

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

# The Workers' Advocate Supplement



50¢

Vol. 3, #10 VOICE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA Oct. 20, 1987

## The Nicaraguan Marxist-Leninists declare:

# The peace pact was negotiated with a gun at Nicaragua's head

The September issue of **Prensa Proletaria**, voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua, contained articles denouncing the fraud of the Esquipulas accord (the Central American regional peace pact or Arias plan). The November issue of the **Workers' Advocate** will carry their article, "Don't surrender the streets to reaction" and below we print "The balance sheet of the MLP of Nicaragua (MAP/ML) on the Esquipulas accords".

The Esquipulas accords are the result of the whole negotiating process initiated since the forming of the Contadora group in 1983. It was facilitated by a simple expedient, used by President Arias of Costa Rica in the elaboration of the proposal that served as a blueprint for the Esquipulas accords: after four years of negotiations, Esquipulas synthesizes in one document all the accords and agreements reached during this period, and leaves aside all the points of conflict, not sufficiently discussed, inconvenient to address, or which could endanger the continuation of the negotiations and the concretization of the accords.

In this way, the document signed in Esquipulas includes the points on which the governments of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica reached consensus, and excludes the points on which there was no agreement.

This mechanism has a political explanation: in this way, the fundamental thesis that the Sandinistas have been maintaining to the Reagan administration -- that U.S. imperialism is the cause of the bellicose situation in the region -- has been shuffled aside and what implicitly remains is that Nicaragua must straighten out her internal situation before continuing with other negotiations. That is to say, the Sandinista government is taking a strategic turn in the process of negotiation, giving in to the political-diplomatic pressures of

the moment being exerted through this mechanism.

### What is Lacking in Esquipulas?

The points which were not included in the signing of the Esquipulas accords are the following:  
Continued on page 4

### INSIDE

<b>The Arias plan and the line of the world communist movement . . . . .</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Mexican Independence Day and the class struggle . . . . .</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>The coup failed, or did it? -- Aquino veers further to the right . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Portuguese Marxist-Leninists: "Why we are not voting": . . . . .</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Mistaken stand of the Party of Labor of Albania on Ethiopia. . . . .</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Behind the Korean strike statistics . . . . .</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Teachers strikes around the country . . . . .</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>For four weeks in Chicago. . . . .</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>For 20 days in Detroit. . . . .</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Boston school bus drivers strike . . . . .</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>In DeGraff hospital strike in Buffalo: Demonstrators win release of two arrested strikers . . . . .</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Postal: The contract's been signed, but the struggle continues. . . . .</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Correspondence:</b>	
<b>On the Literary Debate . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>New address for P.U.R.E. . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>On the Madrid Communique. . . . .</b>	<b>21</b>

---

**THE ARIAS PLAN AND  
THE LINE OF THE WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT**

---

The Central American peace pact provides for stepping up the pressure on Nicaragua under a barrage of words about peace and democracy. It presents to the people the idea that the CIA war on Nicaragua is something in the nature of a mistake that can be avoided if men of good will simply sit together. And the fierce struggle between the exploiters and the toilers inside each Central American nation can allegedly also be moderated and replaced by friendly mutual cooperation.

The truth about how and why U.S. imperialism dominates Central America is obscured. The brutal world of profit-taking and aggression is obscured. Instead sugary words about peace and democracy, reason and good-will become everything. Instead of struggle against the exploiting interests of imperialism, there are the constant reassurances that "U.S. interests" can be satisfied by the Nicaraguan people. And it is even presented that the various pro-U.S. regimes are not lackeys of imperialism, but can be worked with. After all, isn't that how the Arias plan itself came into being,

allegedly imposed on U.S. imperialism by the pro-U.S. regimes in Central America?

The truth about the fierce class struggle in Central America is also obscured. There is only the sugary realm of "national reconciliation" and "progress" for all. A pacifist dream replaces the real world of struggle. And this pacifist dream is propagated the more fiercely that the bloodletting against Nicaragua (and against the Salvadoran and other Central American people) continues.

The liberal politicians themselves talk about how it may be necessary to invade Nicaragua if it doesn't give enough concessions. But the people are led to believe that these same liberals are imposing a new, peaceful policy on the White House.

**Marxism shows the real class war  
that lies under the sugary phrases**

Marxism began its existence by cutting through such sugary deceptions and exposing the real class conflicts that lie underneath them. But the Sandinistas, the revisionists, and the reformists worship at the Arias plan in the name of socialism or Marxism or what not.

**In the face of World War II**

This is not the first time this has happened. One of the major trials facing the working class movement was the world spread of fascism and the mass slaughter of World War II. As the fascist offensive intensified and a world war drew nearer, in 1935, the world communist movement met at the 7th World Congress of the Communist International. It was here that the Leninist line of revolutionary struggle was set aside as outdated by the new conditions. A mistaken orientation was set forward that, with regard to war and peace, was remarkably similar to the present illusions concerning the Arias plan.

The role of struggle was downgraded in favor of sugary words about peace. It was no longer necessary to rally the toilers in the struggle against their class enemies. Instead peace was to be secured by uniting with all those forces who were willing to reiterate pacifist or liberal phrases, whether they meant them or not. It was proclaimed that this type of struggle could eliminate the inevitability of war.

The belief in the wonder-working powers of

---

## The Workers' Advocate



Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the  
Central Committee of the  
Marxist-Leninist Party, USA

Rates: 75¢ for single copy; \$4.50 for 6 issues; \$9 for 12 issues by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).  
From distributor: 25¢ ISSN 0276-363X

---

## The Workers' Advocate Supplement



Rates: \$1 for single copy; \$12 for one year by 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico).  
From distributor: 50¢ ISSN 0882-6366

**LETTERS:** The Workers' Advocate or The Supplement  
P.O. Box 11942 Ontario St. Stn. Chicago, IL 60611

**ORDERS:** Marxist-Leninist Publications  
P.O. Box 11972 Ontario St. Stn. Chicago, IL 60611

---

deals with the imperialist governments was propagated. The movement often found itself subordinate to these deals, reduced to a sort of pressure group for such deals.

Yet, for all this, World War II was not averted. Attempts to unite all those for "peace" were powerless to deal with the real forces leading to a major world conflict. Only major victories for the world revolutionary movement could have stopped the oncoming war. The appeal to bourgeois humanitarianism proved futile. And the analysis about the bourgeois-democratic powers serving peace for their own interests proved mere empty rhetoric.

### **Coming in the Supplement...**

The experience of this earlier period is relevant to the problems of today.

Over two years ago the **Workers' Advocate** and the **Supplement** began a series of articles on the change in line of the international communist movement in the mid-1930s. In the coming months, this series will resume in the **Supplement**. It will begin with the new line from the Seventh Congress on war and peace and will eventually trace the results of this line.

This study is not only valuable with respect to the light it casts on the present struggle in Central America.

No, this history is also important in its own right. It is a key part of the study of how the world communist movement was weakened from within, leaving it vulnerable to the ravages of revisionism. The views and practices propagated since the mid-1930's fostered the corruption of the communist movement.

It is important also because of the light it throws on communist tactics. It raises questions of how communist work should be conducted. And it shows how it became fashionable to denounce

the line of proletarian class struggle as dogmatic and sectarian not only in social-democratic circles, but among "communists" as well.

And the actual history of this period refutes the view that the anti-fascist struggle and the defeat of the Axis in World War II allegedly vindicate the new line from the Seventh Congress.

It shows how this line led to disaster after disaster in the years preceding this war. From the role of "non-interventionism" in smothering aid for the anti-fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War to the Munich sellout whereby the bourgeois-democratic powers gave Czechoslovakia to Hitler as a downpayment for attacking the Soviet Union, the great expectations in the role of the bourgeois-democratic powers proved to be illusions.

And during World War II itself, the new line fostered mistakes and errors that led to many parties throwing away the fruits of the struggle and lacking vigilance against the Allied armies or even welcoming them. In other cases, parties took power but the work of the revolutionary transformation of society was undermined.

Even today the effects of the earlier mistakes are still being felt, not just among the revisionist parties, but among the parties from the anti-revisionist movement. The mistakes in the general stands being put forward by the Party of Labor of Albania on the world situation, for example, owe much to this general framework.

The mistakes of the past are, naturally, not the sole or even main source of the revisionist and reformist errors of today. Capitulation to the bourgeoisie remains at the root of the class collaborationism of today. But the past can and does exert its influence. From a dead weight, the experience of the past can be turned into a revolutionary factor encouraging the struggle for revolutionary Marxism-Leninism today. That is the purpose of continuing this series. <>

---

**The Marxist-Leninist Party of Nicaragua declares:  
THE PEACE PACT WAS NEGOTIATED WITH A GUN AT NICARAGUA'S HEAD**

---

Continued from the front page

disarming of the counterrevolutionary forces; departure of the foreign invaders, dismantling of the military bases of armies outside the region, an end to the military maneuvers of foreign armies, freezing of the acquisition of arms, no interference in internal affairs; no to the presence of foreign troops in the region, non-aggression pact between the Central American states; renewal of the bilateral dialogue between the U.S. and Nicaragua. In other words, Nicaragua backed down, in this phase of the accords, from raising what is at the root of the problem of the war, and instead decided to negotiate aspects which have to do with the internal order of the country, such as the following points: internal dialogue; amnesty; democratization; cease-fire; full freedom of the television, radio and press; opening of new communications media; right of assembly for all types of political organizations; the right to hold public demonstrations; free mobility for the members of all political parties; suspension of the State of Emergency; internationally supervised elections, both for the Central American parliament as well as locally, for the Legislative Assembly and the Presidency.

Thus the Sandinista government is accepting compromises and renouncing its demands in the negotiating process.

This limitation in the results of the negotiations is connected to another factor: the regional and Central American bourgeoisies forced the signing and the compromise at Esquipulas at a time when the United States was in a moment of relative weakness. The U.S. was facing the military-logistic deterioration of the mercenaries and confronting crucial points in the Irangate scandal. The Reagan administration found itself in a poor situation to continue arguing for the necessity of more funds for the contras, given the contras' military weakness and the momentary political weakness of the administration as a product of the arms sales to Iran and the transfer of unauthorized funds to the counterrevolutionaries. The signing of the accords provides a breathing space for the recuperation of the Reagan administration, and contributes to a new authorization by Congress of funds for the counterrevolution, conditioned upon how the Sandinistas implement the accords. Before Esquipulas, Reagan had no "American-style" justification for the approval of the funds.

An additional negative effect of the Esquipulas

accords is that they condemn the revolutionary forces of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica to abandoning the path of armed revolutionary struggle whether they want to or not, when these forces objectively serve as the mutual rearguards of the Central American peoples. This abandonment would also weaken the Nicaraguan people.

For the results of the negotiations, for their concrete unfolding, for the mark they leave, for the logic of Esquipulas and for the mechanisms it establishes, the Esquipulas Pact not only won't provide a solution to the problematic war in the region, but will also hurt the popular sovereignty and right to self-determination of the Nicaraguan people. The accords won't stop the economic blockade, nor the aid to the contras, nor the military maneuvers of the U.S. armed forces against Nicaragua, nor the aggression of the mercenaries.

Sandinism has signed a document whose essence is the following: Nicaragua recognizes juridically, morally and politically, the right of foreign governments and forces to interfere in and determine internal matters which concern only the Nicaraguan people. To give an idea: A National Reconciliation Commission will be formed, which will charge itself with determining whether or not the accords are implemented, and will give the international forces faith in the negotiations. There will also be an Executive Commission charged with regulating and pushing forward the implementation of the accords. This Commission is made up of the foreign ministers of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. There will also be formed another International Verification Commission which will report to the next meeting of Central American presidents in January, 1988 on which countries are implementing the accords by "taking pertinent measures" as and how the signed document prescribes. This last Commission is made up of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay, as well as the secretary generals of the OAS (Organization of American States) and the UN. This is an international battery of high-level pressure which never implemented anything against Somoza-ism nor Duvalier, nor will it ever implement anything against regimes like that of Strossner in Paraguay or that of South Africa. That is how much the bourgeoisie fears the consolidation and advance of the revolution in Nicaragua and Central America.

From there [from this fear of the revolution],

comes the insistence of the international bourgeoisies in fighting against the internal revolutionary forces in Nicaragua, that is to say, in favor of politically strengthening the internal counterrevolution.

In this context, the implementation of the accords will go in the direction of guaranteeing the political space that the internal counterrevolutionary forces in Nicaragua have not been able to attain, due to the high revolutionary temper of the people. To accomplish this, imperialism will seek to internally institutionalize the counterrevolution, at the same time as it strengthens and reorganizes the framework for military aggression through the contras and marines. In fact, imperialism has been using in this sense a division of labor which, in the phrasemongering propaganda, looks as if there were different standards and even conflicts. European social-democracy, specifically the Common Market, has specialized in the political-diplomatic encirclement against the Nicaraguan revolution, and Reagan takes on the "dirty work".

Proof of this is that Reagan is preparing for a new solicitation of funds from Congress, the dispensing of which will depend on whether Nicaragua "fulfills" the accords (and there is no way to guarantee that the forces exerting the pressure [on Nicaragua to accept Esquipulas] will show their satisfaction with [Nicaragua's implementation of

the accord]). Meanwhile this same Esquipulas document starts out with an explicit plea to the Common Market and the Pope in relation to this.

The right seems to think that Esquipulas is the kiss of death of the revolution. The fact that the time limit for fulfilling the accords expires on November 7, on the anniversary of the October Bolshevik Revolution, and on the eve of another anniversary---the fall in combat of Carlos Fonseca, places an equal obligation on those Sandinistas who are genuinely anti-imperialist, on the anti-interventionist forces, and on the Marxist-Leninists to show the reaction that Esquipulas is not the kiss of death. Let the struggle for the self-determination of the Nicaraguan people, for the non-interference in our internal affairs, for the defense of the gains won on July 19, for the consolidation and deepening [of the revolution], raise the working class, the Nicaraguan people, into a single fist, united and militant against the attempts of the internal reaction and imperialism to regain control.

All of the popular, anti-imperialist forces, all those defending the self-determination of the Nicaraguan people, must converge in the battle to prevent the Esquipulas accords from weakening or dismantling the gains which have been won.

The negotiations at Esquipulas were carried out with a gun to [Nicaragua's] ribs. We must work hard with the people to change this situation. <>

---

#### Mexico -- September 16, 1987

#### WHAT THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS FACE ON MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

---

From the Sept. 12 issue of **Chicago Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP-Chicago. Subheads added:

September 16 -- Mexican Independence Day -- day of "patriotic festivities". A day when the ruling party of Mexico, the PRI [Party of the Institutionalized Revolution], will be waving Mexican flags and talking about Hidalgo, Morelos and national unity -- hoping to convince the Mexican toilers to sacrifice more and then some more. All to save the Mexican capitalists and the American imperialists from the economic crises that their greed has created.

For 5 years now, the workers in Mexico have suffered under an austerity plan implemented by the PRI at the "request" of the imperialist IMF [International Monetary Fund]. This austerity plan

was supposed to save Mexico from disaster, and to help it pay off its 98 billion dollar debt to the foreign banks. But the austerity measures have been a real disaster for the Mexican people. Every week the prices of even the most basic necessities like food, housing, medicines and clothing go up. Hundreds of thousands of workers have lost their jobs, and in the countryside, the peasants more and more find it impossible to support their families.

#### Toilers don't take this lying down

All of this has made the Mexican toilers angry and discontented. This summer a whole series of strikes and struggles broke out which show that the workers are fed up with the Mexican and foreign capitalists' calls for even more sacrifice.

Ten thousand Volkswagen workers went out on strike in Puebla in early July. The Volkswagen capitalists went to the Mexican government's Arbitration Board and demanded that the workers take a 15% wage cut and a 20% cut in benefits, and they wanted to lay off 723 workers without paying them the severance pay required by Mexican law. The Volkswagen workers held demonstrations in Mexico City and at the factory site, even blocking the highway between Mexico City and Puebla.

On July 1, 2,800 workers struck the Ford plant in Cuatitlan (outside Mexico City), demanding a 23% wage increase. The workers at the Autonomous Metropolitan University walked out for the second time this year. On July 15, twenty thousand nurses marched in the capital demanding pay increases and more jobs. On July 13 striking Ecatepec steelworkers blocked the main avenue of their neighborhood outside Mexico City. Neighborhood organizations held a conference (Asemblea de los Barrios) and marched in downtown Mexico City demanding that the government live up to its promises to provide housing and services to the poor neighborhoods. Other fights took place with land seizures in Oaxaca and Zacatecas, and in Chiapas at the Autonomous University where police attacked student activists, wounding 15.

#### **The Mexican bourgeoisie debates what to do**

The Mexican capitalists and the imperialists are terrified that this anger and discontent of the masses will turn into a revolutionary movement of the toilers against the rich exploiters. Different sectors of the Mexican bourgeoisie and the U.S. imperialists have discussed and debated what to do to keep this from happening. The other main capitalist party, the PAN (National Action Party), says the PRI has to share more of its governmental power, that Mexico needs a political system more "democratic" like the United States -- in other words, that the PAN should be given more power.

The PAN also calls for more economic and political ties with the U.S. and more support for U.S. foreign policy (like the contra war against Nicaragua for example). PAN would like us all to forget that it was the "close ties" with the U.S. imperialists (i.e. domination by the imperialists over Mexico) that have caused so much of Mexico's problems to begin with.

The PRI, meanwhile, is divided between those who want to keep on doing the same thing as always and those who think the situation is getting out of hand and some changes have to be made to keep Mexico stable (to keep the workers and peasants quiet).

A faction of the PRI calling itself Corriente Democratica (Democratic Tendency) calls on the

PRI to democratize by holding primary elections to choose the Presidential candidate and other similar reforms. This disagreement inside the PRI has even resulted in physical fights and threats of all kinds but that shouldn't give us any idea that Corriente Democratica is interested in the desires of the Mexican toilers for real change in Mexico. After all, the leaders of C.D. are long-time PRI men. Porfirio Munoz Ledo was a member of the presidential cabinet of Luis Echeverria. In the same epoch, Cuahutemoc Cardenas was the PRI governor of Michoacan where he "democratically" sent the army against the peasants. And this is the man that Herberito Castillo, the leader of the "new Mexican Socialist Party" said he would welcome as his party's presidential candidate in an interview in the **New York Times** on Sept. 5, which tells us a lot about how his party is not revolutionary.

#### **Neither PRI nor PAN but a revolutionary storm**

It's clear that the "solutions" offered by these forces are no solution at all for the working masses of Mexico. The PRI is notoriously corrupt and undemocratic, but primary elections and two-party system (a la the U.S.) won't do a thing to stop the exploitation and impoverishment of the Mexican workers and peasants. The rich oppressors of the Mexican toilers are right to be afraid of the growing anger and discontent of the workers, peasants and other oppressed masses. Because it is the power of a mass movement which can fight to defend the toilers against the demands for more sacrifices, more hunger, more exploitation. And it is such a movement that can grow into a revolutionary storm and wipe out exploitation.

#### **Solidarity with our class brothers in Mexico**

The working class in the United States has many ties to the Mexican workers. There is the common fight against U.S. imperialism -- the struggles against the U.S. capitalists that we develop here help to weaken U.S. imperialism's hold on Mexico, and the fight of the Mexican toilers against U.S. imperialism helps to weaken the rule of the U.S. capitalists in their own country.

There are also the more than 10 million Mexican nationality persons in the U.S. (immigrant and U.S.-born) who have family, and other ties to Mexico. The Mexican nationality is an important part of the American working class. All the workers in the United States should support the struggle of the Mexican workers and peasants against U.S. imperialism and against the Mexican capitalist class.

<>

---

**Aquino veers further and further to the right**  
**IN THE PHILIPPINES: THE PLOTTERS OF THE AUGUST COUP AGAINST AQUINO**  
**LOST THEIR BATTLE, BUT ARE WINNING THEIR WAR**

---

In August, right-wing military officers launched another coup attempt in Manila. This was the most serious coup attempt to date against the Aquino regime.

The coup failed. The coup participants who got caught were let off lightly. And it is no secret that the military hasn't been too eager to chase down Col. "Gringo" Honasan, who fled. Meanwhile, Aquino herself has now implemented almost every one of the plotters' demands. Like every previous coup attempt, this latest one was used by the Aquino regime to justify moving even more to the right.

In the first place, the coup demanded pay raises for soldiers. These were quickly granted by Aquino's cabinet.

#### **Aquino Sacrifices Her Friends**

Second, the plotters demanded that Aquino "get the communists out of the cabinet". This was directed against Aquino's two closest advisers, Joker Arroyo and Teodoro Locsin. These men are anti-communist liberals, not much different than Aquino herself. But during the Marcos years they were on the out. And Arroyo, as an opposition lawyer, had even dared to defend some liberal dissidents (such as Aquino's husband, Benigno Aquino) against Marcos' persecutions. This earned him the fierce hatred of the military chiefs.

After the coup Aquino dismissed these two men from her cabinet.

#### **Aquino Pledges War Against the People**

The plotters' other major demand was for Aquino to stop meddling in military affairs and leave the army free to prosecute the counter-insurgency war. To this Aquino has protested that she's all for the war and she's been encouraging offensives against the guerrillas for months.

Aquino has launched a new "army appreciation" campaign, encouraging citizens to invite soldiers

into their homes and show them the great love and respect they are supposed to have for the army. She came to power in a deal with the right-wing military, and she wants the people to worship at the shrine of the bloody army built up under Marcos. Marcos fell in the midst of a powerful upsurge of the masses, but Aquino's role was to try to keep the masses within bound -- not just with liberal rhetoric but also by preserving and relying on the institutions of the Marcos era.

#### **The Bourgeoisie Ponders a New Throw of the Dice**

Underlying the military's pressure on Aquino is the class struggle. More and more of the Filipino exploiters regard Aquino as indecisive and too soft towards the toilers. They demand a vigorous prosecution of the counterinsurgency war against the peasant guerrilla movement. And they do not like the fact that with the fall of Marcos the labor movement found space to grow. They want Aquino to make good on her promises of being better able to stifle the revolutionary movement than Marcos or else they will throw the dice again and turn to the right-wing militarists trained in the Marcos-era methods of rule.

Aquino has tried hard to appease the right-wing. But the right does not consider her efforts to be enough. She was recently deserted by her Vice President, Salvador Laurel, who resigned his other post as foreign minister. He thus freed himself from his post in her government and entrenched himself in the Vice Presidency as an opposing force. He is building up his links with right-wing politicians like former military boss Enrile and other reactionary forces.

The Aquino regime continues to unravel. The toilers must be ready to fight under growing conditions of terror and repression. The way forward in the Philippines is building up the class struggles of the workers and poor peasants through building up the revolutionary movement against the exploiters. <>

---

**From the Portuguese Marxist-Leninists:  
WHY WE ARE NOT VOTING**

---

This past July, parliamentary elections took place in Portugal. The rightist government of Prime Minister Cavaco da Silva was re-elected, for the first time with a majority for his party in the assembly. Below we reprint a pre-election communique by the Portuguese Marxist-Leninists organized in the **Communist Organization "Workers Policy"** (OCPO). Translation from the Portuguese original is by the **Workers' Advocate** staff.

---

The communists organized in the OCPO have decided not to vote in these elections. We know that this attitude will be criticized by the majority of the workers and persons who have leftist sympathies, by those who have considered it obligatory to vote for one of the parties of the opposition in order to combat "Cavaquismo" [the rightist program of the regime of Cavaco da Silva].

However, we have come to the conclusion that the vote for any of the parties of the opposition is a **lost vote**, because it will not have the strength to stop the offensive of capital and the right; and, furthermore, it is a **harmful vote** because it will serve to hold back that which is really important -- the formation of a revolutionary opposition to the regime. This is what we are trying to explain with this communique.

#### **Impotent Vote**

We do not doubt that the right can be overthrown, and it will certainly be overthrown, but not on July 19. To promise this is to lie to the working people. No kind of voting can interrupt at this moment the anti-worker and anti-people policies which are being imposed on us.

It is this way for a simple reason: the victory of the right was decided, not in elections, but in the series of defeated struggles of these last 12 years. The reason for the current capitalist offensive is not in the composition of the Assembly or of the government which it forms. The evil is more profound. The battle is more difficult and prolonged.

**The right won** when the workers' movement was incapable of confronting the coup of November 25 [1975]. **The right won** when the trade union movement was divided. **The right won** when the response to overdue wages, to the pillaging of the Agrarian Reform, to high prices was only petitions and strikes of two hours. **The right won** when the

popular resistance was absent against the law of incomes, to repression, to the political police, to NATO, and to the CEE [Common Market].

The right won the command of national politics not in voting but in the daily practice of the class struggle. This was the "election" that we lost during these years.

And now that capital [the bourgeoisie] has turned to take the reins in its teeth, as before April 25 [1974] they tell us that the decisive thing is the "battle of the ballot boxes"! It would be worth more if we would preoccupy ourselves with the real battles that were allowed to be lost, one by one!

That which counts is the strength demonstrated by the workers' movement in every confrontation with capital. If this strength is not manifested, no type of voting will stand up to the bourgeois order.

#### **Lost Vote**

The PS [the social-democratic party] promises a politics in the interest of the working people. But what has the PS done with the votes which have been given to it up to now? It has set up the UGT [class collaborationist trade union center dominated by the PS]; it has made the installment contracts; it has given us the Barreto law; it has made the alliance with the CDS and PSD [rightist parties]; it has allowed the rehabilitation of the fascists; it has given all the transportation to the U.S.; it has given the country to the Common Market; it has put corruption on the loose. It did less than it promises. Were the governments of Mario Soares [leader of the PS] so different from the government of Cavaco?

The workers who do not want to lower themselves to vote another time for the PS are right. The PS has always carried out policies which are in the interest of the right and the bosses. It is only with unlimited cynicism that it promises now to defend the laboring people.

The experience of these two years also shows that the vote for the PRD [a liberal bourgeois party], as an alternative to the PS, does not lead to anything. Because the "new politics" of the PRD is best summed up as maneuvering between the PS [the social-democratic party] and the PSD [a rightist party].

The PCP [pro-Soviet revisionist party], for its part, calls for a strong vote for the CDU



[revisionist electoral bloc] in order to attract the PS [social-democrats] and the PRD [liberal bourgeois] to a "democratic convergence" and to a "democratic government". As if this politics of pressure upon the PS and General Eanes [former President and the inspirer of the PRD] in order "to call them to the good road", has not already demonstrated dozens of times that it only brings illusions and defeats for the workers' movement! That which the PCP offers to the laborers is the opium of hope in a democratic capitalism, as if that were possible.

### Harmful Vote

We say to the workers who are depoliticized, demoralized, and deluded by the demagogy of the right that Cavaco is your main enemy, he is an unscrupulous director of the business of the bourgeoisie. Not a single vote should be given to the PSD or to the CDS [rightist parties].

But this is not to forget that a vote for any of the reformist parties is also harmful to the interests of the workers' movement. Prisoners to the blackmail of the "useful vote", the workers have postponed from year to year the search for an independent politics, for an open struggle against capital.

Mobilizing the votes of the laborers, the parties of the center (PS, PRD, PCP, MDP, etc.) do not make any real opposition to the right and they block the appearance of a leftist, revolutionary current. They fear destabilization more than the plague. To vote for these parties as a "lesser evil" is in fact to feed the **main disease** of politics in Portugal: the absence of a revolutionary workers' party.

### Impossible Vote

The elections of July 19 could serve to reorganize the workers' movement if there was a candidate of the left who was capable of saying that the disease is in this regime and that it is necessary to return to open struggle, as in 1974-75.

For this, the OCPO proposed on May 9 that an electoral front of the left should be formed containing the UDP [Popular Democratic Union, backed by the Portuguese Communist Party/Reconstructed, which supports the present rightist mistakes of the Party of Labor of Albania], the PSR [Revolutionary Socialist Party], the FUP [United People's Front] and other groups to the left of the PCP. The objective was to take advantage of the electoral campaign to call the laborers to struggle and, if possible, to elect a deputy of the workers' movement who, contrary to

those who are now in the Assembly, would denounce daily, without compromise, the capitalist system as the source of the disease.

Our efforts, however, were frustrated. The UDP, ever more resembling a mini-PCP, wanted a deputy in order to apply pressure for a "national government". The PSR also was not inclined to make compromises in order to develop the workers' struggle: it prefers to make itself flowery with denunciations "from the left" which lack consequences. The FUP, angry over the brutal condemnation of Monsanto which it did not expect [the conviction of its leader Otelo, framed on charges of terrorism], decided to stay away from the elections. And the "Revolutionary Left" confirmed its vocation as a satellite of the PCP, integrating itself in the lists of the CDU.

What this demonstrates is that there does not exist yet an impulse to unity and struggle coming from the factories which pushes the creation of a revolutionary and independent current. It is not within our power to modify the result of these elections.

### Appeal

Our call to all the workers who have a spirit of struggle, to those who are going to abstain as well as those who are going to vote for the CDU, UDP, PS, etc., is to begin to regroup, beyond these **lost elections**, in a new, left current which is what is lacking for the workers' movement.

The OCPO will continue to do that which is in its power to establish a revolutionary communist workers party in the struggle for the common demands of the working class and of all the exploited.

**--Out with Cavaco and the government of the right!**

**--More treachery by the PS? No, thanks!**

**--No to the pact between the PS and PSD to review the Constitution!**

**--We do not need the opium of the "democratic convergence"!**

**--Against unemployment, for a 40-hour week!**

**--Radical struggle against the labor pact!**

**--A combative, unitary and class trade unionism!**

**--Down with the new PIDE [secret police]! Liberty for political prisoners!**

**--Out with the NATO bases!**

**--Against the CEE [the European Common Market], against capital, for socialism in Portugal!**

June 26, 1987

The 3rd Extraordinary Assembly of the Communist Organization "Workers' Policy" <>

---

**A shocking mistake by the Party of Labor of Albania  
PRAISE FOR THE HANGMAN REGIME IN ETHIOPIA**

---

If errors aren't corrected, they go on and on. The Party of Labor of Albania has been giving a wrong orientation to the world Marxist-Leninist movement for some time. This orientation is a danger to the PLA itself. Recently there has been yet another confirmation of what these errors can lead to if they are not corrected.

Last month the official Albanian news agency, ATA, carried an article from "Bashkimi", newspaper of the Democratic Front of Albania, praising the present-day Ethiopian regime and its current maneuver of renaming itself a "People's Democratic Republic". According to this article, the regime is striding faster and faster along the road of consolidating the independence of Ethiopia, constructing a sound economy, etc. etc. etc.

**What is the present-day regime in Ethiopia?**

The article talks in glowing terms of the friendship between the Albanian and Ethiopian people. In fact, such friendship could only be consolidated by opposition to the present regime of the military Dergue and its leader Mengistu Haile Mariam. This blood-stained regime is among the cruelest in Africa. It has thrown itself like a tiger on the revolutionary and progressive currents in Ethiopia. It is utterly chauvinist and has waged for year after year a genocidal war against the Eritrean people. And it has engaged in brutal suppression against other nationalities too, such as the Tigrayans.

Talk of constructing a sound economy could only sound like cruel mockery to the starving Ethiopian people, racked by famine. The famine deaths in Ethiopia are infamous around the world. The present regime not only proved incompetent in the face of famine, it actually sought to use famine and starvation as part of its war against the masses.

**Revisionism -- tool of oppression**

It is true that Mengistu's Dergue speaks in the name of socialism and revolution. It has close ties with Soviet revisionism. The Western bourgeoisie makes use of this to blame the glaring crimes of the Dergue on communism.

But the Dergue is no more communist than the Pope. It has simply grafted revisionist rhetoric over its barbaric cruelties. In fact, the Dergue is the hangman of the actual revolutionaries and

communists in Ethiopia.

In this regard, it is amazing that the ATA article praises the proclamation of Ethiopia as a "people's democratic republic". The Ethiopian government is not a democratic government, but one that rules over the discontented masses by the gun. Its claim to now be a representative republic is a sham. Perhaps, however, its dropping of the term "socialist" from the name is designed to help it snuggle up to the Western bourgeoisie. At the same time, this need not in the slightest mark a break of the Dergue from Soviet revisionism. Under Gorbachev, Soviet revisionism has been advising "third world" regimes to work harder at links with the Western imperialists.

**Not an accident**

Some groups have been advocating that the Albanian mistakes on various foreign policy issues are mere isolated mistakes, not reflecting an error in overall policy that must be changed. So the mistakes of the PLA in praising the hangman regime of Khomeini in Iran or the bloody Turkish butchers are regarded as not that important. And since ATA has fallen fairly silent on Iran (although without retracting its support for the Islamic regime), some have tried to deny the PLA's present stand towards Iran.

The ATA article on Ethiopia punctures these pretenses. It shows that there is a deep rot corroding away at the PLA. True friends of the Albanian communists, true class brothers and sisters of the Albanian workers and peasants, would speak up and not applaud as the ATA drags the honor of the PLA through the mud as it careens from one unfortunate love affair to another, from Khomeini to Mengistu. The example of the Soviet Union proves that revisionist counterrevolution is possible in a once-socialist country, and it is the task of all true communists to help the Albanians avoid such a fate.

**Three-worldism running rampant:  
Even the previous regime of Haile Selassie  
comes in for praise**

It should be noted that the praise for the present-day Ethiopian regime is not simply due to the PLA having missed the facts about the Dergue that the whole world has seen. The ATA article sets forth the "third worldist" revisionist idea of

supporting any regime in Ethiopia once it had "ousted the [Italian] occupiers and the removal of the British troops". ATA doesn't see any struggle of oppressor and oppressed in Ethiopia, but regards that "Ethiopia" as a whole began to march forward. Although it doesn't mention the name of Emperor Haile Selassie, this description is nothing but prettification of the barbaric rule of this reactionary.

The Ethiopian people rose up and threw out Haile Selassie in a revolution. A major struggle then broke out as to whether the revolutionary people would gain the fruits of this victory or another set of barbaric exploiters would usurp power: unfortunately, the brutal Dergue won out. But how does ATA describe these events?

It simply says that the efforts at progress, the "great struggle to uproot the grave consequences of the great economic, cultural and educational backwardness" were "further intensified after 1974", i.e., after the overthrow of Haile Selassie. So Selassie was good, and overthrowing him was even better. Long live one regime, and long live the next one that overthrows it. Long live anyone who turns out on top.

Revolution has vanished. The class interests of the great, exploited majority has vanished. There is nothing left but rhetoric right out of the "three worlds" theory in praise of the local regime.

**For rank-and-file discussion of the burning issues in the world Marxist-Leninist movement**

This mistake by ATA also shows the great danger of the plan set forward by the sectarian Madrid communique of July 1987 proclaimed by some (not all) of the parties in the **Theory and Practice** grouping. This communique condemned our Party for unnamed acts of "provocation" and "confusion". (See the text of this communique and a refutation of it in the September 10 issue of the **Supplement**.)

It is no secret that these "provocative" acts consisted of publicly discussing the burning issues of the world Marxist-Leninist movement. The Madrid communique was, among other things, an attempt to prevent any public criticism of the errors of the Party of Labor of Albania. Certain of the leaders who pushed for our condemnation at Madrid may grumble a bit in private about this or that stand of the PLA, but they denigrate the importance of these errors, minimize the nature of these errors, and do their best to keep others from knowing much about them.

But these errors include praising the infamous and oppressive regime of the Ethiopian. It is clear that this is no time for meaningless diplomatic gestures. All the world's communists, all those who truly believe in communism and revolution,

must unite together and uphold the revolutionary nature of Marxism-Leninism. This requires rank-and-file discussion and decision concerning the major questions of line. <>

**For your reference:**

**The article from the Albanian Telegraphic Agency praising the oppressive Ethiopian regime**

The following article (including the title) is from the September 23, 1987 issue of A.T.A.:

**MARKED EVENT FOR THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE**

**- Article of the newspaper "Bashkimi" -**

The peoples of Ethiopia are celebrating simultaneously two marked events, the 13th anniversary of their national day and the proclamation of the country [as a] People's Democratic Republic. The decision to proclaim Ethiopia a People's Democratic Republic was adopted in the meeting of the national assembly and is itself a new step in the road of the friendly Ethiopian people to consolidate further the independence of the country, for the construction of a sound economy and to cope with the problems faced on the road for progress and prosperity, the commentator Fatmir Dibra writes in the newspaper "Bashkimi".

As a sincere friend of the African peoples, the Albanian people support their just struggle for national liberation, the defence and consolidation of the national freedom and independence, against racial discriminations and apartheid. They support also the efforts of the peoples of the African continent against the interferences of the imperialist and neocolonial powers. An old friendship links the people of Ethiopia with the Albanian people. It is further consolidated in the struggle they have waged against the fascist occupiers.

After ousting the occupiers and the removal of the British troops in 1954, Ethiopia had to wage a great struggle to uproot the grave consequences of the great economic, cultural and educational backwardness. These efforts were further intensified after 1974. From a country with over 90 per cent of the population illiterate, considerable efforts are made in Ethiopia to open schools, universities, to create the national intelligentsia to give an impetus to the development of different branches of the economy.

The Albanian people follow with sympathy the attempts of the Ethiopian people for the progress and prosperity of the country. In these remarkable days for the Ethiopian people they wish that the relations of friendship and cooperation between our two countries and peoples further strengthen to the common benefit, the author concludes. <>

---

## LESSONS FROM KOREAN STRIKE STATISTICS

---

Recently-released statistics reveal the power of the strike wave that has swept across all of South Korea the last couple of months.

\* In all of 1986 there were only 276 strikes in South Korea. But just since June 29 of this year there have been 3,372 strikes!

\* For all of 1986 Korean workers' wage increases averaged 8.3%. But, just since June 29 wage increases have averaged 13.4%.

These statistics teach some lessons about working class struggle. They are not something peculiar to South Korea, but have been seen in many countries which have been rocked by mass upsurge.

For one thing, they show the enormous anger and frustration that had been lying dormant among Korean workers. They show what workers are capable of displaying in a short period of time.

### **Fruits of the Mass Political Struggle**

This powerful strike wave did not come out of nowhere. It was released by the mass political movement of last spring which culminated in the huge mobilizations against the Chun regime in June.

The mass demonstrations forced the government to back down from some of its repression. The demonstrations did not succeed in winning rights for the working masses, although some of the demands of the liberal opposition for electoral reform were conceded. But it doesn't matter what the regime granted. The upsurge against the dictatorship itself provided a school for the workers. It provided an example of militancy that encouraged the workers.

### **Onslaught Against the Bourgeoisie**

The strike wave shows something of the gains that workers can win at a time of mass political ferment and when the workers go into struggle

across the country. The workers did not just go out here and there: they besieged the capitalist employers across the country. They shut down large numbers of plants and work places -- from small ones to the biggest strongholds of South Korean capitalism: the industries owned by Hyundai, Daewoo, Samsung, and Lucky-Goldstar.

### **Destroying the Old Unions**

Not only did the workers win wage gains through the strike wave, but they also won recognition of new unions, which provide the beginnings of organization among the South Korean working class. Workers have learned hard lessons about the need for working class unity and organization against the employers. At the same time, they have further to go. It's not clear how far the old, company unions have been broken up, and there are problems of weak stands taken by some of the new union leaders.

### **A First Step**

The Korean workers have taken first steps, but nevertheless important ones at that. There are signs of growing radicalization among them. In certain places, they have joined up with the demonstrations against the dictatorship.

The workers can win even more, both in the economic and political fields, if they consciously enter into the political struggle against the dictatorship. They could give it a proletarian revolutionary stamp. That way they would immensely strengthen the movement against tyranny and build up their own forces to settle accounts with the system of capitalist exploitation itself. This is why the regime and employers are so desperately trying to keep the workers' movement separated from politics. <>

---

## TEACHER'S STRIKES AROUND THE COUNTRY

---

Teachers have struck this fall in many areas of the country. In Michigan, Detroit's 11,500 teachers struck as did teachers in Gibraltar. In New Jersey, the 2,000 teachers in Elizabethtown and the 850 teachers and staff in Plainfield struck. In Pennsylvania, 1,200 teachers struck in six districts. In Ohio, 1,500 struck in Youngstown and another 325 struck in two towns in the north-eastern part of the state. In Massachusetts, 149 teachers struck in Seekonk while the teachers in Revere waged a three-day strike.

Under the Reagan administration, so much has been cut from public education that it is a scandal.

And the same process goes on under liberal Democratic mayors and governors. In many inner cities, teachers are up against huge class sizes and cutbacks which have eliminated more and more of the curriculum even down to eliminating any physical education for hundreds of thousands of children.

The teachers' demands for a decent wage is not what is shrinking public education's funds. Rather it is the system by which the children of the wealthy are given opportunity while the poorer your are the greater want you face, even in the supposedly equalitarian public education system. <>

---

## STRIKE SHUTS CHICAGO SCHOOLS

---

Chicago teachers and other school employees waged a spirited strike. 26,000 teachers and 13,300 clerks, teachers' aides and maintenance workers struck. On September 23, thousands of them came out to a mass picket that encircled City Hall in the Loop. The strikers' determination was made clear as they shouted "Chop the top, we want a raise!" and "One, two, three, four, Harold are you coming to the door?"

Harold Washington, Chicago's liberal Democratic mayor, tried to keep a low profile. But it was he who appointed the entire school board. And it is this school board which tried to break the strike and cut the teachers' pay. The school board also tried to have the strike ruled illegal in the courts. When that failed it tried to break the strike by opening schools under the pretense of feeding hungry children. Washington himself cried out that there was no money for the teachers.

But the teachers and other school workers demanded that money be found, not just for them but to stop the deterioration of the education provided the youth. Following the lead of the Reagan administration, Republican Governor Thompson pushed a cut of \$165.8 million from Illinois public education. And Chicago's School

Board likewise cut the money allotted for education there. Many teachers report that they pay hundreds of dollars yearly from their own pockets for school supplies because the public educational system is so drastically underfunded.

The School Board threatened that any concessions to the teachers with one hand would be matched by cuts and layoffs with the other hand. And this is what it has done. The **Chicago Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP, which vigorously supported the teachers' strike, denounced the settlement. Below we print excerpts from the Oct. 7 issue:

---

### PROTEST THE BUDGET CUTS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

On October 8, after four weeks, the school strike in Chicago was settled. What are the terms of this settlement and what do they mean for the working people of Chicago? In our view, this settlement represents the continued attack of the Chicago Board of Education against the education of the youth in Chicago and against the livelihood of the teachers. We must take a strong stand

against this attack.

### **Further deterioration of the public schools in Chicago**

The situation with public education in Chicago is already atrocious. Schools and classrooms are overcrowded. In many schools classes are even taught in basement hallways and converted washrooms. Chicago has one of the highest student to teacher ratios in the state. Classes of 45 students in kindergarten and first grade are not uncommon. There are shortages of school supplies and books. There have already been cuts over the last several years in the number of teachers, teachers aides and other staff.

What is clearly needed are smaller class sizes, more teachers, more and better school supplies, more bilingual education and other improvements.

But what is the proposal of the School Board?

It is proposing to cut the class size by two students in only 100 elementary schools and then only in the first and second grades. However, this is supposedly to be accomplished at the same time as the planned layoff of approximately 1,800 school employees, including about 1,000 teachers. Are we really to believe this? Even a fool can see that laying off the teachers means more overcrowding in the classrooms. Furthermore, the School Board plans to cut the budget for the purchase of school supplies and other programs. This can only add up to the further deterioration of the school system in Chicago.

### **A further attack on the livelihood of the teachers**

Over the last ten years the real wages of Chi-

cago's teachers have fallen 14%. 29 Cook County school districts pay teachers from \$5,000 to \$15,000 more per year than Chicago. Nevertheless, the Board of Education had originally demanded that the teachers take a 1.7% pay cut. Only after the four-week strike did the teachers win a 2% raise in real wages (taking into account four missed school days).

The settlement does not even make up for the loss in real wages over the last 10 years. And we see that it contains a whole series of cuts that will harm public education. Unfortunately, pressure was put on the teachers by the Mayor's office, PUSH, the Woodlawn organization and others to accept this settlement. And the leaders of the Chicago Teachers Union also agreed with it.

### **Harold Washington's "flunks out" on public education**

Mayor Washington has made many claims that he is for a fight against Reaganism. But when it comes to a real fight against the Reaganite program for public education we see that he is nowhere to be found. In fact, we find him on the other side.

It was Mayor Washington's hand-picked man, the Board of Education President Frank Gardner, who was the spokesman for the outrageous demand that the teachers accept a wage cut. Manford Byrd was pushed for years by Jesse Jackson to be Superintendent of Schools. And he too was demanding that the school teachers accept wage cuts. Now these two and others are the authors of the layoffs and program cuts contained in the settlement. The program of the stalwarts of the Washington administration turns out to be right in line with Reagan's program for public education. <>

---

**DETROIT TEACHERS END 20-DAY STRIKE**


---

The Detroit teachers' strike ended September 20. Through their spirited struggle the teachers won a 6.7% pay increase the first year. And they blocked the attempt to make them pay for health care benefits. But the strike was stopped before they could win all of their demands.

The teachers were unable to win a reduction in class sizes. As well, although pay increases are promised of 7% and 6% the second and third years of the contract, these are tied to whether the school board is able to come up with new revenues. And the school board and Mayor Coleman Young are still crying they have no money, even while they squander huge sums to turn the schools into police prisons for the youth. There always seems to be more money for police repression against the youth. But while all the politicians cry over youth crime and youth shootings, they are unwilling to give a cent to improve the educational system to help the youth.

And now the school board has announced that it plans to close down various schools and layoff teachers.

The following comes from an article supporting the teachers' strike from the Sept. 16 issue of the **Detroit Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP-Detroit.

On Sept. 1, 11,500 teachers and counselors struck the Detroit school district. They are demanding a 14% pay increase over two years and a class size limit of 35 students. They are also fighting the school board's attempt to cut their health benefits.

Not only do Detroit teachers deal with larger classes and lower pay than the surrounding districts, but they also suffer a severe shortage of supplies. Teachers report a lack of essential educational tools such as science equipment. Worse still, they typically must buy even such basics as paper and scissors out of their own pockets.

The rotten condition of the schools deprives Detroit's youth of a decent education.

**Government of the rich can't find  
a penny for the teachers ...**

School Superintendent Jefferson, Mayor Young, and Governor Blanchard all swear up and down that there is no more money for the teachers. Indeed, when it comes to education of the workers' children, the capitalist politicians always find the coffers empty.

They are making the excuse that there is no tax base in Detroit. But why is that? It is because every chance the mayor and governor get, they give tax breaks to the auto, steel and other monopolies. It is these same corporations that are devastating the working people of Detroit through wage cuts, layoffs and plant closings.

Meanwhile the corporate executives, who live well on their skyrocketing salaries and bonuses stolen from the workers, can pay for fine schooling for their children in Grosse Pointe and Bloomfield Hills.

**...But plenty of money for repression**

At the same time, while the politicians of the rich can't muster a penny to educate Detroit's youth, they seem to have no trouble finding the money to lock them up.

Governor Blanchard denounced the teachers' strike and vetoed a bill for \$20 million in state school aid. Yet every year he comes up with money to build more prisons.

Mayor Young's insists there's no money for the teachers and wants a court order to end their strike. But he can't wait to spend money on his program for Detroit youth. Mayor Young's youth program consists of weapons shakedowns, beefed up security and a special police "strike force" for the schools, as well as rounding up youth on the streets and shipping them to concentration camps for "cooling out".

**And plenty of money for school board corruption**

While Arthur Jefferson is busy pleading poverty for the school board, some 70 school administrators have just received raises, including a 7.1% raise for Jefferson himself! As well, the teachers' union has uncovered that the school board has padded its budget by \$28 million for personnel it does not intend to hire. The Board also spent \$570,000 last year for first class travel, expensive dining and general high living for itself.

**Wage mass struggle in defense of education**

For the children of working people, capitalism offers no future but unemployment, poverty, and being cannon fodder in imperialist wars. Rather than make the rich pay for the education of the workers' sons and daughters, the capitalist politicians prefer to repress the youth, hoping to keep

them from rebelling against the lousy conditions.

Through their strike, Detroit teachers are taking a stand against the poor educational conditions in the city. They deserve the full support of all the working people.

For further steps in improving education, militant struggles by the Detroit workers and youth as a whole are needed. Mass struggle is what forces the capitalist authorities to "rediscover" the money that they previously couldn't find on education.

#### **Teachers defy no-strike ban**

The Detroit teachers' strike is illegal. It defies the unjust Michigan law against public sector

strikes. However, without waiting for an invitation from the governor, the teachers have established a militant reputation of striking when necessary to defend their interests. The teachers know that they can stand up to the state's threats to fire and replace 11,500 of them. They also struck for 45 days in 1973 and 17 days in 1982.

This feature of the teachers' strike is food for thought for postal workers. The teachers' strike cuts against the view that workers are helpless unless they have the legal right to strike. Indeed, various sections of the workforce have successfully used the powerful strike weapon, even without having the legal right to strike. <>

---

#### **BOSTON SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS GO ON STRIKE**

---

Excerpted from the Sept. 16 issue of **Boston Worker**, paper of the MLP-Boston:

The Boston school bus drivers are on strike against concessions. The bus companies and the School Department are demanding that the workers accept a contract with only 4 and 1/2 per cent raises each year at a time when experts are predicting inflation of better than 5 per cent for this year alone. And in Boston inflation is much higher due to the soaring rents. Bus drivers take home an average of \$220 a week and van drivers make 30 per cent less. With \$600 a month rents soon to be \$700 a month rents, the school bus and van drivers clearly need a huge wage just to stay even, not the measly 10 bucks a week the companies are trying to impose.

The companies are also demanding that the workers sacrifice the rights of newly hired workers by doubling their probationary period. The companies are also pushing for the right to fire or discipline workers for missing a mere 5 days in a year.

The same bus companies that are demanding concessions have received increased payments from the School Department of 22 percent this year and another 15 per cent next year. And this despite

the fact that the number of students being transported has been reduced by several thousand and 40 bus drivers have been laid off.

#### **School Committee is both anti-worker and segregationist**

The School Committee is screaming that the workers are holding the children hostage. The School Committee with Superintendent Laval Wilson as its black frontman is actually using extremely two-faced tactics in its attempt to break the strike and re-segregate the schools at the same time. On one hand they are trying to use the pretense of concern about school desegregation as an excuse for a court order to ban the strike. On the other they are trying to use the strike as an excuse to revive the long dead anti-busing movement and return to segregated "neighborhood" schools.

#### **Full-time job with part-time pay**

The school bus drivers are only paid for 5 or 6 hours work a day but because they work split shifts they are actually tied up for 9 or 10 hours a day. Basically they have a full-time job with part-time pay. The situation of the bus drivers is in many ways similar to the conditions of the growing



army of forced part-time workers in the food service, retail and public transportation industries all across the country.

### **Militancy inspires organization**

The Boston school bus drivers are also a very militant group of workers. They have repeatedly defied court injunctions and threats to replace them with scabs by waging militant strikes to

defend their rights. And they have won a number of victories. Only a year and a half ago they forced School Superintendent Laval Wilson to back down from his threat to get the Governor to call out the National Guard and replace them with scabs. As a result of that strike not only did they beat back the companies' demands for concessions, but they also inspired the previously non-union bus mechanics to join the union. <>

---

## **At DeGraff Hospital in Buffalo DEMONSTRATORS WIN RELEASE OF TWO STRIKING WORKERS**

---

From the October 6 issue of **Buffalo Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP-Buffalo:

On Wednesday, September 30, 125 workers demonstrated outside the North Tonawanda police station to protest the arrest of two DeGraff workers. As a result of this mass resistance to the unjust arrests, the police and the mayor were forced to release the arrested workers. The events of last Wednesday show once again that the police and laws stand on the side of the hospital administration and against the interests of the workers. And it points out that the mass actions of the workers are a force in the world.

### **The demonstration**

Earlier in the evening, there had been a mass solidarity rally at DeGraff Hospital. About 250 workers came from many area plants to denounce the DeGraff administration for union busting and strikebreaking, and to support the workers in the fight to regain their jobs.

After a brief rally, a spirited picket was begun around the hospital. As shift change approached, the picketers readied themselves to denounce the scabs and to make crossing the picket line as difficult and uncomfortable as possible for the scab van (used daily in transporting scabs in and out of the hospital). With diligent help from the North Tonawanda police, who pushed and shoved workers

out of the way, the van slowly inched its way out of the hospital parking lot.

But the police's loyalty to protecting DeGraff did not stop with escorting the scabs through the workers' picket line. After the van was in the clear, they proceeded to arrest one of the strikers.

The workers were angry -- it was obvious that one worker was being singled out as a warning to all strikers: "you have no right to defend yourselves against the mass firings of the hospital administration, it is against the law." As soon as the police car departed, a march began to the police station, chanting all along the route, denouncing the police, the scabs, the hospital administration and shouting "let him go!"

Upon arrival at the station another worker was arrested for holding open the door of the station. At this point, approximately 25 workers entered the police station -- shouting and stamping and demanding the release of their fellow workers. Unable to deal with the situation, the police were forced to call the mayor. For an hour or more, the demonstration continued outside the police station, marching and shouting slogans.

Finally, in order to diffuse the situation, the mayor and police released the two workers.

### **The strike**

The strike at DeGraff began on August 11. While a compromise has been reached on the economic issues, the DeGraff administration is refusing

to take back the majority of the workers, some with more than twenty years' seniority. In effect, DeGraff is firing the entire non-nursing staff because they exercised their "legal" right to strike for higher wages and better benefits.

Today, the main issue in the strike is a fight against this mass firing. The DeGraff workers are determined to continue the strike until all can return to work.

**The government, the police and the courts  
are servants of the rich**

What does the experience at DeGraff tell us about the government, its laws, the police and the courts?

Under the laws of the land, DeGraff is given the right to pay low wages, increase workloads and harass workers.

The hospital administration also has every right to hire scabs to replace the workers in the event of a strike. And this too is backed up by the government.

All what about the police? The police are not breaking the law when they escort scabs back and forth across the picket line. They are not committing any crimes punishable by the state when they arrest strikers for standing up to the hospital

and the scabs.

The courts too have already done their part to uphold the law. They have issued injunctions against the workers organizing a militant picket line.

The laws, the courts, the police and government are not set up to protect the workers. In fact, they are framed to be used against the working class. The laws of the land ensure freedom -- but just for the rich. They guarantee the freedom to exploit the workers, to speedup their labor, and to toss them out in the streets when they are no longer of use to the rich. But let the workers rise in anger and fight against their exploitation, and the laws of the land, the police, the courts, and the government come down on them like a ton of bricks.

**The working class must rely on themselves**

At DeGraff, the workers have organized a militant picket line, staffed 20 hours a day. They have refused to bow down to the media lies, the threats of firings, the scabs, the police, and administration harassment. And because the workers have stood up the hospital administration and its allies, they have won the support of the working class of Western New York. <>

---

**ALTHOUGH THE CONTRACT'S BEEN SIGNED, THE POSTAL WORKERS' STRUGGLE CONTINUES**

---

From the Sept. 16 issue of **Detroit Workers' Voice**, paper of the MLP-Detroit:

---

Although the '87 contract has been ratified, it was not received with enthusiasm by all the postal workers. A definite trend of disgust developed against the contract proposal.

But the outcome of the vote doesn't settle the question of conditions at the Post Office. The issue facing the workers is how to fight the daily harassment and speedup.

We print below an account of the struggle, waged by the carriers at Linwood Station against the lengthening of routes. It offers an example of how postal workers can build their struggle against the USPS [U.S. Postal Service].

**LINWOOD CARRIERS FIGHT LENGTHENING OF ROUTES**

"Restore the Routes! No to the route revisions!" Using buttons, leaflets, and meeting outside work, letter carriers at Detroit's Linwood Station have been waging a united mass struggle all summer against the routes being lengthened.

Late last spring, Linwood's management announced that three high-seniority routes would be eliminated and that all the routes would be reorganized. This meant that most of the routes were lengthened, and that three older carriers were forced into being subs or biding on the worst routes.

**Carriers organize on their own**

The workers were infuriated. When they went to the union, the local NALC [National Association of Letter Carriers] leadership wouldn't raise a finger against the route revisions. In fact, at a citywide union rap session, Al Wendland, president of Detroit Branch 1, tried to justify the revisions and announced that the union had agreed to them!

So the carriers started meeting on their own to discuss how to fight. All their anger against management spilled out, and they discussed what to do. These meetings helped unite the workers. They decided to resist the route revisions by refusing to carry the lengthened routes in the required 8 hours.

The carriers also circulated a leaflet which denounced the post office's attacks and called for

mass resistance. The leaflet showed that keeping the struggle confined to filing grievances was not effective, that the workers could not rely on the union bureaucrats, but only on their united strength. The carriers also produced buttons proclaiming "Restore the Routes". The leaflet and button helped draw more carriers into the fight and built solidarity among them.

By June 16, when the revisions went into effect, a new spirit of militancy was already sweeping the station. Carriers were standing up to management harassment, and began staying out in the field longer and longer. This went on for several weeks.

Management swore it would never give in and stepped up the harassment. They singled out militant workers and tried to force the carriers to work faster. This just made many carriers angrier and more determined.

**Management begins to cave in**

By August, management was wearing down. They appeared with some union bureaucrats at a meeting at the station and told the carriers the route changes would be "reexamined" (postal code word for bogging everything down in endless bureaucracy). The workers denounced management and the union traitors and continued to press their demands.

Recently, management was forced to make their first concessions. They announced that time would be taken off the two longest routes and added to the auxiliary route, making it almost a full-length route. Furthermore, extra assistance would be given to the carriers on two other revised routes, depending on mail volume each day.

These concessions are far from meeting the complete demands of the carriers. But it was the pressure of the struggle that forced management to back down even this much.

And what is particularly important is that the struggle at Linwood shows that it is possible for the postal workers to get organized independently of the traitorous top union hacks and fight in their own interests. The Linwood carriers are saying that even if they are not yet strong enough to win all their demands now, they have put themselves in a better position for the future. They are learning the value of a united mass struggle and finding ways to build it. <>

---

CORRESPONDENCE

---

**ON THE LITERARY DEBATE**

From a letter to the editor of **Struggle** from the Chairman of P.U.R.E. (Prisoners United for Revolutionary Education)

21 September 1987

Dear Comrade Hall,

...I have been receiving STRUGGLE and I have immensely enjoyed it, and read with much interest the articles that appeared in THE SUPPLEMENT to the Workers' Advocate in relation to the "literary debate" and am of the opinion that the Party correctly addressed this issue. Please continue to mail STRUGGLE to me here, and keep up the excellent work. Again, thank you for your letter, and for your particular interest in this area. A special revolutionary greetings to the comrades at STRUGGLE and to the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA. I'll be writing to the Workers' Advocate soon and forwarding other political materials. Until then, I remain,

Revolucionariamente,

Alvaro L. Hernandez  
Chairman, Central Committee  
P.U.R.E. <>  
Sept. 20, 1987

**NEW ADDRESS FOR P.U.R.E.**

The August 1987 issue of **Arm the Spirit**, the paper of P.U.R.E., says that correspondence and subscriptions should be directed to

ARM THE SPIRIT  
P.O. Box 1524  
Burleson, TX 76028 <>

---

Dear Comrades,

I read with profound interest the article on Literature and the Class Struggle (the **Workers' Advocate Supplement**, 8/20/87).

The issues raised here are very important concerning the methodology of the party work among

advanced workers/activists. A Marxist-Leninist understanding of the stakes involved in the debate on the course of Party ideological/cultural work will actually serve to strengthen the work of the Party comrades rather than weaken it.

**Struggle** magazine has a definite purpose. We should never treat it in a flippant way, as a kind of playpen for Marxist intellectuals only. That is the method of the revisionist capitulators, petty-bourgeois "chic" journals, and the trotskyists too. By promoting working people's unique culture, the art, music, poetry and movie/TV critiques etc., we are helping the advanced develop politically in the day-to-day struggles against the capitalist bosses. We aid their ability to analyze and critique the society we exist in and to develop forms and methods of being effective in bringing forward those who, though well-meaning, are confused, disoriented, scared and passive, etc. -- the way the ruling bosses want the working people's movements to be!

Another important point is that we cannot do our best work on the economic/political fields of class battles without the aid of consistent ideological work. This is so because Marxism is not just like 8 hours a day at work and then "freedom". Marxism-Leninism is a world view, the theory and practice for the goal of socialist revolution. We cannot have one foot in revolution and the other in fashionable bourgeois ideological quicksand! I think that most of us would agree that **Struggle** was a step forward in our work. But to sustain our modest gain on this front of work we all, I think, need to redouble our efforts to develop/promote **Struggle** magazine in our Party work!

Fraternally,

[Name omitted] -- LA supporter

---

---

**CORRESPONDENCE**

---

**ON THE INTERNATIONAL  
MARXIST-LENINIST MOVEMENT**

The Communist League of Norrkoping  
Box 190 15  
161 19 Bromma  
SWEDEN

Stockholm, September 27, 1987

To the **Workers' Advocate**.

Dear comrades.

On the occasion of the issuing of the sectarian communique of the recent multi-party meeting in Madrid, which publicly slandered your Party and made a scorn of the necessity of a rank-and-file discussion of the controversial issues of the international communist movement, we would like to express our solidarity towards the true Marxist-Leninists in the U.S. as well as in other countries.

It is quite clear, that the head-bashing brawls about "defamation", "provocation" and "confusion", is nothing but a sign of the political impotence and stagnation of the leaderships of these parties.

Although KPS [the Communist Party of Sweden, which participates in the **Theory and Practice** grouping of parties] did not participate, they have told comrades that they agree completely with the statement. For our part, we are going to publish both the statement and your commentary in the next issue of **Red Dawn** [journal of the Communist League of Norrkoping].

[The letter continues onto other subjects. It then refers to slides of the MLP,USA solidarity tour of Nicaragua] ... they are planned to be shown at a series of solidarity meetings which will be carried out in different cities during the fall and winter in support of the Nicaraguan workers' press.

With communist regards,  
on behalf of

The Communist League of Norrkoping

[For a brief description of the Communist League of Norrkoping see the article "First issue of Marxist-Leninist journal 'Red Dawn' in Sweden" in the July 1 issue of the **Workers' Advocate**. Both the text of the Madrid Communique and the our commentary on it can be found in the Sept. 10 issue of the **Supplement**.] <>