, we are talking about the revolution in Nicaragua but also about the world revolution. The proletariat of the aggressive countries must step up their struggles to stop the common enemies, with the aim of making it impossible for the enemies to leave their rear unprotected, when

they attack outside their borders. The interests of proletarian internationalism, a cardinal principle of our party, requires of the Nicaraguan proletariat that it not only demand support for its own struggle but also that it support the struggle of the proletariat in El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Panama ... developing fully the class struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism of our country, making the most important contribution to the struggle of the proletariat and the world revolution.

For An Effective Defense, Towards A Revolutionary Offensive

In this context, in the way defined, for the revolution at a tactical level to be able to strengthen its defense, to restrict the counter-revolutionary offensive and to accumulate forces in order to turn things around towards a phase of revolutionary offense, our party wants to underline the following:

Why Does MAP-ML Participate In The Institutionalization

We participate in the process of institutionalization with the objective of snatching away from the rightist forces the influence that they have won or want to win among some sectors of the masses.

We participate in order to bring to the people, and to the working class in particular, the proposals of the Marxist-Leninist communist proletariat of Nicaragua, organized in our Party. This is to say, that we will use the institutionalized struggle to agitate and carry out vigorous class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the big landholders, imperialism and all types of counterrevolutionary agents, including those that in the name of socialism want to hitch the proletariat to the wagon of the democratic bourgeoisie.

We participate so that the people have the opportunity to learn what is behind the bourgeois program, the instability of the petty bourgeois program and the justness and firmness of the program of the proletariat, the program of the proletarian revolution, the program of the party of the working class of Nicaragua.

Our Party raised high this program of the proletariat, this program that does not begin nor end with the electoral campaign in Nicaragua, (regardless of the outcome or even whether or not it happens).

NOT A SINGLE VOTE FOR THE BOURGEOISIE. BULLETS FOR IMPERIALISM

... this is the battle cry of our Party for the electoral process. □

Movement of Popular Action/Marxist-Leninist
(The Marxist-Leninist party of Nicaragua)

PLAN OF STRUGGLE OF THE MAP-ML

The introduction and list of points from the "Plan of Struggle" were printed in the December 1, 1984 issue of The Workers' Advocate. Below we provide the "plan of struggle" in its entirety.

Introduction

Nicaragua has lived through different historical epochs in its economic and political development.

In the colonial epoch or period, thousands of Indians, Mestizos and blacks were exploited and oppressed through slavery and feudal relations. While world capitalism had already started its ascent and was going against the remnants of feudalism in Europe, in our country, simultaneously, the big lords of the land and of religion flourished.

Late attempts by the local bourgeoisie in the modern epoch were not able to overcome the obstacles inherited from the old systems. That which was revolutionary in the bourgeoisie was aborted in Nicaragua with the overthrow of Zelaya.

Thus the bourgeoisie in Nicaragua couldn't be revolutionary when it could or should have been. It remained, in a sense, trailing behind. This was reinforced by the reactionary character that the Somocista military dictatorship had, even within its own class.

The development of dependent capitalism with these limitations did not offer all the necessary conditions for the proletariat to take up, in the face of this bourgeois inability, the tasks of the revolution.

In these conditions, the petty bourgeoisie appeared, coming mainly from the middle and lower student strata, which, together with the broad masses of the people, played a militant role against the Somocista military dictatorship.

The petty bourgeoisie was thus making its appearance, taking up the banner of the transformations that the bourgeoisie was not capable of starting or carrying through.

Nevertheless, since July, 1979, the petty bourgeoisie, crystallized in the FSLN, has proved itself unable not only of carrying out the more consistent bourgeois democratic reforms, but as a matter of fact, it hasn't had either the necessary political or material strength to eradicate the inherited oligarchic institutions, such as the latifundos (big

landholders), or the landlords of housing and farmlands.

The petty bourgeoisie, through the program of "mixed economy" and "national unity", as a consequence of the political strength of the bourgeoisie, has not been able to offer anything but a program of reconstruction of capitalist relations—in spite of its (the FSLN's) populist rhetoric.

The program of reconstruction of capitalism through the mixed economy requires, in the face of the current crisis of world capitalism and of dependent capitalism in Nicaragua, an increase in the exploitation of the labor force. This is necessary in order to generate enough surplus for the reproduction of capital, for the increase of the rate of profit of the bourgeoisie and for the reproduction of the bureaucratic apparatus of the state. This explains the wage freezes, the prohibition and illegalization of the workers' strikes and peasant land takeovers, the increase in indirect taxes which falls mainly on the toiling masses, the uncontrolled inflation, the speculation in the basic commodity market, the real increase in the length of the working day through many different mechanisms, the minimum wage law that institutionalizes a system of pay freezes for the labor force, as well as the subsidies for big private production, the annulment of the debts of the capitalists, the tax incentives for the big private enterprises, the preferential currency policy, the credit policy in favor of the big producers, etc.

In this situation, the class struggle, the clash between the economic and political interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, of the exploiters and the rest of the people, has no choice but to accumulate force and to develop itself in forms ever more evident and sharpened. In this struggle, the state, led mainly by the petty bourgeoisie, which itself is governed by the social relations of production that it promotes and develops objectively, is attempting to mediate this class struggle with an allegedly supra-class role (allegedly standing above the contending classes). This stance is presented with an enormous dose of populism which is now characteristic of the petty-bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, as they defend their role as mediators of the class struggle (on a basis objectively capitalist and in crises), the petty bourgeoisie has no choice but to substitute for the logic of the development of the revolution and of the class struggle, the

logic of the preservation and conservation of their own political power. More and more this petty bourgeoisie is demarcating its ideology, its own politics and, with its practice in power, its increasingly reactionary character with respect to the social, economic, and political revolution that the proletariat and the historic epoch demand (this is to say, in respect to the proletarian revolution in Nicaragua).

The Nicaraguan proletariat, despite the fact that it still carries enormous objective limitations as a product of dependent capitalism in our country, is clear that in neither the oligarchic paternalism based on the great "hacienda" (based in the traditional Conservative and Liberal Constitutionalist parties), nor in the late demagoguery of the agro-industrial commercial bourgeoisie (represented in the Social Christian, the Liberal Independent and other parties), nor in the revolutionist rhetoric of the petty-bourgeoisie represented in the FSLN (a tenacious anti-Somocista guerrilla which found itself with the power in its hands but without any program except for a mixture of stretched versions of that of the liberal bourgeoisie), are there any answers for the needs of the masses and the proletarian revolution in Nicaragua.

Only the Nicaraguan working class, in the cities and in the countryside, in an alliance with the poor peasantry will be able to carry through this transformation to its final consequences, to carry through the tasks that have been delayed due to the inconsistencies of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

But these tasks are not the entire program of the Nicaraguan proletariat. Its actions go further than just trying to develop the bourgeois democratic transformations which neither the bourgeoisie nor the petty bourgeoisie were able to develop. The program of the proletariat is essentially anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-bureaucratic.

The program lays the basis to settle accounts with the classes left behind, but fundamentally it is a program to advance, to march forward to the historic victories, to take the route of the construction of proletarian socialism.

In our conditions, one sees the pressure of both the reactionary and the revolutionary classes. The petty bourgeoisie tries to arbitrate this struggle while it establishes itself as a power supposedly above classes, scolding some and soothing others depending on the case. This is the only original thing in the plan of struggle of the FSLN. The program of struggle of the proletariat, counterposed to that of the oligarchy, the bourgeoisie, and the petty bourgeoisie, is supported by the party of the working class of Nicaragua, the party of the proletarian revolution in Nicaragua, the MAP-ML.

Workers and Peasants to Power!

1. Economic policy to function in the interests of the toilers and to advance to socialism.

The Marxist-Leninist party of Nicaragua, at the

head of the working class, will implement its economic policy for the necessities of the broad masses. This signifies that the logic of private profit that has predominated in the "mixed economy" will have to give way to the logic of the needs of the masses, for which the worker-peasant power will expropriate, without indemnization, the big private owners and the big economic enterprises in the hands of big private capital in Nicaragua. These will be transformed into state enterprises under the control and administration of the workers—worker administration from the level of the local unit to the nation/macro-economic unit. This action of expropriation of big private capital is not an operation that can be developed overnight. Its rate will depend on the capacity of the working class to lead it, while avoiding the vice of bureaucratism and of nationalization without worker control or worker administration that only leads to the creation again of a corporative state that through a state bureaucracy would oppress anew the broad masses.

This advance of the working class against capitalism will develop through revolutionary actions of the expropriation of big capital, workers' control and administration, and the centralized planning of the country's economy.

2. Popular revolutionary agrarian reform

The transformation of the system of property and production in agriculture will be driven forward through the expropriation, without indemnization, of the latifundos (big landholdings) whether idle or in use by its private owner. These, together with all the productive resources, will be put at the disposal of a national plan for production. The state property and production will be strengthened. The delivery of productive land for the benefit of the poor peasant cooperatives will be proceeded with, and voluntary cooperatization of the small landholders will be promoted. The worker-peasant government will proceed to build an agricultural model that will rationalize the available resources, putting in the forefront the necessities, for consumption, of the people and for the development of the productive forces.

The agrarian reform will be implemented with the participation of the worker and peasant councils, who, through their centralized organ and local organs, will prepare and execute, with popular participation, the tasks for the agrarian transformation of the revolution.

3. Repudiation of the external debt, inherited from Somocismo on July 19, 1979.

The worker-peasant power will disregard payment of the external debt inherited from Somocismo on July 19, 1979, and will proceed with a study and evaluation of the new debts assumed by the Government of National Reconstruction during its rule. The self-determination of the Nicaraguan people and the development of the productive forces of the country will not be jeopardized by any payment

agreement. Resources that result from the repudiation of the external debt will be used for the strengthening of the national development. The financial blockade and the economic pressures of the bourgeoisie and the enemy governments will be neutralized by proletarian internationalism which wills that the international workers' movement assume as its own the task of the economic defense of the worker-peasant revolution in Nicaragua. The financial and technical support must be provided fundamentally by the peoples and toilers of the world.

4. Urban reform to resolve the problem of land and housing for the broad masses

The expropriation, without indemnization, of private urban properties that are rental property will be carried out. Land and housing property for personal and family use will be respected. The urban lands will be redistributed through the Popular Revolutionary Councils. Community efforts for self-construction will be promoted without taking away from the unavoidable responsibility of the worker-peasant state for urban construction and quality housing. The state will proceed with the elimination of the slums (cuarterías) and will assign the slum dwellers (pobladores) new lands and buildings. Housing and land that have been designed for living/housing but which in the previous regime served as quarters or offices for the state bureaucracy will be surrendered.

5. The form and development of the worker-peasant power

The immediate dissolution of the formal institutions that signify a limitation on, substitution for, or imposition on the participation of the broad masses in the daily exercise of power. The elimination of the separation of powers, bringing together the organisms of the toilers into a single organ with both legislative and executive character. This organ, the Popular Assembly of Representatives, will be made up of the councils of workers, peasants, popular sectors, militiamen and soldiers. It is the supreme organ of the popular power, the power of the workers and peasants.

Worker-peasant power will be secured through the councils that will develop from the activities and levels of control, from the most simple to the most complex forms of worker administration.

All the representatives will be elected by the base and subject to removal at any time that the base determines; this is true for the representatives of the organs at the base to those of the highest organs of representation. The salaries of the government functionaries and representatives will not exceed the salary of a medium level worker.

6. The generalized arming of the people through the worker and peasant militias. The formation of a popular revolutionary army. Full exercise of democracy in its ranks. The formation of councils of soldiers. Officers and commanders democratically

elected by the troops. The incorporation into productive work in times of peace. Obligatory military service according to the necessities of the military defense of the revolution.

The worker-peasant revolution requires that the masses take up consciously and in an organized way the military arts in their diverse forms and techniques.

For this, the restructuring of the militias, giving priority to their formation in the work centers, will proceed without impairing the complementary territorial militias. The decentralization of light arms and a military zonification that rationally distributes the defensive resources in all the national territory will be carried out.

The use of certain specialities of the military arts requires the formation of a permanent army, which will be reduced to the minimum size possible, and that will take part in productive activities so as not to become a burden on the toilers.

In the army, to avoid bureaucratization and isolation from the masses, councils of soldiers will be formed for the free discussion and treatment of the problems of the revolution and the rights and concerns of the soldiers themselves. In this way the appointments and promotions will be the work of the exercise of democracy in which the soldiers of the base decide on the choosing of their own commanders.

In the execution of military actions, however, the strictest centralization will prevail.

The obligatory military service will take into account volunteer service in the militias and its implementation will depend on the necessities of defense.

The central axis of the military defense of the country will be the workers, peasants and people's militia, that is to say, in general the armed people.

7. The defense of the integrity of the national territory and the self-determination of the people and of the proletarian revolution in Nicaragua. Struggle against all types of interference from countries or hegemonic superpowers.

The worker-peasant power guarantees the full defense of the national territory as well as the self-determination of the Nicaraguan people and the workers' and peasants' revolution in Nicaragua. The worker-peasant government will not accept any type of imposition from countries, groups of countries, or the hegemonic superpowers that dispute the division of the world (among themselves).

In foreign policy, in respect to other peoples and toilers of the world, the worker-peasant power will defend and support these same rights.

8. Respect for the right to self-determination of the peoples and toilers. Practice of proletarian internationalism and militant support for the struggles of the peoples against their oppressors and exploiters. Work for the formation and cementing of the international unity of the working class.

9. Democratic liberties for the broad masses through the revolutionary popular mobilization, to cut the political activity of the bourgeoisie and reaction. Develop the free ideological struggle against the enemies of the toilers. Practice of union democracy, and freedom of union organization and the right to strike.

Through political action determined by the councils of the workers, peasants, popular sectors, militiamen and soldiers the worker-peasant power guarantees the most revolutionary democracy among the people and fierce imposition against the enemies of the toilers. This democratic participation does not discount for a moment the counterrevolutionary intentions of the bourgeoisie and big landholders, even of those who have already been expropriated, or the actions of imperialism against the revolutionary power of the workers and peasants.

The broadest freedom of criticism will be exercised within the organs of power. Full union democracy will be guaranteed that will eliminate the verticalism/hierarchism and bureaucratism of the unions. The worker-peasant state will guarantee the right to strike, as an instrument that the workers' movement must have at its disposal in order to pressure or to settle matters to which they have not been given an opportune or sufficient answer. The free ideological struggles, persuasion, and even better, the genuine and direct participation of the toilers in power, are guarantees that the counter-revolution will not have much room to manipulate this just right of the strike. Nevertheless, there will remain prohibitions on all types of stoppage or sabotage by the bourgeoisie that has not been expropriated by the worker-peasant power.

10. Struggle against the exploitation and oppression of women. Special programs for the incorporation of women into productive labor.

The struggle against the exploitation and oppression of women revolves around the transformation of the social relations of production that will destroy all the capitalist mechanisms of exploitation.

Nevertheless, it is necessary, even in this case, to continue the struggle against all types of oppressive remnants or marginalization of women. Special programs for the effective incorporation of women into productive labor will be implemented, without forgetting to take into account certain natural limitations that are not actually historical remnants of her marginalization and oppression. For example, pregnant women may not be exposed to risk in a work process that may/could affect her health or that of the child in formation.

The problem of the care and supervision of the children of women workers will be resolved, guaranteeing the necessary state services to this end. Furthermore, the ideological struggle against the male (machista) prejudices that try to tie the woman to domestic work in the home will be carried out.

At all levels a scientific sexual education will be promoted and the contraceptive technology that

the toilers voluntarily request will be made available to the people, with the aim of eliminating the practice of abortion without medical attention to which may women of the people resort. Along with this there will be study of and approval of legislation that authorizes voluntary abortion under the control of and vigilance of the state medical services.

11. Nationalization, under state control and worker administration, of the mass communication media, the medical services, and education. Strengthening of the state enterprises of mass transportation.

The mass communication media will be nationalized and put under the control and administration of the workers. The private practice of medicine and the profit-making activities in education will be eliminated, to which end the private colleges that exist in the country will be nationalized. Nevertheless, freedom for the extra-curricular functioning of institutions which are dedicated exclusively to religious teachings will be permitted. This is to say, that the religious education centers may only teach religion.

The strengthening of the state enterprises of mass transportation, which will resolve the problem of transportation, including buses, taxis and commercial transportation, will proceed.

12. Development of scientific knowledge among the people. Respect for the cultural traditions of the masses. Opening up of universal culture through the free ideological struggle. Development of the cultural expressions of the proletariat.

13. Immediate nullification of the Somocista labor code that is still in effect. Full power to the toilers in decisions in labor matters and social security through the supreme organ of power, the Popular Assembly of Representatives.

14. The right to administrative autonomy for the indigenous and pobladore communities of the Atlantic coast in Nicaragua. Respect for and noninterference in the use of its communal lands. Special industrialization of the Atlantic coast in agreement/harmony with its natural base. Investments in its own zone of the surplus necessary for local development and the rest of the country.

Workers and peasants—to power!

Not a single vote for the bourgeoisie—bullets for imperialism!

Long live the Marxist-Leninist party of Nicaragua—the MAP/ML!

Long live the Workers' Front!

Long live the Marxist-Leninist Youth!

Movement of Popular Action (Marxist-Leninist)
of Nicaragua

(Translated by The Workers' Advocate staff.)

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SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Continued from front page

second half of my talk will be devoted to remarks about our approach and experience in the contention with the social-democratic trend headed up by black bourgeois politicians and petty-bourgeois elements.

The Fight Against The Oppression of Black Workers

In the mid-70's, a social-democratic outfit named BUILD (Build Unity, Integrity, Leadership and Determination) had considerable influence among the black workers. BUILD was an organization established by Saul Alinsky in the mid-1960's. That is, it was essentially a social-democratic community organization engaged in the narrowest sort of reformist politics at best and poverty pimping at worst. But, in accordance with the times, it had a strong cultural nationalist appeal and it associated itself with various "left" opportunists. BUILD maintained its cultural nationalist appeal in the 1970s. For example, it organized pickets at police precincts located in the black community and demanded an end to police brutality through the hiring of more minority police officers. Significantly, BUILD also operated as a sort of ombudsman for black workers, especially those from the unorganized work places, who would appeal to BUILD to take up their grievances through the local labor boards.

This organization, as I noted, had strong influence at Roswell Park. One reason for BUILD's influence was the corruption of the local union. At that time at Roswell Park, the CSEA union was essentially a company union headed by right-wing labor bureaucrats. These bureaucrats all came from the professional strata at Roswell. The professional employees are organized into the same local as the labor grades. Indeed, numbers of the union hacks were actually supervisory personnel. In addition, they were and still are, although they're no longer in office, casehardened racists of the Reaganite stamp.

Working in a place with such a "union," which never addressed the grievances of the white workers, leave alone the black ones, meant that the black workers inevitably turned to BUILD to assist them to fight the more oppressive measures of the administration. For example, they turned to BUILD to fight against arbitrary firings, which were a considerable problem in this period.

Now, the effect of BUILD's influence was quite detrimental to the struggle of the workers at Roswell Park. It was detrimental to the struggle against national oppression, detrimental to the struggle against economic oppression, and detrimental to the fight against the corrupt labor bureaucrats.

First, all the issues of national oppression facing the black workers at Roswell Park were turned over to this petty-bourgeois social-democratic organization. BUILD pursued these matters in the most

narrow, legalistic, and bourgeois manner by appealing to the administration, by channeling everything through labor boards, etc. Thus, the influence of the sold-out leadership of BUILD was a block to the development of a real struggle against the racist administration at Roswell and, also, to the fight against the racist labor bureaucracy.

Second, the nationalist politics of BUILD and its ideological influence over the workers meant that every question of oppression of black workers was dealt with solely as a national or race question. Thus the issues of harassment and arbitrary firings, which affected all the workers (although certainly most especially the black workers) were dealt with strictly as cases of racial oppression. (And the specific oppression of black people was seen as something of concern only to blacks and not to the working class as a whole.) Thus, the class question was negated and everything was seen solely as an issue of national oppression to be pursued solely by blacks and by black workers headed up by petty-bourgeois elements at that.

Overall, the effect of this black nationalist line was to split up and fragment the struggle of the workers against the administration. Instead of all the workers uniting for mass struggle against the racist oppression, as well as against economic exploitation, the black workers, that is, the most significant section of the labor grades, were channeled into individualist and legalist struggles against the administration. In this way, also, the bourgeois-nationalist line of BUILD nicely dovetailed with the racist line of the corrupt bureaucrats who controlled the local. The union hacks were left unscathed as the struggle from below was not developed among the masses of workers.

However, in the later 1970's the influence of BUILD began to wane a great deal among the black workers.

In part this was a result of the workers' direct experience with BUILD. Although perhaps several jobs were saved, and no doubt a few token promotions were finagled, the national oppression and economic exploitation of the black workers kept on increasing because no significant resistance by the masses was being organized.

In addition, the difficulties of BUILD in the later 70's were a result of the drying up of the poverty pimp funds. Accordingly, greater internecine, unprincipled strife developed inside the organization and a number of factional splits took place. They were fighting over who would get the diminishing funds.

Other factors also played a role. Notably there was the effect of the militant workers' movement in the period 1976, 1977, and 1978 both locally and across the country. Our Party's persistent agitation promoting this movement and promoting mass struggle began to establish among the black workers a definite consciousness of an alternative way to fight.

The final factor which explains the significant

waning of BUILD's influence in the latter 70's is that the Party intensified all-around political and ideological agitation at Roswell Park and we began paying closer attention to the work there, although we had not yet decided to concentrate at the hospital.

This then was the essential complexion of politics among the black workers at Roswell Park when we began our concentrated work in 1979. I will now proceed to explain our tactics for organizing the struggle against national oppression. First, I'll describe how we dealt with the struggles that came up inside the work place and, secondly, how we organized at the work place when an important city-wide struggle broke out against a racist murder campaign in the following year, 1980.

The Struggle at the Work Place

The main objective attack facing the Roswell Park workers in 1979 was overwork. For several years, the State's hiring freeze and policy of attrition of state workers had thinned out the ranks of the work force at Roswell Park while the actual work to be done had steadily increased. In order to force greater and greater work out of the workers, the administration conducted a systematic campaign of harassment, disciplinary measures and firings.

This attack, of course, was first and foremost directed against the labor grades, and especially against the black workers, and more especially against the younger and more militant black workers who were bolder in resisting the increased workloads. In carrying out its attacks against the black workers, the administration resorted to the filthiest and vilest racial slurs and slanders against those workers it attacked. It labeled them as "lazy", "thieves", "drug users", etc. Not coincidentally, this also provided the corrupt union bureaucrats with a justification for never lifting a finger to protect the black workers' jobs and for leaving them entirely defenseless before these attacks.

In this situation, we agitated and worked to guide the struggle of the workers along the following lines:

First, we appealed to all the workers, both black and white, to themselves take up the struggle against economic exploitation and national oppression. Not any outside force, not the trade union, not as individuals, but the masses through their own struggle and organization. Together with our agitation, we developed various low level methods of struggle, such as petitions, groups confronting the administration, slowdowns.

Secondly, we strove to unite all the workers in the struggle against both economic exploitation and national oppression. Neither did we reduce the struggle in the work place to an economic struggle and fail to take into account the specific national oppression of black workers, nor did we attempt to transform every issue of attack against black work-

ers into a racial and national question. As well, we always addressed the struggle in the work place -- whether the economic struggle or the fight against national oppression or other struggles -- as part of the countrywide struggle of the working class against the capitalist class and state.

Thirdly, we developed our agitation and struggle in such a way as to hit at the reactionary corrupt, labor bureaucrats.

The strength of the Party's line and work was such that, within a year of our initiation of vigorous agitation and organizing work at Roswell, the trend of individuals looking outside the work place to the black bourgeoisie, specifically to BUILD, to resolve their grievances was gone entirely. A clear new orientation to appeal to the masses of workers themselves to fight on these issues was established. The question of the masses of workers organizing themselves at the work place was established as **the way to fight.**

The most important measure of our success in this period was our ability to build up a good-sized distribution network, with supporters in all of the labor grade departments. As a result of this, all of the struggles began to be channeled to us through this pro-party network.

On an even broader scale, and as another measure of our success, the masses themselves enthusiastically proposed and supported that one of our comrades run for president of the union local to kick the reactionary, racist bureaucrats out of office. It is important to note that the program upon which our comrade ran had two key planks: the first was struggle against economic oppression (overwork being the main form), and the second was struggle against racial discrimination. The committee we organized united a significant section of black and white workers for these demands.

[The comrade won election as president of Local 303 in 1979. His activity sent the higher union bureaucrats into a frenzy, and they undemocratically removed him from office. But he stood firm against the bureaucrats and retained the support of the rank-and-file workers. (See the article "Mass Active Resistance Is The Correct Trade Union Policy" in The Workers' Advocate of Feb. 25, 1980.)

Later, in the union elections of spring 1981, there was a new factor, the so-called "Unity Slate". This is gone into in detail later in the speech. And the speech also refers to still another Local 303 election in 1983 which provided an additional confirmation of the correctness of the revolutionary tactics.—Note by the Supplement]

Among the masses generally, as a result of our work, a militant atmosphere and a definite trend to resist overwork developed. And we were able to stop the firing of four black dietary workers who did not pass a competency test that the administration had organized as a means to attack them.

To anticipate somewhat later developments, it can also be mentioned that our agitation and struggle against national oppression at Roswell forced the

administration, together with Arthur Eve, to "investigate" the problem of discrimination at Roswell Park in late 1979 or early 1980. The investigation led to establishment of a new office for affirmative action, manned by a flunkie of Eve. Within months of the creation of this office, a number of blacks were promoted to supervisory posts in several departments including the most important labor grade department. We'll have more to say about this tendency later.

The Fight Against the Racist Murder Campaign in Buffalo

So now I want to go on and speak about the role of establishing a base among the black workers at Roswell in the city-wide struggle against the racist murder campaign in 1980.

In the fall of 1980, when a strong movement emerged to struggle against the racist murder campaign in Buffalo, our concentration at Roswell Park provided a solid base for propelling us into the center of this city-wide movement. In turn our role in the city-wide struggle had important benefits for our concentration work at Roswell Park. Allow me first to briefly state the most important objective features of the situation.

During the fall of 1980, in the midst of the presidential election campaign, and shortly following the mass black rebellions of that spring and summer in Miami, Chattanooga, and other places, a racist murder and terror campaign was launched against the black people in Buffalo. Between September 1980 and January 1981, six black men were murdered, and the corpses of two were mutilated. Three more were nearly killed by racist thugs. Numerous cross burnings took place. And the funeral of one of the victims was desecrated by the visit of a KKK "white" van.

This racist murder campaign was far more than the results of the crazed activity of the single lunatic who was eventually found guilty of various of the murders. It was a coordinated political campaign, a part of the nation-wide, government-organized offensive against blacks. Comrades will recall the murder of anti-klan demonstrators at Greensboro during this period. In particular the local nazi party in Buffalo was active in it. This group has links that trace back to the police department and into the office of the Mayor himself. Nor was it accidental that the police failed to arrest a single suspect over months of so-called investigation or that they denied the existence, which was well known among the masses, of any organized racist or nazi groups in Buffalo.

There was massive outrage throughout the black community in Buffalo against the racist campaign and against the foot-dragging of the racist government. Extensive self-defense measures were taken by the masses. And the sentiment in favor of mass demonstrations, for organizing a political movement, against the government was very strong.

The black bourgeoisie worked overtime to suppress the development of any mass struggle. The preachers preached themselves hoarse from the pulpits against violence. The black bourgeois politicians organized themselves into a "Leadership Forum" to prevent violence. Not the violence against the black people, mind you, but against any violent resistance to it. The Leadership Forum demanded that the Griffin administration and police department be more "responsive" to the concerns of the black community.

They organized a Unity Day rally to unite black people behind the Griffin administration and even invited racist Griffin himself to speak at it. They had Jesse Jackson fly up, straight from trying to "cool off" the masses in Miami, to preach against violence and "negativity". Jackson reminded the masses that it was supposedly the violent struggle following the assassination of King in 1968 that contributed to the victory of "fascism", that is, the election of Nixon that year due to white backlash. The lesson: no mass struggle against the racist murder campaign, vote for Carter in 1980.

In this situation we agitated along the following basic lines:

** We targeted the government, exposing its connections to the local racist gangs and its role as the instigator and leader of the racist campaign. We called upon the masses to develop their political struggle against the government. And we denounced the sell-out black leadership vigorously. We exposed them for calling on the masses to rely upon the very government that was organizing the racist campaign. We denounced them as firefighters against the mass movement. We denounced them for tying the black masses to the racist Democratic Party of Carter and Griffin.

** We vigorously participated in the city-wide political movement. We organized our own contingents for all the demonstrations. There were about half a dozen demonstrations in several months. Several of them involved thousands of people, which is a very large demonstration for our area. We organized our own meeting, and we attended the numerous meetings which were organized by others throughout this period.

** In developing this work in the city-wide movement and on a city-wide basis, our concentration at Roswell Park played an invaluable role.

The Relationship of the Work at Roswell to the Work in the City-Wide Movement

I'd just like to go through a number of features of this now.

First of all, we made maximum use of our supporters, of our ties at Roswell to assist us to broaden our ties in the black community and to participate in the general political movement. Expressed in another way, we made the maximum effort to bring the workers out of the work place and into the political movement.

Of course, we strove to mobilize workers from

Roswell Park to attend our own political meetings and to participate in our contingents in demonstrations. In this work we met with definite success.

But more than just this. To cite one example, a black worker from Roswell Park went with us to distribute leaflets at the local community college, a community college attended by a majority of young black students. She gave us valuable contacts with the students, she helped us to meet the president of the student association who was quite friendly to our politics, and she organized for us to speak before one of his classes. Soon, with very little effort really, we were embroiled in contradictions with the revisionist and reformist CPUSA at Erie Community College who were frantic at our developing work there. This work continued for some time afterward. Thus, overnight we found ourselves in the thick of things at this campus because of our ties at Roswell Park.

Of course, in addition to this, we mobilized other workers from Roswell to do distribution and poster with us in the community — work that they were eager to do and which greatly assisted us in strengthening our work in the black community.

To cite another example, one of the pro-party workers lived in a housing project. He organized a meeting at his house which eight black youths attended. Two of our comrades went to this meeting and carried on extensive discussion with them about the racist murder campaign and how to fight it.

Secondly, another very practical relation between our concentration work and our participation in the general movement was the intimate knowledge of events we had due to our deep ties with the Roswell Park workers. During periods such as this it is inevitable that the bourgeois press will distort, minimize, and outright suppress news of important developments. But if racist attacks or other incidents occurred, and if there was resistance to the attacks, we knew immediately because of our ties with the workers at Roswell. Or, in regards to more general developments, our ties at Roswell Park meant that we knew how extensive were such trends as the masses arming themselves and what form this was taking.

Thirdly, our concentration at Roswell Park meant that we constantly had our fingers on the pulse of the masses, that we knew their mood intimately, and were in close contact with any changes in it. Thus, for instance, we knew the mood when Jesse Jackson came to cool out the movement.

Shortly before Jackson's visit, the Black Leadership Forum had organized a token rally, Unity Day I, to press their demand that the Griffin government be more responsive to the concerns of the black community. They had invited Griffin himself to speak. Griffin showed just how responsive he was to the demands of the black community by, while begrudgingly accepting the invitation, declaring that he would rather be watching the football game. This rally was obviously organized to reconcile the black masses with the Griffin administration and to sup-

press the development of the movement. It was followed shortly by Jackson's visit, which had the same motive.

Six hundred people attended the Jackson meeting. They were clearly aroused and expecting that he would provide impetus to their struggle. Of course, Jackson's whole effort deflated this sentiment. But how precisely did it affect the masses? We knew that it had not in fact succeeded very far. That's because of our ties at Roswell. Thus, we proceeded with confidence to call on the masses to participate in our contingent in a demonstration organized by opportunists shortly thereafter. As well, we proceeded with confidence to organize for our own meeting which was attended by three Roswell Park workers and other elements from the black community. And, finally, we knew that Jesse Jackson in this situation was eminently denounceable, that there was a definite opposition and even a certain disgust at his role, and we proceeded to denounce him in the sharpest terms in our leaflets.

Let me give another similar example which is perhaps even a clearer illustration of this point of how concentration of Roswell meant that we had our fingers on the pulse of the masses and how this significantly assisted us in figuring out our tactics for participating in the general movement.

In December the Griffin administration granted the local nazis a permit to demonstrate at City Hall on the anniversary of Martin Luther King's birthday. Remember, this is right in the middle of the racist murder campaign. The Workers World Party and other opportunists called a counter-demonstration. Griffin immediately outlawed the opportunist-called demonstration in order to "prevent violence".

Griffin then proceeded, together with the Black Leadership Forum, to call for a counter-counter demonstration, Unity Day II, to be organized several blocks away from the anti-racist rally in Lafayette Square. This Unity Day II was clearly organized against the anti-nazi, anti-racist demonstration. The extensive agitation that was run for it, including frequent TV spots featuring the mayor arm in arm with our own local Jesse Jackson, the Reverend Bennett Smith, directly counterposed the mayor's demonstration to the anti-racist demonstration. This is how they talked: unity, not struggle or negativity. No opposition to the government. Be positive, peaceful, and legal. Don't be violent and illegal like the demonstration before City Hall. They weren't referring to the nazi demonstration, that was legal, but the anti-nazi demonstration.

All of this propaganda created an extremely confusing situation, and a great deal of pressure was exerted on the masses not to participate in the anti-racist demonstration. In such a situation like this, it is difficult to figure out correct tactics. And even when this is done, it is extremely difficult to establish the right confidence and assurance in your tactics in order to oppose any tentativeness.

It was our concentration at Roswell Park, and our

close ties with the black workers there, which was the key link in assisting us to work out our tactics and have the utmost confidence in their correctness. Thus, even though Unity Day II was organized against the anti-racist demonstration, we knew that the masses did not see it that way. We knew that the majority of the masses would attend that rally, and that they would attend on an anti-racist basis.

This was important for us in determining how to distribute our forces, to ensure that we agitated among those masses properly, and in making our decision to form a contingent among them. In fact, we were the only "left" group to do so.

The WWP and the RCP either boycotted Unity Day II or adopted an openly hostile attitude toward the masses rallying in Lafayette Square. Now I'm not trying to say that the only reason they did that is because they don't have the same ties with the masses that we do. They also did that because they're rotten opportunists and we're Marxist-Leninists.

On the other hand, even though this tremendous pressure was organized by the government against any mass participation in the anti-racist demonstration before City Hall that would confront the nazis, and even though the WWP was waffling incredibly in the face of the government's pressure, we knew that definite sections, and in fact the most militant and important sections of the masses of the workers, would attend that rally. We were able to confidently decide to place our main forces in this demonstration, to call on the workers to participate in our contingent in this demonstration, and together with black workers from Roswell Park and other work places, to directly confront the nazis.

Fourthly, our concentration at Roswell Park provided us with a microcosm in which we were able to closely study the line of the black misleaders and its effect on the black masses, to closely work out the details of our line in opposition to that of the misleaders, and to measure its effect among the masses. This prepared us for what we would come up against elsewhere — at Erie Community College, for example. And it allowed us to sharpen our agitation, to hit at the key questions that needed clarification among the masses, and to hit against key points in the social-democratic line.

Finally, in concluding these remarks on the relationship between concentration and developing our work in the city-wide movement, let me just add several brief points about the positive effect which our work in the political movement had on the concentration work at Roswell Park.

First of all, we won tremendous respect among the Roswell Park workers for our orientation toward the January 15 events. This helped us significantly in politicizing the broad trend that we had established around the Party in the work place.

Second, by mobilizing our supporters using our ties from Roswell Park to assist us in the city-wide work, we strengthened the pro-party forces at Roswell.

And third, the experience in such struggle, under the conscious, guiding role of the Party, is an invaluable education for the workers. The work place is inherently narrow. Developing our work in the broader political movement in closest connection to the work place concentration is invaluable in helping us overcome this narrowness.

And I don't mean just in the sense that we have the workers participate in the political movement and gain experience in that. There is that, and it's very important. But, as well, from that experience the Party is able to more clearly correlate for the workers the relationship of the trends that they face in the work place to the broader political trends that exist in the political movement. The Party is better able to show the workers that various problems that come up are not just a matter of this or that individual but of a definite opportunistic political trend.

So, for example, as I'm shortly going to go on to discuss, the trade union election was held a few months later. In it the social-democratic trend at Roswell raised the slogan "Cool it" and attacked our line of mass active resistance as being "negative", etc. Because the workers had gained some experience in the political movement we were able to correlate the unionists' line at Roswell with the black bourgeois politicians' conciliation to the racist murder campaign. And we were able to make clearer that this was a definite political trend in opposition to the trend of mass active resistance represented by the Party.

The rest of my remarks are now going to be concentrating specifically on the:

Struggle Against the Bourgeois Nationalist Trend at Roswell Park

In fact, throughout the period we have just been discussing, which is roughly 1979-1980, there was a social-democratic, bourgeois nationalist trend at Roswell Park. But it remained fairly amorphous. While it existed, and it vied against us, it lacked organizational shape. It was in the spring of 1981, during the local union elections, that this trend congealed into what is known as the Unity Slate or unity trend.

The social base of this trend is that section of black working people at Roswell who are most like the petty bourgeoisie, the professional and semi-professional blacks employed at Roswell, which includes some supervisory personnel. If it sounds awfully familiar to the racist bureaucrats who had previously dominated the union, that's not coincidental. These petty bourgeois and labor aristocrat elements are closely tied to the local bourgeois politicians, especially to Arthur Eve. Throughout the period we have just been discussing, they were the main conduit for the sellout politics among the black workers.

But without organization, they had real difficulty in effectively contending with us. They were

faced with the prospect of a broad trend for proletarian politics becoming consolidated among the black labor grade workers at Roswell. In fact, it was our success in the work which impelled them to organize against us, to attempt to wipe out our influence among the black workers, to try to split them from the broad trend around the Party, and to work to reestablish the hegemony of the black bourgeoisie.

The Platform of the Unity Slate

Let me make several remarks about their platform. Actually Unity has had no definite worked out program of any sort. But if I can sort of formulate what their platform was, it will help to clear up the picture of their basic politics.

First of all, Unity trend had no principled appeal against the corrupt labor bureaucrats who continued to monopolize the trade union posts at that time. At best, they could only come up with some vague suggestions for "democratic" changes in the union. In fact, the only specific change they ever recommended was holding more union meetings. Instead of two a year, we now have four.

In reality, their basic line was: it is "our turn". By this slogan they tried to make the black workers believe that they, Unity, would better represent the black workers. But this slogan really meant that it was the turn of the black labor aristocrats, professionals, and supervisors to control the local union instead of the control by the white professionals and supervisors.

That this was their true aim was hardly even concealed beneath their thin, nationalist appeal against the corrupt bureaucrats. Let me just quote from the **Challenger**. The **Challenger** is the black newspaper in Rochester and Buffalo, which was founded by none other than Arthur Eve. Up until several years ago Eve continued to edit the paper. During the union election campaign the **Challenger** published an article which was really the most programmatic statement ever made by the Unity Slate, or, I should say, made for Unity. So I'll just quote a few points from it.

It gives the basic slogan, "Together we stand, divided we fall." And it mentions that there is an entire slate of black officers running in the upcoming union election at Roswell. It also has a picture here of just a certain section of Unity Slate. There were actually three white workers running with them. But in the **Challenger** article it is presented as if the entire slate were all black. And the article says that this entire black slate, based on statistics, has an excellent chance of winning because 80% of the eligible voting membership in Local 303 is black. This is in the form of a quote from the leader of Unity Slate.

So, in terms of what their program is, the leader of the Unity Slate goes on to state, "We need more than two representatives." And the **Challenger** goes on and says, "which is clearly why she and others

decided to run. Proper representation is the key." Inadequate union representation of the young blacks in particular is the problem which needs to be solved. And then the leader of Unity Slate goes on to say, "Insensitive supervisors and insensitive union leadership -- that's the problem at Roswell Park which we have to solve." Of course, in her view, the whole solution to the problem of insensitive union leaderships and insensitive supervisory personnel, insensitive to the young black workers, is not to develop mass struggle against the company and its union bureaucrat lackeys, but to have some black supervisors and to have some black professionals among the union bureaucracy. So the black workers and young blacks are still to be left out in the cold; they are to entrust their fate to the upper strata and are advised to believe in cooperation with the ruling class.

This is the crassest type of tokenism. It is an attempt, in the name of fighting national oppression, to rally the black workers to assist the black bourgeois elements into cushy union posts and supervisory positions.

So the whole first point that I'm making about Unity Slate is that they had no principled appeal against the labor bureaucrats. In fact, in essence, they were the same thing.

Secondly, Unity Slate wielded its nationalist appeal not against the racist white union bureaucrats but against the MLP. Neither did they have any principled difference with the labor bureaucrats, nor did they even on an unprincipled basis try to attack the labor bureaucrats and present themselves as being a genuine black alternative. They really just did not use the nationalist appeal against the bureaucrats.

Their most basic approach was to appeal to nationalist sentiments. And that appeal was directed against us. They engaged in the most vicious, racist campaign against our Party as being supposedly "honkies pimping off the black people's struggle". And they attacked our supporters among the black workers as being supposedly "Uncle Toms".

And finally, let us look at the Unity Slate's attitude towards the trade union struggle. We raised the question of mass active resistance, not class collaboration, as the correct trade union policy. The Unity Slate only addressed this question by way of the slogan "acceptability". That is, they presented themselves as "acceptable" negotiators with the administration because they were well versed in bourgeois methods of leadership and in dealing effectively in this type of politics. Along with this they raised, as I mentioned before, the slogan "Cool It".

Thus, once you peek beneath the nationalist facade, the rightist, social-democratic essence of this Unity trend is clear as day. And the nationalist appeal, far from being directed against the racist bureaucrats, was rather directed against the proletariat, against the Party, in order to bring the black workers back into the black bourgeois

fold.

Our Tactics in the Union Elections

So now I'm going to pass on to discuss our basic tactics in this trade union election. And again, I'll divide my remarks into two parts. First of all, there's the election itself in which three groupings participated: the corrupt bureaucrats, the Unity Slate, and our slate, the Workers' Mass Action Slate. Then there's the question of the possibility of the rerunning of the presidential election, after the elections were over, because of extensive voting fraud by the corrupt bureaucrats. This possible election rerun led to an important discussion about what tactics we might pursue in that situation.

The Union Election Itself

We knew that with the organization of the Unity Slate we would suffer losses. By losses I do not primarily mean that we would get a lower vote turnout in the trade union election. That's only a measure of our strength. What we were most of all concerned about was that this social-democratic trend would make definite inroads into the broad section of workers who had come to support us over the past several years, and in particular among the black workers who were supporting us in the labor grades.

Nevertheless, even though we knew we would have definite losses, we welcomed the congealing of this force into a definite, well-defined trend. For this process objectified a political tendency that existed among the masses. It organized the trend into a concrete shape that we could analyze for the masses and against which we could wage an objective struggle. The political education of the masses is the main thing, not whether we win a trade union post. At the same time, we were not about to hand over our trend to the social-democrats without a fight. We sought to maintain, as far as we could, the broad forces that we had gathered around the Party.

Thus in the election campaign itself our tactics were centered on two points:

First, we worked to strengthen the political-ideological struggle against social-democracy. This meant continuing to campaign on the slogan of mass active resistance, which we had raised in the first union election, and continuing to target the corrupt union bureaucrats as well as to expose the Unity trend. Now, the unit later summed up that, in practice, we did not place enough emphasis upon the struggle against the corrupt bureaucrats. Thus it would have been better to have kept the fight against the administration and the corrupt union hacks as the center of the agitation and then on that basis to work to expose the social democratic Unity trend. But we did succeed in raising the level of consciousness against social-democracy. We made use of Party leaflets during the campaign and a letter to the pro-party workers which analyzed the

social-democratic nature of the Unity trend, its politics and its history.

The second point of our tactics was that we organized a slate of candidates to run on our platform. This slate included white and black workers. It was an important means for, in an objective way, driving home among the masses that we are a trend and not just a candidate for president. We organized a broad committee to support the "Mass Action Slate", and through it we developed agitation against the attacks of Unity Slate. This form was crucial for preserving the broad trend around the Party, even though we suffered some losses to the social-democrats in the election.

The election campaign, and the results of the election itself, showed that while the Unity Slate did succeed in making definite inroads among the black workers in the labor grades, we fared well in preserving our broad trend.

The total vote for our presidential candidate was 45. This was less than the 135 votes that we received in the first election in 1979. But in 1979 we were running against two reactionary union hacks who split their vote. In this election our candidate for president ran not only against a corrupt bureaucrat but also against the Unity Slate. And still he got 45 votes. What is more, the other candidates on our slate gathered, on the average, about 70 votes apiece.

During the campaign, as I mentioned, great pressure was exerted against the black workers. This led to definite vacillation among a section of workers.

On the other hand, the broad trend that we were able to hold together during this campaign emerged from the struggle more consolidated than before. It was a good deal clearer ideologically as to the real nature of bourgeois nationalism and social-democracy.

The Discussion of Possible Tactics If the Election Was Rerun

As I mentioned briefly in the beginning, in this election there was extensive voting fraud carried out by the reactionary bureaucrats who still controlled the trade union apparatus. The Unity Slate candidate for president protested the election fraud to the regional level of the union. This protest was eventually denied at the regional level and the Unity Slate didn't pursue it any further. But when we were faced with the prospect of a second running of the election for president, we had extensive discussion on what tactics we should pursue.

Eventually the unit, in close consultation with the higher Party bodies, decided in favor of forming a united front with the Unity Slate. That is, we decided we would withdraw our candidate for president if there was a reholding of the election, and, if definite conditions were met, we would support the Unity Slate candidate for president.

So the point is moot because this election was

never held and we never got to even attempt these tactics. But it's valuable, I think, to explain what our thinking was on this question.

Faced with this social-democratic, bourgeois nationalist trend, which was organized precisely in order to kill us, why did we decide in favor of attempting to conclude a united front? The essential reason was that, while we would not give up the struggle against the politics of this trend, we had to find a way to maintain our ties among the masses of workers and to, at the same time, find a way to influence the base of the Unity trend. That is to say, we were looking for a way to get the ear of the workers who were supporting the Unity trend so that we could develop an objective struggle against it.

While it was clear to us that social-democracy, as represented by the Unity Slate, was an enemy, this was not at all clear to a broad enough section of the masses. The main thing the masses sought to achieve in the trade union elections was the ouster of the reactionary, racist, corrupt bureaucrats. This had been the issue for several years. The great majority of workers were united in this legitimate desire.

Now, among the masses of the workers who were united on this question a division had arisen between the who, on the one hand, saw that only mass active resistance was a genuine alternative to the corrupt bureaucrats and that the Unity Slate represented no real alternative, and on the other hand, those who still had definite illusions that Unity Slate would make a difference. In this situation it was important that we should continue to act, and that the masses should clearly perceive us as acting, as the unifiers and organizers of their struggle to achieve the goal of ousting the reactionary bureaucrats. We had to make sure that we were not cast in the role of spoilers, disrupting the mass urge to achieve the ouster of the reactionary, corrupt bureaucrats.

As well, it was important that we develop the struggle against the social-democratic Unity Slate in an objective way. We had to work in a way that would not isolate us from the base of the Unity Slate, which was, after all, among a significant section of the labor grade workers.

Thus we decided to try to appeal for a united front with the Unity Slate. But this appeal had to be handled correctly. We did not want to corrupt or weaken the consciousness of our trend against social-democracy. Yet, at the same time, we wanted to penetrate into the base of the Unity trend and prepare the conditions for the exposure and isolation of its social-democratic leaders. In specific terms, what we decided to do was:

First, we decided that we would withdraw our presidential candidate from the race. Our candidate had received far fewer votes than the Unity Slate candidate for president, approximately half or maybe even a third. It was clearly the view of the broad masses that it was our candidate who should withdraw so that the oppositional vote was not divided in

half and so, therefore, the reactionary union hack could be defeated. Based on this situation we decided that withdrawing our candidate would be the correct step to take.

But in taking this step, on no account would we stop our principled struggle against social-democracy. We were determined to promote no illusions to the effect that Unity Slate was, in principle, different from the reactionary bureaucrats.

Secondly, we decided to demand that the Unity Slate agree to adopt, as part of their platform, certain measures that would be in the interest of the workers. Our support for their candidate would be conditional on whether or not they agreed to one or more of these measures. By withdrawing our candidate we hoped to show the masses our sincere desire for unity against the reactionaries. By making demands on the Unity Slate we hoped to show the masses that the Unity leaders were not really different than the reactionaries, that they were not really ready to fight for the demands of the rank and file. If the Unity leaders did not accept our demands then the masses would find it easier to see the nature of Unity Slate. If the Unity leaders did accept our demands then we had further consolidated these as the unified stand of the workers and we had a lever with which to expose the Unity leaders later, because we fully expected that they would not carry through on these issues after they got into office.

Thirdly, in terms of the method for arriving at any agreement with Unity Slate, it was necessary to ensure that all negotiations and agreements were carried out in the open and under the supervision of the masses. No back room deals. No possibility for us to be compromised by the social-democrats' later betrayals.

Finally, we reasoned that any agreement would either lead to the achievement of some measure of benefit to the masses and their struggle, or it would lead to the clearest and most powerful type of exposure of the social-democrats for betraying the workers. In either case we expected to gain closer contact with the rank and file in the Unity Slate.

Again, let me emphasize, that the whole aim of this tactic was to ensure that, while we maintained our own trend distinct and independent from social-democracy, and while we carried out a principled struggle against social-democracy, we could take the most aggressive attitude to penetrating to the base of the Unity trend and to winning over their supporters through our positive efforts and through our exposure of the rotten nature of the leaders of the Unity Slate in the most objective manner.

As I stated, this discussion of a possible united front with the Unity Slate in the election proved to be moot. But it well illustrates our general orientation for dealing with this trend during the next period. During the summer of 1981, which is a month or two after the elections were over, an important struggle developed at Roswell which allowed us to apply this orientation and to make further inroads

against Unity trend.

The Fight Against Short Staffing and Low Pay

In the summer a struggle developed against low wages and overwork, and it aroused the workers throughout the hospital. It led to the organization of two mass pickets by the workers, which is a significant form of struggle in a work place that has never been on strike. Eventually, it led to the convening of a special session of the State Budget Committee which was held at Roswell Park itself. This committee meeting was chaired by none other than Arthur Eve. It was attended by hundreds of workers who used it as an opportunity to thoroughly denounce the Roswell administration.

The fight against shortstaffing and low pay began in the nursing department. In fact, the nurses were, and still are, paid lower than the majority of nurses in our area. The Nurses Committee organized the fight. It was an official committee of Local 303, but it was composed of one of our firmest supporters, several activists in the Unity trend, and several Unity leaders. This committee maintained a certain independence from the corrupt bureaucrats. In fact, it co-opted the leader of the Unity Slate (who was an LPN) onto it right from the outset of the struggle. In its activity and line, despite the presence of our supporter and other genuine elements on it, the Nurses Committee clearly reflected the policy of the Unity trend.

Now, we did not go into the Nurses Committee. We might have fought to be co-opted onto it, and we might have succeeded in getting a seat. But, instead, we decided to maintain our organizational separation and thus to maintain the simplest sort of demarcation between our Party and Unity Slate. We appealed to the base of the Unity Slate directly through the leaflets of the unit. Through our conduct in the struggle, we were able to demarcate our line most objectively from that of Unity Slate and to increase our influence among its base.

The Nurses Committee sought to confine the fight against overwork and low wages to the nurses. It was our agitation and organizational work which ensured that the struggle was extended to other departments and, most importantly, to the labor grades.

As well, the Nurses Committee never clearly formulated the specific demands of the fight. It was our agitation which initiated and concretized the demands for more hiring of workers and increased wages. These demands were taken up by all the workers.

On top of this, the Nurses Committee was not in favor of mass actions. Again it was our agitation which initiated the call for mass pickets and aroused and mobilized the workers for them.

As you would expect then, the Nurses Committee, while seeking to maintain its independence from the labor bureaucrats, never fought against them. Instead it capitulated to their pressure. It was only our Party which provided the struggle with its oppo-

sitional character directed against the trade union bureaucracy.

Perhaps this can best be illustrated by the following incident. When the Nurses Committee actually got around to calling a mass picket, after we had initiated the move for it among the workers, the labor bureaucrats were at first furious and they demanded that it be called off. The Nurses Committee waffled, but given the strong sentiment of the workers, and our work, it was impossible to suppress the picket. The labor bureaucrats and the Nurses Committee were forced to concede that the picket would occur. They then tried to confine it to the nurses alone. And on the day of the picket, the bureaucrats, who had at first tried to squash the picket, showed up and muscled the Nurses Committee out of the practical leadership of it. The bureaucrats put their mugs before the cameras to be filmed and their mouths over the microphones to spew forth their line. And the Nurses Committee capitulated to the labor bureaucrats.

But we organized the labor grades to show up to the picket en masse, together with placards proclaiming the demands of the workers. These were the only placards present with the demands of the workers. The bureaucrats attempted to suppress us, to force us to take down our placards, but the labor grade contingent was too strong and numerous. Only through the effort of our trend, therefore, was a militant and large picket organized which supported clear demands of the workers. And it was organized right in the teeth of the corrupt bureaucrats' attempts to suppress it and the Nurses Committee-Unity Slate capitulation before them.

Now, it's important to note here that while the Nurses Committee-Unity Slate led this struggle, it was our work -- through a tacit united front -- which was alone responsible for mobilizing the labor grades into it, including the labor grade workers who supported the Unity trend. That is, we mobilized Unity's own supporters against the wishes of the leaders. The Nurses Committee sought to confine the struggle to the nurses and to keep the labor grades out of it, and in a moment I think we'll see more clearly what the significance of that was.

We concentrated on mobilizing our trend and appealing to their base through our independent activity. Thus, we placed ourselves in the best position to criticize their capitulation to the labor bureaucrats, to attack their sellout when it eventually came, and for this to have the maximum effect upon their own supporters.

So eventually, this struggle was liquidated, and by a significant means. Unity trend relied upon its intimate ties with the black bourgeois politician Arthur Eve, who came to Roswell Park to conduct a formal investigation into the situation. Such investigations have by now become standard operating procedure when any motion develops at Roswell. Unity Slate convinced the workers to abandon their struggle in favor of appealing to Eve to resolve their difficulties.

This must remind comrades of the situation several years earlier. The exact same line of appealing to the black bourgeoisie, which then meant to BUILD, was now again being followed, but now the call was to rely on Eve. And it had the same effect of undermining the mass struggle. However, this time the form was slightly different and the sellout occurred on a higher level.

Needless to say we fought against this liquidation of the struggle. We went to the Eve hearings, and we called on the workers to not rely on Democratic Party politicians but on their own struggle to win their demands. We agitated to continue the struggle. Unfortunately, however, the motion was effectively squashed.

Within several months, the Eve committee produced a task force report, a report which was supposed to carry through with solving the grievances which the workers had raised to the Eve committee. Now this report ignored the demands of the labor grade workers. The only concrete steps it proposed were the creation of a whole new supervisory strata among the nurses, of a number of straw bosses whose pay scale was raised two steps, and a reorganization of the entire department in order to "solve" the problem of overwork. These steps were eagerly implemented by the Administration. Unity Slate crowed over this great victory which Arthur Eve and they had won for the workers. And they squabbled with the reactionary CSEA bureaucrats over who deserved the most credit for it.

I think it should now be clearer what the class and social basis of this Unity Slate trend is and why they sought to confine the struggle to the nurses alone and to keep the labor grades out of it. The whole effort was designed to secure some token advances for their strata and they simply never had any intent to secure the demands of the workers.

So when this sellout occurred, we explained to the masses that both the labor bureaucrats and the Unity Slate, who are essentially the same thing, deserved credit for the sellout. We issued a leaflet which sharply exposed Arthur Eve's role as a betrayer of the struggle.

The Unity Slaters went wild against us. They launched into a big argument in defense of Eve at the end of a union meeting, confronting a comrade amongst a large group of black workers. Mr. Eve himself roamed the halls of Roswell Park to demand an accounting from our comrade, which our comrade obligingly gave him. But despite this frenzied attack on us by Eve and the Unity Slate, the masses of workers in the labor grades, including the base of Unity trend, who have always supported Eve, agreed with us. Numbers of them pointedly endorsed our denunciation.

Since Unity wanted to make such a big stink out of it, we followed up this contradiction with an open letter which we circulated among the most active and the more friendly Unity Slate supporters as well as among the pro-party workers. This letter went into greater detail, and summed up the whole

history of the struggle, to drive home the exposure of the social-democrats and Eve. And the Unity Slate could come up with no answer and no response to what we had to say.

Now I want to emphasize the significance of this denunciation of Eve. It was the view of the unit that at an earlier moment we could not have denounced Eve without isolating ourselves from the base of Unity trend. Unity and Eve would surely have been able to whip up nationalist sentiment to shut off their trend from us. But based on this objective exposure, developed through the mass struggle and the workers' direct experience, we have won the ability to openly criticize and attack Saint Arthur, and our criticism does not fall on deaf ears. It cannot be readily dismissed with nationalist appeals and anti-communism.

I also want to point out that the fact that we did not polemicize against Eve or the Unity Slate before this did not mean that we weren't always fighting against social-democracy. We found other means to attack the trend. But objectively the tactical question of when we could come out and hit them really hard by name was something that we developed in this manner.

Of course, there is a great reservoir of good will for Mr. Eve, and large illusions about the black bourgeoisie still exist among the broad masses of black workers at Roswell Park. But through the development of our work, in the struggle against national oppression, in the contention against the black bourgeois nationalist and social-democratic trend at Roswell Park, we have succeeded in maintaining a real trend around the Party, based mainly upon the black workers. And we have succeeded in maintaining excellent relations with the base of Unity trend. And we have the ability to influence them.

Let me just give one example. In the last trade union election, which was held last year, our comrade ran for the office of first vice president. He ran directly against a Unity Slate candidate. He garnered 160 votes, the largest we've ever won, and he fell 12 short of matching the number which the Unity Slate candidate won.

Or, take another example. This spring the state government announced its intention of merging Roswell Park and Buffalo General Hospital. This would mean a big loss of jobs for the Roswell Park workers. Against this attack the Party, independently, and in the name of the Party, organized a picket outside Roswell Park. This picket was widely endorsed by the masses inside and we succeeded in drawing out half a dozen workers despite all pressures against it.

Thus, despite the situation of relative lull that has prevailed in the past period, and despite the existence of an antagonistic trend which has mass influence and which is determined to wipe us out, we have succeeded in maintaining our broad trend at Roswell Park and we are able to influence a wide section of black workers. []