

## CAMPAIGN TO STOP THE IMPORTATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN COAL

## BLACK WORKERS CONGRESS' PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

We put forward these points in the spirit of unity - struggle - unity, in the working out of a correct line for the coal coalition and struggling over a correct line to weld our disunified Communist movement into a genuine Communist Party of a new type, in the spirit of combating sectarianism while opposing any conciliation with opportunism.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

I. The stop the coal movement should be clearly seen in relation to worldwide imperialism in crisis. The main blow should be directed against imperialism, and for the right of self-determination for the South African majority. Within this we should raise the right of all oppressed peoples to liberation and all oppressed nations to self-determination, especially the Black nation. Within this we must combat national chauvinism and secondly, narrow nationalism within our own ranks and within the workers movement. We must raise the issue of proletarian internationalism and point to imperialism and social imperialism as the common enemy of the world's peoples. While the roots of racism are in the imperialist system, this bourgeois ideology must be combatted wherever it rears its ugly head, even, and most especially within the ranks of the workers and communist(s) if we are to weld the unity necessary for the overthrow of United States imperialism.

In taking this position we stand firmly on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism - Mao-Tse-tung Thought.

"The weight of emphasis in the internationalist education of the workers in the oppressing countries must necessarily consist in their advocating and upholding freedom of secession for oppressed countries. Without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every Social Democrat of an oppressing nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as an imperialist and a scoundrel."

Lenin, quoted by Stalin in Foundations of Leninism, p. 80

II. We must view the coal coalition in relation to our primary task of building a genuine communist party of a new type based on Marxism - Leninism - Mao-Tse-tung Thought. With imperialism crumbling and the workers movement, and movements of oppressed nationalities and other sectors of the population oppressed by imperialism on the rise, our communist movement remains divided, locked in struggle over the line that can unite us and lead the workers and oppressed masses to socialist revolution. Our central task then is to weld these disunited forces into a communist party capable of leading the masses to victory over imperialism.

"No army at war can dispense with an experienced general staff if it does not want to be doomed to defeat. It is not clear that the proletariat can still less dispense

with such a general staff if it does not want to allow itself to be devoured by its mortal enemies? ... Only the revolutionary party of the proletariat can serve as this general staff. The working class without a revolutionary party is like an army without a general staff."

Stalin, Foundations of Leninism, p. 104

In working out a correct line and uniting the majority of genuine Communists behind it, we rely on Marxist-Leninist theory which is a vast wealth of knowledge and represents the summed up struggles of the international working class for the past hundred years. But Marxism teaches us that theory must be linked up with practice. Mao has said "practice is the criterion of truth" and Lenin said "the standpoint of life, of practice, should be first and fundamental in the theory of knowledge." In struggling around a correct line for the Stop the Coal Movement, applying it in practice, seeing what works and what doesn't, we take one step towards forging the unity among communists around the correct line necessary for the building of the new Communist Party. But building a new Communist Party while the central task, is not the only task. Mao tells us to "learn to play the piano" saying:

"In playing the piano all 10 fingers are in motion. It won't do to move some fingers only, and not others. But if all 10 fingers press down at once there is no melody. To produce good music, the 10 fingers should move rhythmically and in coordination. A party committee should keep a firm grasp on its central task and at the same time, around the central task, unfold work in other fields."

Mao, Methods of Work of Party Committees, Vol. 4, p. 379

The building of a united front under communist and working class leadership is one of the 3 strategic tasks of proletarian revolution. The Coal Coalition is part of that united front, and as such we must struggle to build it and struggle for working class and communist leadership within it.

III. We propose the adoption of the ALSC strategy section which deals with trade union beauracrats and the coal coalition as an inti-imperialist organization in a correct manner.

"We aim to expose the imperialist U.S. in its aggressive plunder, exploitation, and oppression of the worlks people at home and abroad, particularly as manifested in this South African situation. We would further, in the course of this, aim to expose the agents of, and th4e concilitators and collaborators with the U.S. bourgeoisie, from the State Department to the trade union beauracracy."

"We call for the broadest possible combination of forces to STOP SOUTH AFRICAN COAL, the composition of which should be from all sectors of the population who oppose imperialism generally, and who oppose the importation particularly."

The emphasis should be an organizing the working class into the coal coalition. We must actively and aggressively recruit the working class into this struggle, for are we not talking about a united front under working class (and communist) leadership. And aren't the ties between the communist and workers movements at this time far too weak and too few.

We also hold that the coal coalition should be an anti-imperialist organization. We must struggle to reach the highest degree of unity possible and must, especially in an organization of this type, raise the issue of imperialism and what it means. We do not feel that such a demarcation will serve to prevent unity with a worker or someone from another sector of the population oppressed by imperialism who opposes South African coal importation but does not yet understand imperialism from uniting with and joining the Coal Coalition. Rather the use of the word imperialist and an explanation of what it means will raise his/her consciousness. We believe that trade unions and trade union officials should be united with to the degree that they can unite with the anti-imperialist stance of the coalition. Such unity should not sacrifice the independent role of the coalition working among the rank and file or the right of the coalition to openly criticize those views which are contrary to the broad internationalist thrust of the coalition.

IV. We welcome and seek the participation of trade unions, church and liberal groups, etc. However, we must maintain the independence and initiative of the coal coalition and not capitulate to, tie ourselves to, or tail behind these or other forces that may be organizing and acting to stop the coal. We must not underestimate the strength of the Communist Movement to organize independently around its own slogans, nor the consciousness of the working class and other oppressed and progressive people and their ability through struggle and advocacy, to unite around an anti-imperialist program. We communists can organize the masses around such a program, if only we would start trying.

"During the War of Resistance our Party combated ideas similar to those of the capitulationists. That is, such ideas as making concessions to the Kuomintang's anti-popular policies, having more confidence in the Kuomintang than in the masses, not daring to arouse and give full rein to mass struggles... and handing over the leadership in the War of Resistance to the Kuomintang. Our Party waged a resolute struggle against such impotent and degenerate ideas, which run counter to the principles of Marxism!"

Mao, The Question of Independence and Initiative Within the United Front, Vol. 2, p. 214

We should take from the experiences of the great Chinese Revolution, learn lessons and avoid making similar mistakes.

V. The Coal Coalition should adopt the following slogans to put forward in their campaign:

1. STOP THE COAL. STOP U.S IMPERIALIST PLUNDER AT HOME AND ABROAD.
2. SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN MAJORITY. DISMANTLE THE RACIST SOUTH AFRICAN STATE.
3. SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE BLACK NATION. SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS. LIBERATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLES.