

# THE COMMUNIST

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

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



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

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## SOVIET "AID" PAYS CUBAN MERCENARIES

Last month the Soviet Union agreed to a new economic "aid" package to Cuba. This new deal calls for Soviet payment of sugar, Cuba's chief export crop, at four times the world price. Cuba will also receive oil supplies from the Soviet Union, its main source of oil, at a cut rate.

But, the Soviet Union is not providing this economic "aid" in order to promote Cuban economic self-reliance and independence. Rather, the deal is an example of the Soviet neo-colonial domination over the Cuban economy. For, in exchange for the "aid" Cuba must guarantee an expanding use of its military forces in Soviet wars of aggression on the African continent. Overall the Soviet Union's subsidy of the Cuban economy has tripled since 1975, the first year that Cuban troops appeared in Africa.

### CUBA, NEO-COLONY OF THE SOVIET UNION

Today, after 15 years of so called "socialist aid", and "equal exchange", the Soviet Union has a stranglehold on the Cuban economy. During this period, the Soviet revisionists supplied loans at high interest rates to the Cubans, demanding in turn that these loans be used to purchase Soviet products at inflated prices. It became evident that the Soviet aid was not designed to move Cuba out of its dependence on sugar as a single crop economy, which it had inherited from its colonial dependence on US imperialism.

As it once did from the US imperialists, Cuba must import most of its machinery, consumer products, raw materials, and agricultural products from the Soviet Union. This is because Soviet "aid" and relations of economic exchange have not been designed to diversify the Cuban economy to meet the needs of the people for basic food products or to promote industrialization on a modern scale. Thus Cuba's economic development remains crippled by its continued dependence on a single crop economy.

Whereas, before the revolution seventy per cent of Cuba's one crop economy was owned or marketed by the US imperialists, now it is the Soviet social imperialists who own and market Cuban sugar. In other words, the Cuban economy is today just as dependent on the Soviet Union as it once was on US imperialism. In typical neo-colonialist fashion, Cuba supplies the "mother" imperialist country with cheap raw materials, primarily sugar, while it provides a market for the more expensive manufactured goods of the Soviet Union. This keeps the Cuban economy in a perpetual state of dependence on the Soviet social imperialists.

### SOVIET BUILD-UP OF CUBAN MILITARY

There is a special way that the Soviet Union has exploited its neo-colonial relationship with Cuba. For, Cuba not only supplies the Soviet Union with raw materials and markets for manufactured goods, it also now supplies well trained and well armed soldiers for Soviet wars of aggression.

With massive amounts of "aid" in weapons and loans for weapons,

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## SCAFFOLD COLLAPSE KILLS 51

As you drive north on Route 2, towards Willow Island in Pleasants County West Virginia, you can see a sign posted in front of a small power plant which reads "3,679 continuous days without lost days to job injuries". A mile or two further, past an American Cyanamid plant, where the Ohio River passes near the road, stands a construction site which makes no such claims to job safety. This is the Pleasants Plant of the Monongahela Power Company where on Thursday morning, April 27, at 10:10 AM, 51 workers fell 170 feet to their deaths in a cascade of wet concrete, wood and twisted steel.

These men were working on the construction of the second of two concrete towers which are to be used to cool hot water that is a by-product of steam-generating electric power. Some were carpenters who made the forms into which the concrete was poured, some were ironworkers who installed the reinforcing bars in preparation for the pouring, some were laborers who hauled up the concrete and other materials, and others were finishers who spread and smoothed out rough spots in the wet mortar.

Everyday as these men went up to work on the tower they passed a company sign which declared, "The Best Safety Device is a Careful Man". However, despite the best care taken by the workers, they still plunged to their deaths Thursday morning.

The men fell because their scaffold was anchored in wet cement which gave way. The circular towers they were working on are built of five foot concrete layers, reinforced with steel. The policy of the contractor, Research-Cottrell, is to try to pour a layer each day. The scaffolding is attached to the top of the shell like a saddle on a horse, anchored to the tower with metal bolts pushed into the previously poured concrete segment. When the scaffold fell, it was bolted into the 28th layer of concrete, poured only the afternoon before. The 28th ring, which had not yet

hardened, fell along with the scaffolding, forms and fresh concrete from the 29th ring. One worker said Friday, "That damn concrete was grey yesterday morning" while set concrete has a white and glossy appearance. "They shouldn't have moved that scaffolding up. I guess they just wanted production and that's what they got." A co-workers standing nearby shook his head in agreement, saying, "They were on you all the time for production".

It was the contractor's policy of pushing for speedy production that caused the men's deaths. The capitalists never had to climb the tower and never looked beyond their profits to concern themselves about the men's safety.

### COMPANY COVER UP

The Research-Cottrell Company, which has previously built 36 similar towers, tried to act as if they had a perfect safety record in the past which therefore made the present catastrophe "mysterious" and "impossible". But workers tell that in the past at the most they narrowly escaped similar major accidents caused by the same policies which finally resulted in the deaths of fifty-one men.

One worker from the Willow Island plant said "This damn near happened last year, but we were lucky." Another continued, "when it's cold and rainy, sometimes the concrete never sets right. But most of the time you get by with it".

Workers at the John Amos Power plant, also contracted by Research-Cottrell, told of near-misses because of bolts slipping from wet concrete. One said, "A couple of them did come loose and a few times the scaffold would slip, but the safety cable would catch it. One time it slipped three feet but no one got hurt".

Although the Research-Cottrell Company had built the towers so far without a "major accident", many individual

fatalities had occurred. At the Amos plant, 18 workers quit after a man fell to his death. At that time no safety nets were provided even though workers had argued for them. After the fatality, nets were installed. At the Pleasants site alone, three iron workers and one carpenter had been killed. A spokesman for the company declared off-handedly, "in this kind of business, you're bound to have some fatal accidents".

But glib and easy phrases will not satisfy the righteous anger that outpours from the needless deaths of 51 hardworking men. This disaster hit hard the working class communities that stretch along the Ohio River near the construction site. While some men were contractors from out of town, the majority were from the nearby towns of St. Mary's, Walkers, Waverly and the city of Parkersburg.

### MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT AID COVER-UP

Even the grief of the families was exploited as hundreds of newsmen descended on the town. Instead of concentrating on exposing the causes of the tragedy, the bourgeois press tried to invade the homes and private sorrow of the victims' families in search of "human interest stories". It became so bad that reporters were labelled "vultures" and barred from the funerals.

But the bourgeois media were not the only vultures who suddenly found interest in this working class community bloodied by death. Politicians such as Governor Rockefeller arrived to voice their hypocritical condolences and spread mystification over the causes behind the workers' deaths. Rockefeller claimed, "There are no indications what it might be", and intoned "Tragedies of this magnitude are difficult to understand and even more difficult to accept". Ray Marshall, Secretary of Labor, issued a statement in which he said, "I wish there were some

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## COMMEMORATE CINCO DE MAYO

Every Cinco de Mayo, the Mexican people celebrate their victory over the invading French army in the battle at Puebla on May 5, 1862. Mexico's successful resistance to French aggression is still an inspiring example of struggle for national independence.

### FRANCE'S PLANS FOR HEGEMONY IN LATIN AMERICA

During the 19th century, European powers were in a race for colonies. England conquered India and much of Africa while Holland, Denmark and Belgium claimed other areas of the world. Napoleon III of France planned to extend his rule over all of Latin America. First he intended to conquer Mexico and establish a European monarchy under his control. He wanted Mexico not only for that country's own wealth, but also for its strategic location. Mexico could be a base for attacking the rest of Latin America.

As Napoleon III wrote in July of 1862, "There will be people to ask you why we waste so many men, and spend so much money, in establishing a regular government in Mexico...but it will not be interesting to us if it (the United States) takes possession of the whole of the Gulf of Mexico, and governs the West Indies and South America, thus controlling the entire produce of the New World...if a firm government is established there (Mexico) by the aid of France, we shall give to the Latin race beyond the ocean its ancient strength and power; we shall have guaranteed the security of our own and the Spanish

colonies in the West Indies; we shall have extended our benevolent influence to the centre of America, and that influence, while it makes a market for our fabrics, secures us the material indispensable to our manufacturers."

Mexico's proximity to the southern US was also important in Napoleon III's plans. At the time of the French invasion, the Civil War was going on in the US. France, as England, supported the South in this war and intended to quickly conquer Mexico and then proceed to ally with the Confederacy. For the European powers, developing US industry in the North was unwanted competition for Southern cotton as well as for their other markets and sources of raw materials. The US had been expanding under the guise of its "Manifest Destiny", taking half of Mexican territory in 1848. By controlling Mexico, France intended to stop US expansion at its present southern border. The US had laid claim to Latin America with the Monroe Doctrine, but during the Civil War was unable to oppose French

expansion into the hemisphere.

### INTERNAL CLASS CONFLICT IN MEXICO

France also took advantage of internal contradictions within Mexico. The forty years after Mexico won independence in September of 1821 were filled with class conflict. On the one side was the ruling Hispano-Creole aristocracy -- the large landowners and the Church. On the other were the bourgeois democratic forces. Finally in 1857, the bourgeoisie won and established a democratic republic under the leadership of Benito Juarez. The new constitution abolished slavery, established free education, ended peonage and contracted labor, established free speech and the right to bear arms, invalidated all titles of nobility, separated church and state, etc. But the reactionary forces did not accept defeat and attacked the new government. After three years of civil war, the republican forces again won. It had been a civil war against the feudal relations which held back the

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## REVOLUTIONARY TRAINING

No question is more important to party building than revolutionary training. And yet the subject has been badly neglected in the US communist press. We conclude it has been neglected by Marxist-Leninist organizations period. While some training has gone on, an understanding of its significance has been missing.

In fact, we will transform the disunity of our movement into party unity only by a conscious process of revolution-

ary training. The question of how we train, therefore, is a priority on the party building agenda.

With this issue of THE COMMUNIST, the WORKERS CONGRESS (M-L) begins a series of articles on revolutionary training. Our columns are open to readers for discussion and struggle on the question, and on its relation to party building.

"The Chief Means of Revolutionary Training" begins on page 4.

# MAY 13 ANTI-BAKKE RALLY

On May 13 thousands of people are expected at an Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition (ABDC) rally in San Francisco. This rally culminates a week of intensive mobilization and activity up and down the West Coast. The San Francisco rally is receiving wide support from unions as well as from student and community organizations of all nationalities. This support reflects the growing mass opposition to the Bakke decision. Other rallies have been organized by ABDC between May 6-13 in New York, Chicago, Atlanta and Boston.

Only a few weeks ago 15,000 attended a National Coalition to Overturn the Bakke Decision (NCOBD) march in Washington DC. This rally was an important gain in the battle to defeat the Bakke decision.

The motion toward nation-wide activity around Bakke reflects the growing scope of the anti-Bakke decision movement. No longer limited to a few college campuses in California, anti-Bakke activity is now being carried on in numerous communities and campuses throughout the US.

The anti-Bakke decision movement is winning this support due to the strong popular opposition to attacks on equal rights of women and oppressed nationalities. However, the future growth of this movement and its influence is being undermined by its fragmentation. In order to overcome this fragmentation, Marxist-

Leninists must take the lead in the struggle for unity. The tactics of reformist and national exclusive tendencies have undermined this unity in the past.

In Washington DC this was reflected in the reluctance of some to aggressively build the march because of the reformist leadership at its head. In turn we now see the leadership of the DC march holding a separate West Coast rally! The sectarianism associated with this kind of activity only serves to promote apathy and cynicism. Those building a separate rally fail to appreciate the importance of unity to the anti-Bakke decision struggle. Instead they place their own narrow interests above the movement as a whole.

We call on all those opposed to the Bakke decision to support the ABDC rally on May 13.

The Workers Congress (Marxist-Leninist) also calls on the ABDC to take up the struggle for united action aggressively. United action can and should be built on the basis of support for the principle of equal rights. This principle does not compromise a revolutionary outlook. At the same time it is not exclusionary.

The principle of equal rights allows Marxist-Leninists to unfold propaganda and agitation around national oppression, the oppression of women and the leading role of the working class. Yet it does not exclude from participation those who are

still under the influence of reformist politics.

The struggle to defeat the influence of reformism and revisionism in the spontaneous movement is a long protracted struggle. To carry out this struggle successfully requires persistent and patient political education. This work also requires that communists take the lead in building the broadest possible unity. It is only through such work that communists gain the trust, confidence and respect of the masses.

## CINCO DE MAYO

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

economic development of Mexico. The war had been between the progressive aspiring national bourgeoisie backed by the oppressed peasants and the aristocratic forces backed by the professional military elements.

Even after the civil war, these reactionary forces didn't give up. Many supported France's plans to control Mexico as a way to re-establish their own power and wealth. They provided Napoleon III with the excuse of supposed Mexican approval for his designs on Mexico.

The new Juarez government needed to rebuild the nation's economy after years of civil war. When it suspended payment on foreign debts, Napoleon III seized on this act as a pretext to invade Mexico along with England and Spain. The three European powers agreed to "only" force Mexico to renew debt payments and not to acquire it as a colony. But Napoleon III's real plans soon became clear and England and Spain withdrew, leaving Mexico to France. However, Napoleon III hadn't planned on Mexican resistance.

### CINCO DE MAYO VICTORY

The French army began to move towards the capital. When it reached Puebla on May 5th, 1862 (Cinco de Mayo), it found the Mexican army had improvised forts and was prepared to hold the city. In a display of fatal arrogance, the French army charged up the middle of the Mexican defenses at the most strongly fortified position. Four thousand poorly equipped and trained Mexican soldiers held their position and then carried out a counter attack that drove the French army back to the coast. This was the first defeat for the French in almost 50 years. France and all of Europe was shocked to learn that this defeat had come at the hands of a poor former colony.

This victory inspired the Mexican people to continue and expand their defenses against the invading army. Napoleon III had to send two more divisions to Mexico -- 30,000 soldiers. Still, it was another year, in June of 1863, before the French finally took Mexico City. Soon after, they established Maximilian of Austria and Carlotta as Emperor and Empress of Mexico. Even though the superior French military force had taken much of their nation, the Mexican people continued their resistance. The French never captured the Juarez government nor defeated the republican forces.

By 1866, France had to withdraw from Mexico. Napoleon III was under heavy pressure within his country because the long Mexican invasion was very costly in money and lives yet was bringing France no wealth or power in return. The U.S., with the end of the Civil War, also put pressure on the French. In addition, Napoleon III needed his troops back in Europe for the war he was preparing to wage against Prussia. Finding itself overextended, France gave up its plans for a Latin American empire and withdrew its troops from Mexico by March, 1867. Soon after, Maximilian's "empire" fell.

The bourgeois democratic forces resumed control of Mexico. They had played a progressive role in the struggle against French hegemony. Backed by the peasantry, they fought for the right of the Mexican people to control and develop their own national economy.

## WEST COAST MOBILIZATION

### march & rally

10 am assemble at Garfield Park  
25th & Harrison Streets

1 pm rally at the Federal Bldg.  
450 Golden Gate Avenue

### program

Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition  
Robert F. Williams  
Philip Veracruz  
Black American Law Student Assn.  
Iranian Student Association  
Asian Student Union  
Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan

## MAY 13, 1978

## WALSH PETITION DRIVE FAILS

Last week the deadline passed on a massive campaign in California to petition for a ballot initiative that would prohibit racial, ethnic, or sex quota systems and other affirmative action programs. The campaign failed to gather the necessary signatures, but it is, nevertheless, a strong example of the growing attack on the struggle for equal rights.

Instigated by Lawrence Walsh, a former California state senator, the aim of the "Walsh Initiative" was a state constitutional amendment that would have terminated all affirmative action programs in state-funded higher education and in public and private employment contracts.

Walsh called his proposal a "total anti-discrimination measure to insure by constitutional law a complete and unbiased approach to equal rights." And, he cynically said, "This is the first realistic proposal submitted to the people to insure equal rights for everyone under the constitution -- its anti-discrimination at work..."

The Walsh initiative was an attempt to undermine the struggle for national and sex equality under the guise of protecting individual rights. Like the advocates of the Bakke decision Walsh justified his attack on national and sex equality with "reverse discrimination" demagoguery: "We have been plagued by mass hysteria and hypocrisy in our efforts to eliminate discrimination and have actually created a system of reverse discrimination... We need to return to the basic American principle, that every person is entitled to equal rights and equal opportunities regardless of race, religion, sex, color, or circumstance of birth."

By reducing the question of equality to a matter of individual rights, the bourgeoisie, through

the Walsh initiative, the Bakke decision and other similar attacks, attempts to obscure the social oppression of women and of whole national groups. For example, in the field of medical education as recently as 1973 Afro-American students who comprise 12% of the population made up only 6% of medical students, and women who make up 51% of the population comprised only 16% of medical students. Affirmative action programs and quota systems were won through the struggle waged by the masses of people against this factual discrimination and for genuine equal rights. Under the guise of a "total anti-discrimination measure" the Walsh initiative attacked these programs for the purpose of preserving the preferential treatment that white males receive in fact and to perpetuate inequality.

In the attempt to undermine the struggle for equal rights, campaigns like that of Walsh have placed a heavy emphasis on gaining the support of the trade union bureaucrats and labor aristocracy. For, it is through these agents of the bourgeoisie that they hope to whip up national and male chauvinism and to drive a wedge between the working class that must lead the fight for democracy and its main allies -- the oppressed nationalities and women.

The failure of the Walsh petition drive is a positive development for our struggle. But, more significantly, the Walsh campaign makes clear that we can expect more and more attacks on the democratic struggles of women and oppressed nationalities.

We call on all forces organized to fight the Bakke decision to begin now to take up opposition to these other attacks cropping up nationwide.



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

### Subscribe to THE COMMUNIST

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EL COMUNISTA se publica separado en español. \$4.25 por año. Favor de extender su cheque o giro postal a favor de Workers Congress. Congress de Obreros - POB 11713 - Los Angeles, Ca. 90011

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES AND OPPRESSED NATIONS, UNITE!

# RALLY BUILDS SUPPORT FOR STEARNS STRUGGLE

Miners in Stearns Kentucky are still out on strike, fighting for a union contract. After 21 months, the 150 miners, their families, and their many supporters are stronger than ever in their unity and determination to carry this strike on to victory. It was in this spirit that they gathered in Stearns, Kentucky for a nationwide support rally and march on Saturday, April 29th.

## NEW COMPANY OFFENSIVE

At the rally supporters heard the Stearns miners talk about the new company offensive to break the two year strike that has completely shut down production at the Justus Mine. Blue Diamond Coal has hired a new group of strikebreakers in an attempt to get production rolling again. But, Blue Diamond could not have their scabs without the help of the state apparatus. No scab could get by the militant Stearns strikers without the state troopers that the Governor of Kentucky has permanently stationed in the small community. The state troopers act as body guards for the scabs and continually harass the strikers and their families.

Also, one local UMW miner missed the rally on April 29th because the week before the circuit court judge sentenced him to two years in jail as an example to all the strikers. The worker had been involved in a minor incident involving a small business. He had fully paid for the damages and the shop owner refused to press charges. However, because he is a Stearns striker, the state prosecuted him and the judge laid down the heavy sentence. This was the same court that sentenced many strikers to jail last year after state troopers attacked their picket line, and also that issued an injunction limiting strikers to six pickets at each mine entrance.

After the rally, supporters marched through Stearns, followed and photographed by state troopers. The wife of one miner said that she used to respect state troopers. Now she sees that they are strikebreakers who beat and threaten the people for the "crime" of organizing a union.

The people of Stearns are learning that the police and the courts define justice only as it serves the interests of Blue Diamond Coal Company and other capitalists.

## STEARNS MINERS INTEND TO WIN A CONTRACT

Despite its offensive Blue Diamond isn't having any more success at breaking the strike than it did before. The miners were proud to tell the crowd at the rally that not one of the 150 striking workers at Stearns has broken ranks to scab! They continue to maintain 24 hour picketing at the two mine entrances, with sandbags still set up in case company gun thugs start firing

at them again. The Stearns Women's Club continues to hold fundraising events and in other ways supports the strike.

One Stearns miner who spoke at the rally described the beginning of their long struggle. He said that the bosses at Justus Mine used to say, "If you don't like it, get your bucket and leave." Two years ago the miners decided that they wouldn't take the unsafe working conditions any longer, and they wouldn't go get their buckets either! They began the drive to organize themselves into the UMW. As another striker put it, "We refuse to be treated like dogs. We're men and women of the UMW."

Throughout the strike the Stearns miners have demonstrated courage and solidarity of this type that is inspiring to all workers.

## FIGHTING FOR SAFE CONDITIONS

The Stearns miners are prepared to fight as long as it takes to get a union contract that will improve working conditions in the Justus Mine. Blue Diamond runs some of the most dangerous mines in the country, and they are all non-union. In March 1976, shortly before the Stearns miners organized in the UMW, 28 men were killed in an explosion in Blue Diamond's nearby Scotia mine.

In the Stearns mine, workers know that the methane gas level gets up to 13%! A spark from a machine could touch off an explosion that would blow up the mine. Blue Diamond refuses to improve mine ventilation to remove the gas. The company offers to pay higher wages, but will not sign a union contract which sets safety standards, guarantees miners the right to refuse to work under unsafe conditions and establishes a union safety committee.

As old-timers told supporters who came to the rally, the fight for a union in Stearns has been going on for many years. They remember how the company broke the union in 1953 by closing the mine for a year and a half. The old-timers tell how it was safer to work in the UMW. Knowing this history, the Stearns miners are prepared not only to win their current battle, they are also preparing to continue the fight against the company afterwards to protect their safety and other interests.

## NATIONAL COAL STRIKE CONTINUES

Some of the UMW miners who came to the rally were also still on strike. Although the national strike ended in most of the coal fields on March 25th, it didn't end for at least 12 UMW locals. The companies they work for are independents which have always signed

the BCOA contract. This year they refused.

In Harlan County, Jericoil Mines won't sign a UMW contract and instead offers a non-union contract with no union safety committee, a stricter absentee clause, no work stoppage clause and a totally unacceptable pension plan. In Virginia, at least 5 coal companies have gotten together in St. Charles and the surrounding county to refuse to sign the BCOA contract and to try to break the union in their mines. The Governor of Virginia sent in state troops who are harassing the county's population and will protect scabs when the company hires them. All of these miners have been out on strike since December 6 with no benefits. Yet they refuse to go back to work until they have a UMW contract.

For the UMW miners who came to Stearns for the rally and have gone back to work under the new national contract, the struggle for safety also continues as unnecessary deaths continue to mount. There were such deaths in Pennsylvania and Virginia in the early part of April. Three of these miners died on April 4th, along with a federal mine inspector and an equipment repairman, in a Pittston Company mine in Southwest Virginia when they were caught and suffocated by "black damp", air without oxygen. Oxygen-generating self-rescuers (used in Europe) probably would have saved all the victims. But, the federal government still does not enforce the provision of the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 which requires that such safety equipment be made available to each miner. And, Pittston, the second largest independent producer of coal in the US, refuses to spend the money needed for the self-rescuers.

Three other Virginia miners died in a roof fall in the Beatrice Mine owned by the Inland Creek Coal Company. Roof bolt methods developed in European mines are again safer than the ones used

US mines and might have prevented this "accident".

Obviously, for the miners the new national contract has not brought "peace to the mines". And, their resistance continues to grow. On April 11th the first wildcat under the new contract took place when 1140 Virginia miners walked out on the Clinchfield Coal Company over the firing of a miner.

The significance of the Stearns strike extends far beyond the small Kentucky community. In the first place the union busting that stripped Stearns' miners of their trade union rights in the early 50's occurred all over Kentucky and other areas of the eastern fields. While most Kentucky miners were once UMW, the majority are now non-union. If Stearns goes union again, the coal operators fear that the rest of the miners will follow.

But, even more importantly, the bitter struggle at Stearns exposes the strategic importance of the coal industry to the Energy Plan and war preparations. As the crisis of imperialism deepens, the bourgeoisie's exploitation of the working class must intensify and this will demand greater and greater control of the labor force. But, as we saw during the national coal strike, the resistance of the coal miners poses a serious obstacle to these needs of the bourgeoisie.

Correctly organized 150,000 miners are capable of throwing the entire system into deep crisis.

It is for these reasons that the coal operators resist so viciously the courageous example of the Stearns strikers for basic trade union rights, and the inspiring example they provide for coal miners and the working class in general.

For communists all this only makes more critical the task of going into the mines to link our science with the spontaneous struggle. It can only be through patient day-to-day work in the mines that we will win the confidence of these workers and lead them into the revolutionary struggle for state power.

To send contributions or to ask about setting up a Stearns Strike Support Committee:  
Stearns Miners Relief Fund  
c/o Daryl Vanover - Route 1 -  
Whitely City, Kentucky

# SCAFFOLD COLLAPSES

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

way that today's tragedy could have been averted".

OSHA is joining in these attempts to put blinders over our eyes. OSHA officials called in to inspect the Pleasants Plant have indicated that they are not focusing on the speed-up of production which caused the accident. Instead, in a recent report, OSHA stated that among the "possible contributing factors being considered are the quality of the concrete, the mechanism used to hoist concrete to the top of the tower, the design of the tower and the method by which the scaffolding was moved up after each day's work".

Why is OSHA so hesitant to pinpoint the cause of the fatal fall? "We have to be because there is a lot of money involved". This statement by Labor Department spokesman Jack Hord reveals utter disregard for the lives of the working man and a base subservience to the interests of capital.

Because of the low priority placed on safe working conditions, there are only 20 federal inspectors in the entire state of West Virginia. Research-Cottrell had never been investigated, though 13 previous OSHA inspections had taken place, and nine citations, worth \$5,430 in fines, were issued. Three of the "serious violations" found in the past were: "workers on scaffolds without safety belts or life lines; temporary floor openings left unguarded, and electricians working off scaffolds without protection of safety belts."

Dr. Eula Bingham, the director of OSHA who was called in for the inspection, stated, "We're not as efficient as I'd like to be. As I said before, OSHA cannot itself clean up the workplace. It really has to be an employer-worker team that makes the construction industry a safe one."

Working class catastrophes bring out all the bourgeois soothsayers who present their tired "solutions" to lack of work place safety. The OSHA director calls for cooperation between workers and manage-

ment despite the fact that it is management's drive for increased production at any cost which results in the deaths of thousands of workers each year.

The labor bureaucrats also join in the chorus, bleating that they "lobbied" for 100 additional OSHA inspectors for West Virginia, but somehow this just wasn't included in the government's present OSHA budget. These union heads, conspicuous by their absence when the real protest against unsafe conditions was needed to be made, only continue to make their piteous whimpers for reliance on the bourgeois state, and make arrangements for the insurance money to be paid to the grieving families.

The working class in West Virginia, as all over the world, has a bitter history of countless lives lost in the capitalists' blind drive for profits. Since 1897, there have been 20,113 mine deaths recorded in state records, and thousands more unreported or the result of black lung. Flooding, aided by indiscriminate and destructive strip mining of the hills has caused the deaths of 148 people in the last 15 years.

The sign at the Pleasants Plant read, "The Best Safety Device is a Careful Man." But capital can never provide the working man, however careful, with a safe place to work. We can learn from the miners that a "careful" man doesn't work when conditions are unsafe and that we need in every contract a safety clause which protects the right to refuse work under dangerous conditions. Moreover, this is not an "arbitrable" demand. We won't grieve with our lives! Therefore we must never give up the right to strike to enforce that demand.

In every workplace communists must lead struggles for health and safety in order to defend one of the most fundamental interests of the working class. In addition, it is in leading these struggles that we can drive home the basic fact in all our work that there can be no job safety without proletarian state power.

# 'AID' TO CUBA

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

the Soviet Union has built the Cuban armed forces into the second strongest combat unit in the Western Hemisphere, after those of the United States. But, it is a "Cuban" military that is infiltrated with thousands of Soviet advisors who boss the use and maintenance of military equipment as well as the training and command of Cuban armed forces.

## CUBAN MERCENARIES IN AFRICA

It is on the African continent that the USSR has put its "Cuban military investment" to work. Today, there are over 45,000 Cubans in Africa. Approximately 39,000 of these are military forces, representing nearly one third of the strength of the Cuban armed forces.

By using the Cuban mercenary forces the USSR has been able to spread its superpower tentacles over the African continent even while its own military forces are tied down in Europe, which is the focus of its superpower contention with the US. In addition, by using Cuban military forces the USSR attempts to cover its hegemonic strivings with the prestige of the Cuban revolution.

The Soviet social imperialists opportunistically use the fact that Cuba is a third world country, that one quarter of its population is Black whose ancestors were taken as slaves from Africa, and that at one time Cuba gave genuine revolutionary material aid to the revolutionary struggles in Africa, to hide the role of Cuban mercenaries as instruments of Soviet hegemonism.

Under the signboard of socialism and aiding the national liberation movements, the Cubans were first brought into Africa in 1975. They were then used in the Soviet Union's war of aggression against Angola. This role of the Cuban mercenaries has continued to expand. Having infiltrated into every aspect of life, thousands of Cuban and Soviet civilians and military advisors remain in Angola today. Also in March of last year, the Soviet Union instigated an armed invasion into Zaire with the aid of Cuban mercenaries.

More recently it is in the Horn of Africa that the Soviet Union has used the Cubans as an instrument for meddling into and fanning the flames of a border dis-

pute between Ethiopia and Somalia. And, currently the social imperialists are attempting to deepen their penetration into this strategic area by using Cubans in Ethiopia's war against the Eritrean national liberation movement. It is thousands of Cuban troops which presently hold the Eritrean capital of Asmara.

## CUBAN RESISTANCE SURE TO GROW

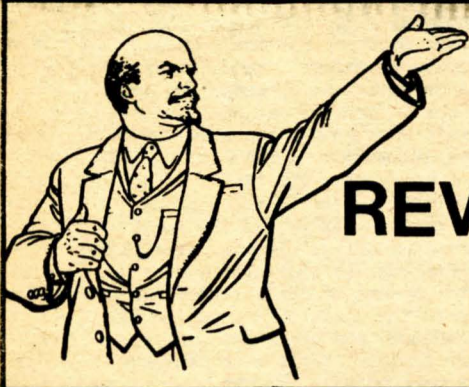
The use of Cuban mercenaries in Africa is part of the social imperialists aggressive and expansionist plans for world hegemony. But, nowhere in the world, including Cuba, are the social imperialists able to move forward with their wild ambitions and plans for global hegemony without meeting stubborn resistance.

Cuba is a part of the third world. The objective interests of the Cuban people lie with the other oppressed countries and peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. For this reason the Cuban people will eventually rise up against the neo-colonial domination of their country by the Soviet Union and overthrow all social imperialist influence over their internal and foreign affairs.

Already this resistance is starting to grow as the Cuban people protest the use of their military forces in Soviet adventures in Africa. It is only by building this resistance into a relentless and determined struggle against Soviet social imperialism that the Cuban people will be able to regain their proud revolutionary history.

It is the internationalist duty of communists and advanced workers everywhere to support the anti-imperialist struggle of the Cuban peoples. One of the best ways we can support this struggle is by being ruthless in our exposure of the essence behind Soviet "aid" to Cuba and by completely stripping the banner of socialism and proletarian internationalism off the mercenaries being used to carry out Soviet hegemonistic aims.





# THE CHIEF MEANS OF REVOLUTIONARY TRAINING

Lack of training and experience in revolutionary work are common to us all.

For example, a circle places its comrades in heavy industry, but work proceeds aimlessly and without result because they have no grasp of the role of factory nuclei or little grasp of the fundamental principles of trade union work. One comrade is fired because she wears her politics on her sleeve. Another is so secure he hides his politics from his fellow workers. Neither is able to establish political ties with the vanguard in the workplace. Still another is outdone by a union bureaucrat because he lacks a firm grasp of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism or has not thought out how they apply to the day to day struggle. Mistakes are repeated because work is not summed up or mistakes made by one collective in one place are needlessly made by others because there is no exchange of common experience. Inner party publicity -- the exchange of information and reports -- is weak, loose or non-existent, both within and among Marxist-Leninist organizations. Units function autonomously according to their own pace, making common development of theoretical, political and practical work impossible or haphazard at best. There is neither decentralized responsibility nor centralized leadership and authority. Democratic struggles are ignored because comrades scorn anything but "genuine" reforms. Working without a sense of direction, one comrade is lost to the movement because there is no training to move her forward. Another leaves "burnt out", exhausted by activity without result. An organization is penetrated by agents or degenerates because it lacks training. Documents, to give only one example, are needlessly connected to an organization because there has been inadequate training in the simple techniques of security.

All of this is a one-sided account, to be sure, but every comrade could give many more examples to show how lack of training in revolutionary activity plagues our work.

## THE NEED FOR REVOLUTIONARY TRAINING

None of this is unique to our movement. It takes years to build a party skilled enough and experienced enough to lead a big and powerful multinational working class in the struggle for state power. Lenin pointed out that the first efforts of Russian Marxists to connect the spontaneous struggle of the working class to the revolutionary movement against the autocracy were undermined by inadequate training:

"The failure of the enterprise merely showed that the Social Democrats of that period were unable to meet the immediate requirements of the time owing to their lack of experience and practical training." (WHAT IS TO BE DONE?, Peking Edition, p. 39.)

Opportunists at that time, just as opportunists today, attempted to justify the situation. Instead of frankly admitting that the leaders of the movement lacked sufficient training to carry out work in a revolutionary way, they claimed that the material conditions did not exist for revolutionary work. For Lenin, on the other hand, the problem was to identify shortcomings and identify the means to overcome them. While he emphasized that lack of practical experience in revolutionary work was normal -- a "natural phenomenon" -- it was not normal for revolutionaries to bow to the situation. The opposite was the case -- they were obligated to overcome it:

"The lack of training of the majority of the revolutionaries, being quite a natural phenomenon, could not have aroused any particular fears. Since the tasks were correctly defined, since the energy existed for repeated attempts to fulfil these tasks, temporary failures were not such a great misfortune. Revolutionary experience and organizational skill are things that can be acquired provided the desire is there to acquire them, provided shortcomings are recognized -- which in revolutionary activity is more than halfway towards removing them!" (WITBD?, p. 40)

But while Lenin would not blame revolutionaries for their lack of experience, he had nothing but scorn for those who justified their lack of training or neglected to take the steps necessary to overcome it:

"But what was not a great misfortune became a real misfortune . . . when people -- and even Social Democratic

organs -- appeared who were prepared to regard shortcomings as virtues, who even tried to invent a theoretical basis for slavish cringing before spontaneity." (WITBD?, p. 40)

The task Lenin placed before the young Russian Marxist movement therefore was to boldly identify shortcomings and to take up the training necessary to overcome them.

## A FUNDAMENTAL CONDITION FOR PARTY UNITY

In this respect the situation which existed in Russia in 1902 resembles the situation in our own movement today. Then, as now, the movement was plagued by scattered and fragmented circles of revolutionaries who had not yet succeeded in forging a common unified party. In WHAT IS TO BE DONE?, Lenin showed the connection between the amateurish tendencies of inexperienced revolutionaries and the fragmented character of the movement. Scattered and disunited circles inevitably mean a narrow scope of theoretical, political and organizational work. While this is to a certain extent inevitable, what is not inevitable is, as a consequence, to reduce the far reaching goals of communism to the narrow limits of circle struggle. This tendency can be overcome by training in revolutionary work. But inexperience becomes amateurishness when there is a failure to understand that a vanguard organization of revolutionaries cannot be built up on the basis of narrow activity. Amateurishness in turn feeds a longstanding opportunist tendency in the communist movement to adopt a narrow conception of Marxist theory, of the role of the communist movement, and of its political tasks. This tendency, called economism, justifies the narrowness of circle fragmentation. It sets no goals beyond the constricted scope of circle activity and opposes any effort to overcome amateurishness by revolutionary training.

Preparing the conditions for party unity means overcoming the conditions of circle fragmentation and amateurishness. This requires an ideological defeat over the economist tendency to narrow the scope of our tasks and also practical revolutionary training in the broad political and organizational tasks the communist movement imposes on us.

Mao reminds us that the essence of dialectics is the transformation of opposites. Since the revisionist betrayal of the U.S. Communist Party, the main task of US revolutionaries has been to forge the unity of the best representatives of the working class from the disunity of the communist and working class movement. If we have accomplished relatively little, it is because the tasks of revolutionary training have not been boldly and consciously taken up.

Our disunity has a material foundation in the fragmented conditions of struggle under capitalism. Thus unity cannot be won by desire alone. Genuine desire is an indispensable prerequisite for party unity, but there must also be a concrete plan and subjective effort by revolutionaries to translate ideas and policies into reality. In other words, the transformation of disunity into unity depends on the conscious dynamic role of the vanguard. What Lenin makes clear is that the conscious role required for party building is a process of revolutionary training. In order to transform the conditions of amateurishness and disunity connected to circle narrowness, revolutionaries themselves must be transformed. Revolutionary training is therefore a fundamental condition for party unity.

## REVOLUTIONARY TRAINING AND POLITICAL EXPOSURES

How then are we to acquire revolutionary training?

It is impossible to raise the question of party building conscientiously without raising this question.

Do we acquire revolutionary training as the old Revolutionary Union (now the RCP) proposed -- by throwing ourselves into the mass movement in order to obtain practical experience?

The trouble with this view is that "the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness." (WITBD?, p. 37). The same is true of the mass movement generally -- left to its own efforts, the mass movement can give rise only to a reformist consciousness.

Practice in the mass movement, therefore, without consciousness, plan or policy, will not contribute to the tasks of

revolutionary training. Collectives which have carried on the same plant work year after year without significant advance can testify to the fact. Lenin writes:

"For that reason, the reply to the question as to what must be done to bring political knowledge to the workers cannot be merely the answer with which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those inclined toward Economism, mostly content themselves, namely: "To go among the workers." (WITBD?, p. 98).

If going among the workers is not enough, then what must be done to overcome the lack of training which prevents revolutionaries from consolidating their unity and taking political knowledge to the working class? Lenin's answer is unambiguous:

"the masses will never learn to conduct the political struggle until we help train leaders for this struggle, both from among the enlightened workers and from among the intellectuals, and such leaders can acquire training solely by systematically appraising all the everyday aspects of our political life, of all attempts at protest and struggle on the part of various classes and on various grounds." (WITBD?, p. 199).

Training leaders is the essential task of party building. It is the task of winning the vanguard to communism. The systematic appraisal Lenin refers here is a "comprehensive political exposure". "The masses cannot be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity," he writes, "in any other way, except by means of such exposures." (WITBD?, p. 85). He continues: "Working class consciousness cannot be genuinely political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases, without exception, of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter what class is affected. Moreover, to respond from a Social Democratic, and not from any other point of view. The consciousness of the masses of workers cannot be genuine class consciousness, unless the workers learn to observe from concrete, and above all from topical (current), political facts and events, every other social class and all the manifestations of the intellectual, ethical and political life of these classes; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and the materialist estimate of all aspects of the life and activity of all classes, strata and groups of the population." (WITBD?, p. 86).

In other words, in order to train ourselves as leaders and in order to take political knowledge to the working class, what we need are political exposures. According to Lenin, they are the chief means of revolutionary training.



## FIVE CRITERIA FOR POLITICAL EXPOSURES

How is it that an exposure can function as a tool of revolutionary training?

First, an exposure becomes an instrument of revolutionary training if it is political. This does not mean that it trains if it deals with bourgeois politics anymore than "lending the economic struggle a political character" is politics for us. An exposure is political from a revolutionary point of view if it responds to events of every kind from a Marxist-Leninist standpoint. This is a matter of class stand. Only a Marxist-Leninist point of view makes it possible to take political knowledge to the working class. An exposure is political when it evaluates everything in terms of its contribution to the struggle of the working class for political power.

The first criteria of a political exposure, therefore, is that it is presented from a Marxist-Leninist point of view.

In order to respond from a Marxist-Leninist point of view, an exposure must apply the scientific method of Marxism-Leninism. This is the second point. An exposure will be an instrument of revolutionary training only if it applies a materialist analysis and a materialist estimate to what is going on around us.

The second criteria of a political exposure, therefore, is that it apply the method of dialectical and historical materialism to the analysis of events.

Taken as a whole, exposures will provide revolutionary training only if they are comprehensive. That is, they must apply a materialist estimate to all aspects of the life and activity of all classes, strata and groups of the population. Focusing only on what directly concerns the working class, for example, can never provide training in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the bourgeoisie or in mobilizing all the forces of popular resistance required for a determined assault on the bourgeois state.

The third criteria of a political

exposure, therefore, is that it contribute to a comprehensive, materialist estimate of all aspects of social life and activity.

In order to become an instrument of revolutionary training, an exposure must also be topical. In other words, exposures must deal with the current practical problems of the US revolution and not take up Marxism-Leninism or the life and activity of the population in the abstract and without revolutionary purpose. Lenin says that a worker must have a "clear picture" of the economic nature and the social and political features of each class and stratum in modern society if he is to become a class conscious revolutionary. But he adds,

"this clear picture does not come from books. It can be obtained only from living examples and from exposures following hot upon the heels of what is going on around us at a given moment." (WITBD?, p. 87).

The fourth criteria of a political exposure, therefore, is that it is topical.

In order for political exposures to provide training in revolutionary activity, they must be based on the unity of theory and practice. On the one hand they must sum up practice and submit it to the test of Marxist-Leninist theory. On the other hand they must guide practice and be tested in practice. In other words, political exposures must provide the basis for nationwide political agitation and must put forward a line or policy around which agitation can unfold.

The fifth criteria of a political exposure, therefore, is that it lay a foundation for political agitation and promote the unity of theory and practice.

## A TOPICAL POLITICAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ISKRA TYPE

According to Lenin, "these comprehensive political exposures are an essential and fundamental condition for training the masses in revolutionary activity." (WITBD?, p. 87). For this reason, a newspaper devoted to political exposures is the best means to train revolutionaries and the popular masses. Such a newspaper gathers exposures in order to subject the whole of political and social life to the test of Marxism-Leninism. Unlike bourgeois newspapers, it does not pretend to be a "photographer of facts". Like Lenin's ISKRA newspaper, it uses political exposures to provide a timely, comprehensive and materialist analysis of events in order to guide political action.

Obviously, no single exposure, however complete, can provide a comprehensive picture of the activity of all classes and groups of the population. In order to systematically appraise all the everyday aspects of political life and all attempts at protest and struggle, we need a newspaper capable of gathering many different exposures and which appears regularly and frequently. In terms of guiding the tasks of revolutionary training, no other similar kind of activity can be as effective. Speeches, forums, leaflets, bulletins, books, schools, films or even a theoretical journal are all essential complements of a revolutionary newspaper. But overall, none can provide the same stability and consistency in guiding the day to day tasks of revolutionary training.

A newspaper devoted to comprehensive political exposures is also the best vehicle to ensure that revolutionary training be based on the unity of theory and practice. While not every exposure will directly guide revolutionary activity, each exposure must lay a foundation for political action of the popular masses and, overall, a newspaper devoted to political exposures must put forward a line or policy to guide practical action on every burning question affecting either the immediate or long range struggle of the working class.

We pointed out above the connection between the perpetuation of disunity in our movement and our lack of training. Like Lenin's ISKRA, a single, common US political newspaper devoted to comprehensive political exposures is still the best means for us to use to overcome our lack of training in revolutionary work. Because of the connection between political exposures and revolutionary training, the fundamental lesson of WHAT IS TO BE DONE? can be applied to our revolutionary struggle today:

"The whole point," Lenin wrote, "is that there is no other way of training strong political organizations except through the medium of / a nationwide / newspaper." (WITBD?, p. 198).

## CORRECTION

In the last issue of THE COMMUNIST (volume IV, no. 11, April 24, 1978), the reference to the "National Continuities Committee" on page 3, column 3 is incorrect. This should be the "National Liason Committee". For a discussion of the National Liason Committee's approach to party building, see THE COMMUNIST, volume IV, no. 5 (January 2, 1978).