COMMUNIST

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY JANUARY 1998 $1

DEFEAT RIGHT OPPORTUNISM SPLITS IN THE RULING CLASS OIL AND WAR IN THE MIDEAST

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

PLP fights directly for communism. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism long ago. The two-stage idea of first socialism, then communism, led back to capitalism.

As the world's bosses prepare for oil wars and eventually World War III, PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers t turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

Communism means working together to build a society based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money, and profit. Everyone will share a society's benefits and burdens.

Communism means abolishing the concept of race and racism.

Communism means abolishing sexism.

Communism means abolishing nations. One working class, one world, one Party.

Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers—eventually, everyone—must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!

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ON THE COVER

The illustration on the cover of our first issue is *The Meeting*, showing Russian workers in the early days of the Revolution. The early days of the Russian Revolution saw a great surge in working-class art such as this

We invite working-class artists of today to work with us on future issues of Communist!

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THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RIGHT OPPORTUNISM

Capitalist ideas, culture, and habits have been the Achilles' heel of all communist movements, including ours. The current crisis of overproduction shows that capitalism cannot be reformed. The articles in this section reflect our Party's current thinking on this crucial question and describe some of our attempts to make communist politics primary in our practical work.

SPLITS IN THE RULING CLASS

Weakened internationally, U.S. rulers are also divided among themselves. The dominant, Rockefeller-led wing faces New Money bosses in the Oil Patch, and splits in its own ranks. These articles expose the class essence of the billionaires' dogfights and discuss how workers can take advantage of the enemy's weakness.

INTENSIFYING COMPETITION AMONG IMPERIALISTS

Oil-Mideast oil especially-is the lifeblood of modern capitalist industry. U.S. bosses, who have slaughtered hundreds of thousands to control this resource, will go to war again over oil to stop their rivals from cutting deals with competing Iranian and Iraqi rulers. These articles present a communist point of view about imperialist bloodbaths for profit and the coming of World War III.

DEFEAT RIGHT OPPORTUNISM— OPEN THE DOOR TO REVOLUTION

During the Great Proletarian Revolution Cultural Revolution (GPCR) in the People's Republic of China, Alexei Kosygin, then the premier of the Soviet Union, stopped off in Beijing on his way home from a world tour. His visit was a final attempt to patch over Soviet bosses' differences with the Chinese. Throughout the 1960s, the Chinese and Soviet Communist Parties were at each other's throats in an ideological battle over the course of the international communist movement.

At the time, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) represented the left of this struggle and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) was the right. The Cultural Revolution was an attempt by Mao Zedong and his allies to keep the Chinese Communist Party on a revolutionary course.

As the story goes, Kosygin asked how long Mao intended to keep the Cultural Revolution running. Mao answered: "Ten thousand years." Kosygin was taken aback. He said: "What? Ten thousand years?" Deferring to Kosygin's surprise, Mao quipped: "Well, maybe only nine thousand years."

The Progressive Labor party was organized thirty-seven years ago. Subjectively, that seems like a long time. However, in historical terms, it represents less than the wink of an eye. One could summarize the PLP's essential history as a constant battle against revisionism (or right opportunism). Right opportunism has been the crucial long-range error of the international communist movement throughout its history. To the extent that we inherited Marxism-Leninism from our great predecessors, we also inherited their political mistakes.

PLP'S HISTORY IN A NUTSHELL: A STRUGGLE AGAINST RIGHT OPPORTUNISM

During our infancy, we correctly fought against the Soviet leadership's abandonment of revolutionary communism in the 1950s and early 1960s. Soviet premier Khrushchev epitomized the emasculation of revolutionary Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. Among his many crimes, he betrayed the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. In its place, he substituted a sham he called "The Dictatorship of the Whole People." But Khruschchev didn't materialize out of thin air. The seed of his betrayals was already present in errors made by the great founders of Marxism-Leninism.

For example, they believed in the need for a state apparatus separate from the communist party. In Road to Revolution 4 (1982), the PLP identified this idea as a major error. We said that in the past, communist parties in power had established sham states to create the false impression that a mix of class forces could lead society. In fact, however, the party apparatus always led. And because workers had been won to an ideology different from and less than communism, their politics were limited to reformism. No political safeguard existed among the masses to prevent party leaders from abandoning communist principles.

In Road to Revolution 4, we discovered that a mass party composed of members who understand and support communism will help guarantee that the party remains on a revolutionary course. Hence, the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat is tens of millions of the most fully developed communists. They are the party and the state as well. In conjunction with all its members and its base, some of whom may not yet be members, the party leads all facets of society. No sleight of hand is required. No forces other than the working class and its allies will hold power. No power will be shared with capitalist forces of any type.

Having brought the false separation of state and party to its logical conclusion—an openly capitalist state and party—Khrushchev went on to the wholesale disavowal of virtually every key Marxist-Leninist principle. For example, Lenin had rightly asserted that capitalism inevitably leads to war. Khrushchev proclaimed that this was no longer true, that war was no longer "fatally inevitable." His "proof:" nuclear weapons had made war obsolete. The Soviets stopped promoting and assisting international communist revolution. Within the USSR, the CPSU leadership encouraged profits and promoted the right to amass private property.

COMMUNISTS MUST DESTROY THE WAGE SYSTEM, NOT PRESERVE IT

Key to capitalist restoration in the socialist states was the retention of the wage system. Socialism preserved wage slavery. But wages, the sale of labor-power, are the core of capitalism. Communists should never institute or preserve capitalist practices. In the old movement, communists often viewed themselves as better capitalists than the bosses they had overthrown. The fledgling PLP opposed Khrushchev's betrayal, which the U.S. "Communist" party had echoed point for point. The formal restoration of capitalism to the USSR took place under the cover of a vicious, slanderous campaign against Joseph Stalin's leadership and revolutionary accomplishments. The old imperialists were hard pressed to match

Khrushchev's anti-Stalinism, which served as a cover for the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism. We correctly estimated over thirty years ago that the Soviet Union had turned into its opposite and become a full-blown capitalist state subject to the general laws and contradictions of all imperialist development.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Chinese Communist party issued fairly staunch criticism of the Soviets. However, because of its own right-wing errors, the CCP also ultimately went the way of the Soviet Union. The GPCR failed to defeat "Capitalist Roaders" within the party leadership.

A thorough assessment of the GPCR lies beyond the scope of this article. Nonetheless, a few comments are in order. The GPCR was not a revolution, although one of its slogans was "Bombard the Headquarters." However, Mao and Co. never planned to destroy the old state and party apparatus. Nor did they intend to seize political power and build a proletarian dictatorship from scratch. As far as it went, their strategy aimed to reform the CCP by packing the leadership with left-minded cadre. The results are obvious.

Nonetheless, the GPCR advanced several important concepts. The PLP has learned from them and still tries to implement them. One was: "Serve the People." This seems innocuous enough, but the Chinese Communist Party had long since stopped serving the working class, serving instead its own elite with all sorts of plums. Another key slogan that we should attempt to carry out vigorously is: "Make politics—i.e. communist politics—primary."

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution put forward the idea that communists, rather than experts, are crucial to society. During his battles with Khrushchev, Mao had already advanced the concept that the ideological superstructure was primary over the economic base. Khrushchev had championed the old illusion that by producing an abundance of goods, socialism would automatically topple into communism. Against this economic determinist absurdity, Mao argued that if goods alone could bring about communism, then the United States was already communist, because it had more goods than any country in the world.

Left forces in the GPCR set up a commune in Shanghai. It partially replicated the revolutionary Paris Commune of 1871. During this experience and others like it, the GPCR made significant efforts to replace capitalist socialist relations with communist ones. For example, it somewhat intensified attempts to organize production and distribution on the basis of need rather than market requirements.

We in the PLP learned the fundamentals from the previous communist movement. Of course, this knowledge included the bad along with the good. As we put into practice ideas we thought good, we learned much from our own activity. In this sense, practice remains primary. We drew valuable lessons from the historical practice of others and from our own on-going experience.

THE ROAD FROM SOCIALISM TO CAPITALISM

In the 1980s, we finally figured out that despite heroic efforts by millions of workers and others, the old movement had destroyed itself from within because it had failed to make communist politics primary. From its earliest days, the movement's leaders—Marx, Engels, then later Lenin, Stalin, and Mao—estimated that the masses could not be won directly to communism. Marx and Engels decided that an halfway house—socialism—was necessary to make the transition between capitalism and communism. However, as events later proved, socialism really paved the road back to capitalism. In every country where it developed, the socialist stage retained many capitalist ideas and relations. Wage slaves remained wage slaves, because workers received salaries relative to their skills. Although the early socialist revolutionaries carried out many profound reforms, class need never became socialism's primary aspect.

The reformist die had been cast. The Russian Revolution was organized around reform slogans rather than communist goals. Its key early slogans were "Bread, Land, and Peace." They may sound reasonable, but they didn't work. Wage gaps between "skilled" and "unskilled" workers inevitably widened. Experts and managers with "red" pedigrees became the new ruling class. The profit motive returned with a vengeance. A few of the old Czarist forces came back, but not massively. The real disaster was the persistence and eventual triumph of capitalist ideas, culture, and habits.

Who's to say that the masses can't adopt revolutionary ideas and goals? Are workers so backward that only a few wise men can comprehend advanced communist concepts? We estimate that a direct leap from capitalism to communism is possible. We believe that the many can eventually grasp and apply communist principles. We are after a mass communist cadre rather than a tiny elite of experts. "Unrealistic!" you say. Maybe so. But we know that social-

ism doesn't work. We know that capitalism in any form is a horror show which wreaks havoc on all the world's workers.

So in the early days, we applied many of the old international communist movement's mistaken ideas. We advocated socialism. We were wrong! We learned and are still learning the hard way that we are communist revolutionaries, not reformers. As the old movement's children, who deeply respected our forebears, we mainly promoted reforms while advocating communist ideas on the side. Although we knew by 1982 that socialism had been a mistake, we didn't elevate our own practice to the level of this understanding. Our party advocated communism in general while implementing reformist politics, like the shorter work week. We came up with all sorts of rationales to justify the theory that these reformist battles would lead to communism. Slowly, too slowly, we learned that the contradiction between our line and our practice was undermining the revolutionary process. Therefore, with great difficulty and frequent stumbling, we have tried to upgrade our practice to make revolutionary politics primary.

The uphill journey between Road to Revolution I and 4.5 represents our party's attempt to rid itself of reformist politics and practice. We still have a long way to go. Although our history encompasses only 37 years, we've learned that there was something to Mao's prediction of ten thousand. Let's hope we can do better than that. Nonetheless, the fight against revisionism remains a very long term proposition.

HOW DO WE FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM INSIDE THE REFORM MOVEMENT?

Because of past errors and poor leadership, many of our members do not yet grasp how to make politics primary. The entire party from top to bottom has to work on this. All of us jerk our knees to jump on reforms, especially economic ones. Most of us fear that we will isolate ourselves if we don't advance or support reforms, particularly wage increases, strikes, etc. We also worry that if we criticize reforms, we will inadvertently side with the bosses.

So even in a period when we are trying to root out reformism from our practice, it continues to crop up. Recent Challenge articles, letters to the editor, and Bulletin articles contain a number of incorrect or, at best, confused ideas. A January 1997 editorial about a large auto strike in South Korea says that the success of the strike—winning higher wages—is important to the working class of the whole world. Nothing could be further from the truth. A strike can serve workers only if communist ideas are put forth within it and if workers are won to them. Of course, this won't happen in a vacuum. Communist ideas spread in the heat of battle. It's important to sharpen strikes, by fighting scabs. Such struggle can lead to party-building, which is what winning is all about..

Our role in reform struggles is first and foremost to show that building and joining the party is crucial to all workers. In any economic struggle, we can raise the need to abolish wage slavery. For instance, we can raise in a mass way the question: "Is it their factory or ours?" In our factory, there can be no wages. We will gear production toward need, the working class's need, as well as our own. We won't produce for profit. The cornerstone of everything we do should be the struggle to win workers to understand the need for a mass communist party.

Shortly after the editorial about the South Korean strikes, Challenge ran an article about the Metro public transit system in Washington, D.C. The article called on the union to become more militant and to spread its organizing. But the PLP correctly views unions as the bosses' tool. They will never act in the workers' class interests. Even if they increase their militancy and force some minor concessions for their members, the result can only reinforce their reformist grip on workers.

A more correct outlook emerged in a subsequent letter criticizing the approach of the D.C. article. The recent discussion piece "Making Politics Primary" put forth a number of constructive suggestions about raising the party's advanced ideas within the struggle. In this case, there was the dual issue of the D.C. big bosses' racism against the drivers and working class public, and the union leaders' and petty bosses' nationalism.

If you are active in the class struggle and you up the ante by fighting the boss and by advancing communist ideas, will you become isolated? Maybe. But even if bad ideas gain you some acceptance, they don't help. We are not in a popularity contest! Even if putting forth a communist line temporarily isolates you, the isolation will sooner or later reverse itself as workers come to recognize the correctness of the ideas you advocate. Building a collective mass base for communism can overcome any isolation.

Let's take a chance. Enter the reform movement. Raise communist ideas. Sharpen the struggle against the bosses. Let's see what happens. We bet you will not be isolated!

The Rodney King beating sparked mass anti-ractis rebellion, but only Communist revolution can destroy racist police violence.

OUR OPPORTUNISM HAS PREVENTED US FROM SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES

The current period cries out for revolutionary solutions and action. With the U.S. in the vanguard, worldwide imperialism is in decline. The bosses can't make significant reforms. They are at one another's throats in a fight to the death. No maneuvering by us can alter this inexorable truth. Imperialism is dying. But it will not disappear by itself. We have to kill and bury it.

However, we should clearly understand the character of the times. World capitalism is a moribund system. Its decline is now! What reform can reverse this decline? This is something new.

Therefore, for every situation, there are revolutionary answers. On the issue of immigration, we should boldly advance our internationalist line. We have always said: "Working people have no nation;" "Smash all borders;" "Frontiers are a capitalist device." If you want to eliminate borders, you must eliminate capitalism. We have always identified fascism as the inevitable consequence of capitalism. If you want to destroy fascism, you must destroy capitalism. It's the same with war. Profit wars will rage as long as capitalism stands. We correctly maintain that racism is the tool of capital and can be destroyed only once capitalism has been smashed.

Is our line on immigration, fascism, war, and racism isolating us or winning broader acceptance for our party? These are not separate issues. They are all part and product of the profit system. Fighting to eliminate them is therefore part of the global revolutionary communist process.

But we still basically shy away from revolutionary politics when we take on economic issues. Yet it's becoming clearer that capitalism doesn't work. So revolutionary politics are more and more the order of the day.

We have been weak as well in politicizing non-economic issues. Our shortcomings give some credence to illusions about the omnipotence of the ruling class. Over the last couple of years, we were especially feeble in responding to the O.J. Simpson trial. We failed to recognize it as a golden opportunity to expose police terror as an instrument the bosses use to hold power. Some said that Simpson was a rich parasite, so "why bother?" Others said that he mistreated women and killed his wife. All this may be true. But out of this trial, the nationalist Farrakhan built one of the largest demonstrations ever held in the U.S.—around his own rotten line.

Except for some minor action in Los Angeles, we offered little opposition when the ruling class rehabilitated the police and their credibility during the second O.J. trial. Our passivity and opportunism reinforced the incorrect idea that the bosses can get away with anything they want. Where were we?

Before O.J., the Rodney King beating had generated a mass rebellion in L.A. The King affair drew international attention. Even the parachutist George Bush had to deplore police brutality toward King. We could have seized the Simpson and King affairs as golden opportunities to fight racism and to raise our line that the fight against it is a class question that concerns all workers, just as smashing capitalism is in the interest of all workers.

A similar case could be made about our lethargy on the question of "downsizing." The open fascist Pat Buchanan was able to use layoffs demagogically to broaden his appeal to the working class. Where was the PLP's march on Washington to oppose downsizing? We could have linked the issue to the system of wage slavery and can still do so.

Recently, we have learned a little from these mistakes and have correctly started to move on welfare "reform," slave labor, and prison labor. These issues

Increased police terror, slave labor workfare and prison labor are signs of growing fascism. Counterattack on May Day!

should be prominent in our May Day marches and our subsequent organizing activity.

In this period, worldwide imperialism is revealing its total bankruptcy. It is totally incapable of meeting the needs of the vast majority. Only communist ideas have real merit or validity. "Make communist politics primary" is not just another slogan. It is the only alternative to an imperialist system that has brought the world to instability and the brink of chaos.

WORLD WAR WON'T DEVELOP OVERNIGHT—BUT IT WILL SURELY DEVELOP

We live in an age of war and fascism. If you study events between World War II and the present, you will see an unending series of large and small wars. We won't list them, but the UN counts several dozen raging throughout the world as you read these lines. Some of you lived through the Vietnam War, which wasn't exactly insignificant. Perhaps some of you were around during the Korean War, which also involved the Chinese and a number of Soviet airmen. Most of you surely remember "Desert Storm" for oil, which killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis over a few weeks in 1991. Twelve thousand Iraqis are still dying every month as a result of that war, as are a few U.S. soldiers. The African continent is a tinder box already exploding or about to explode.

These conflicts often fail to make an impression on us because we and our kids aren't the ones being slaughtered. "Other people" don't seem as important as those close to us. But those hundreds of thousands of Rwandan children dying because of imperialist adventures and nationalist complicity in them are real people. We aren't exempt from the process: it can and will happen here.

As we have already mentioned, smaller wars cover the globe. They often reflect contradictions among various imperialists. Zaire, now renamed the Congo, provides a good example. In this case, the French and U.S. bosses are slugging it out by proxy. But these local proxy wars aren't so small. Millions have died in them and are dying. Challenge-Desafio has frequently warned that another Middle Eastern war looms on the near horizon. The tense situation in this explosive region reflects sharpening contradictions between local bosses and major imperialists—including the Russians—over control of oil and the immense profits it generates. "Desert Storm" intensified this process.

Some people are lulled into thinking that because all-out war among the main imperialists is slow to develop, it will therefore never happen. True, war between the U.S. and Japan or the U.S. and Germany isn't imminent. But economic and political competition between these forces is heating up. Sooner or later their fight to dominate markets and raw materials will reach its logical conclusion. As it does in every process, "quantity will turn into quality." To think otherwise is to believe that the laws of class society have changed and that war among imperialists is no longer inevitable.

Most of today's so-called "local" wars will sharpen and widen. The slaughter in Bosnia may well be a straw in the wind. Larger wars will erupt tomorrow or the day after. Don't be deluded by appearances and duped into complacency! Communists and workers have everything to lose and nothing to gain by hoping that the profit system can be reformed to abolish world wars.

WAR IS THE HANDMAID OF CAPITALISM: ORGANIZE IN THE BOSSES' MILITARY!

The night before Bush launched Desert Oil Storm, a PLP club had criticized the party leadership for predicting that the war would happen. Well, our job isn't to warn about peace. Lenin was right to point out that capitalism makes war inescapable. Perhaps one can quibble about the time frame, but war—local, regional, and global—looms on the near horizon. Is the party crying "Wolf!"? Look at history and decide for yourself whether circumstances have changed sufficiently to nullify Lenin's thesis on the inevitability of war.

But all of us, leaders as well as members, have difficulty grasping this truth. As our newspaper Challenge-Desafío has written, we have been weak in the recent period on the question of war. One reflection of this weakness is the inadequate effort we have made to organize in the bosses' military.

The more isolationist wing of the U.S. ruling class does not share this weakness. The now operate on many military bases, especially in the South, to augment their growing army of irregular militias. Murdering black people is one of their main activities.

What holds us back from advancing our military work? Many youth in and around the party take a dim view of joining the military. Pacifist reluctance often lies at the core of this disdain. It's true, as we say, that the military enables the rulers to hold power and help expand imperialism's profit base at home and abroad. Along with this observation and a dollar and a half, you can get on a New York City subway, for the time being.

Soldiers must be won to side with the world's workers and to make communist revolution. You can't get the job done operating only from the outside. Hatred of the military can become productive only if it builds the revolutionary communist party. Can we just sit by as the Christian Militias and the Rockefellers compete to build their power base against the working class and each other? The Russian Revolution won in great part because of contributions by soldiers and sailors in the Czar's military. Have we got a better answer?

War is coming, but in order to wage it, the bosses require certain conditions. They need more capital. They also need an obedient working class, as well as a passive population in general. The Korean and Vietnam Wars exposed the U.S. ruling class's inability to develop a politically reliable army or a mass ideological base for itself on the home front.

Despite the rulers' many limitations, their mad scramble for profits and markets will lead to a third World War. World War III is likely to differ significantly from the first two. U.S. bosses made marginal use of nuclear weapons in W.W.II to hasten Japanese surrender and to warn the Soviets that they'd better behave. But World War III will see the extensive use of nuclear arsenals. This is another aspect of today's new situation. To get their way, the rulers will be forced to rely increasingly on technology rather than human beings. Desert Storm provided an example of air power, "smart bombs," and other gadgetry as alternatives to imperialism's inability to win troops to fight for its gold and oil.

Thus, organizing in the military assumes new and ever more crucial importance for communists. Nuclear weapons cause mass destruction. They must be confiscated from the rulers. But this can't be done with a butterfly net or by issuing statements expressing horror at the bosses' barbarity. In the final analysis, all the technology in the world can't supplant the need for ground troops. As we have often said, you can't pump oil or hold territory from the sky. We must be on the ground, among those troops.

Once again, no set of reforms can fix a world headed for nuclear war. It's our world or the bosses'. The world should and will belong to those who built it.

Nonetheless, things are somewhat complicated, because a base for open fascism does exist in the form of "Christian Militias," the anti-abortion movement, and other descendants of the long-established "Bible Belt." However, these forces owe their allegiance primarily to bosses who, for their own selfish reasons, oppose the plans of Rockefeller, Inc. The main section of U.S. rulers isn't likely to win a solid mass base for its upcoming war plans. Therefore, it needs its own form of fascism as well, to sharpen the oppression of the working class and keep it in line. And, lo and behold, the rulers also need fascism to discipline their own ranks, especially among the factions that don't support wars they deem counter to their particular profit interests.

WHY THE BOSSES NEED FASCISM AND WHY IT REVEALS THEIR WEAKNESS

Previous communist movements usually analyzed fascism as a response by the ruling class to the growth of communist forces. This is undeniably true, as far as it goes. Fascism is in part a virulent, desperate capitalist response to a revolutionary communist threat. The first rabid attack launched by German Nazis targeted not the Jews but the communists.

However, history exposes fascism as more than just an attack on a major revolutionary movement. Fascism developed before World War II in both Italy and Japan. In those countries, communist forces were small and had an insignificant base or no base at all. We can identify at least four roles fascism plays for an increasingly aggressive, oppressive capitalist class: 1) Establish self-discipline among the bosses; 2) Intensify internal oppression and disciplining of the working class to cut costs and increase profits; 3) Sharpen racism, both to raise profits and also to weaken and divide the working class; 4) Assault the communist forces that happen to be around, even if they are modest. The rulers understand that commu-

nist forces, which may be small today, can grow much larger tomorrow. As Marx and Engels pointed out in *The Communist Manifesto*, "A specter is haunting Europe." The specter of communism still exists. Today, it haunts the entire capitalist world. The rulers have learned the hard way that tiny revolutionary parties can become huge.

Many Challenge-Desafío articles have described sharpening splits within the U.S. ruling class. These splits basically pit the old-line Rockefeller forces against "new money" rivals who have conflicting class needs. The struggle over oil is the eye of the storm. Rockefeller & Co. are preparing for war to maintain their oil dictatorship over European and Asian competitors. The "Oil Patch" gang want to save the billions they have invested in the domestic oil industry. Some of them, like the Koch and Hunt interests, have been dealing with Rockefeller's Iraqi and Libyan enemies. The Old Money-New Money contradiction has many twists and turns and a long history, and oil isn't the only point of struggle. We won't go into the details here.

However, the split bears mention, because it's relevant to the development of fascism in the U.S. Recent political events show that the bosses' dogfight is intensifying. The battle for control of the Republican party, the Newt Gingrich scandals, the hoopla over Democratic campaign funding, the struggle over women in the military, and the recent circus about Anthony Lake's failed CIA nomination are just a few cases in point. This is a life and death fight over the direction of U.S. capitalism. It could lead to a form of civil war. Many people, including some party members, don't believe this is a credible scenario. But civil war can come in many guises. In some respects, a small version of it has already started. The FBI didn't exactly use water pistols in Waco. And the Oklahoma City bombing was planned over a long time by fascist militias who consider the federal government their main enemy and who are funded directly or indirectly by New Money. The list of prominent politicians and other capitalist leaders dying under "peculiar" circumstances (Vince Foster, Ron Brown, Admiral Borda) seems to be growing. The basic contradictions for a type of civil war already exist within the U.S. They are sharpening. We can't discount the possibility. Like world war, it is a process that won't mature overnight.

Once again, we aren't prognosticators. But consider the following as a possibility. Clinton/Rockefeller start their next Middle Eastern adventure, perhaps against Iraq. Even though the Iraqi army is politically weak, it puts up a better show than the last time. U.S. soldiers begin to return in body bags. Buchanan and other New Money isolationist forces increase their efforts to organize a jingoist movement around the slogan "bring the boys home." At the same time, the U.S. is forced into other military interventions. Will Rockefeller & Co. simply accept this challenge in the name of "democracy?" Not likely! Regardless of the details, the battle among big bosses to control the economy is going to get a lot more violent, and the violence won't be purely verbal. Our party will have to expose all these forces as fascist killers, regardless of the form their political line assumes.

Seen in this light, fascism reflects a national ruling class weakening with respect to its competitors. Fascism is not a sign of strength. U.S. rulers are not liable to build a solid fascist base, especially within their military. We can turn this dilemma into big opportunities to build a mass communist movement against the profit system and its fascist manifestation.

However, even if this estimate proves incorrect and U.S. capitalism succeeds in developing a more vigorous version of fascism, as the Hitlerites did in Germany, we can still build a mass movement, because fascism in any form directly contradicts the aspirations of the working class and cannot indefinitely hold workers' loyalty.

Building a revolutionary party is a deadly serious business. It can't be done without a great deal of skullduggery. Just look at the old Russian and Chinese revolutionaries. A purely open, "legal" party can't develop a mass revolutionary movement. We have been very weak on fascism as well as war. Right opportunism stubbornly clings to life. It is also a fatal flaw. Right opportunism and the illusions it builds about capitalism are a cancer that can destroy our party. This cancer has wiped out every communist movement before ours. If we aren't careful, it can kill us as well.

So the key question to raise in this period is: how have we fought and how are we fighting right opportunism? The class enemy is formidable, but they don't beat you. You beat yourself! The primary contradiction in any process is internal. Remember Alexander Haig, the Rockefeller flunky who was White House Chief of Staff and later Secretary of State? In an article he wrote several years ago, Haig made the (for him) remarkable observation that the U.S. hadn't defeated the Soviets in the Cold War. He explained that the Soviets had lost the Cold War because of their own internal weaknesses. Of course, our readers know all this, but sometimes it's not so bad to restate the obvious.

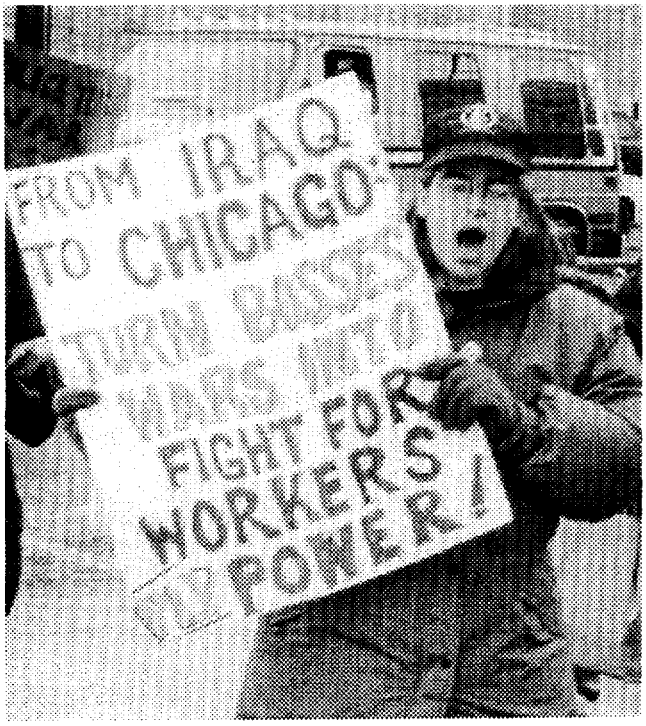
CAPITALIST CRISES: OVERPRODUCTION AND THE FALLING RATE OF PROFIT

Capitalism has brought chaos, death, and suffering to workers everywhere. The worldwide profit system is unstable and becoming more so on a daily basis. Workers and others have just one choice between two paths. Either go down the tubes in a capitalist holocaust or fight for revolutionary communism. That's the only deal available. In this titanic battle, there are no third options. As the old Woody Guthrie song goes: "You're either a working man or a thug for J. H. Blair." The class struggle doesn't allow neutrals.

Two inter-related crises are inexorably driving the world's bosses toward war. The first is the one Karl Marx defined as the "crisis of overproduction." He called the second "the tendency of the rate of profit to fall." A brief look at each of these phenomena may be useful.

As we mentioned above, capitalism organizes production on the basis of profit rather than need. Marx discovered that the secret of capitalist profit is the surplus value workers produce and capitalists keep for themselves. However, things aren't so simple. Workers generate profit at the point of production, but the profit can't be realized unless the commodity is sold on the market. To complicate matters further, the capitalists are also in competition with each other.

PLP demonstration in Chicago makes the point: The working class must not take any bosses' side in imperialist wars—our job is to lead a communist revolution



So, in order to maximize his profits, each capitalist must find ways to produce cheaper, better-quality goods faster than his competitors, and then to acquire markets for sales. This process generates a number of contradictions that the profit system can't solve. They will become clearer if we look at a few cases in point.

OVERPRODUCTION: CAPITALISM FLOODS THE WORLD MARKET WITH COMMODITIES IT CAN'T SELL

Take the world automobile industry. In the years following World War II, U.S. automakers ruled the roost. The Big Three raked in billions from the domestic and overseas markets. Then came the Vietnam War. The U.S. auto industry and the steel and other industries that supported it retooled for military production. This gave competitors from Europe and Japan a chance to catch up. As everyone knows, they have overtaken GM, Chrysler, and Ford. But the story doesn't end here.

Advances in technology begun by the Japanese in the 1970s mean that auto companies can make cars faster, cheaper, and better than ever—and with fewer workers. In 1979, Ford required an average of 40 hours' labor to build a car. Today, Toyota's Tahara No. 4 plant in Japan can assemble the luxury Lexus LS 400 with 18.4 hours of labor. The Toyota plant in Georgetown, Kentucky, can build a car with 19.5 hours of labor. Nissan's plant in Smyrna, Tennessee, can match the Tahara plant's rate.

Volkswagen is looking to make a car with 20-30 percent less labor than the Japanese system. Even the stumbling Big Three are in the race. Ford's labor input fell per vehicle to 25.4 hours between 1979 and 1993. GM and Chrysler also improved, although not as much.

What do these "improvements" mean? The world's auto bosses can produce more cars than ever, cheaper than ever, and, although they will always need a working class, with fewer workers than ever. The industry's capacity to make automobiles is increasing by leaps and bounds. Not only are the existing players improving the production process; new competition is threatening to push some of them aside. For example, by 2000, Korea will produce more cars than Chrysler and will some day make more than Germany.

But there's a fly in the ointment The world's auto companies are producing far more vehicles than the market can absorb. By 2000, the same year in which Korea is slated to outproduce Chrysler, worldwide productive capacity will exceed demand by 36 per-

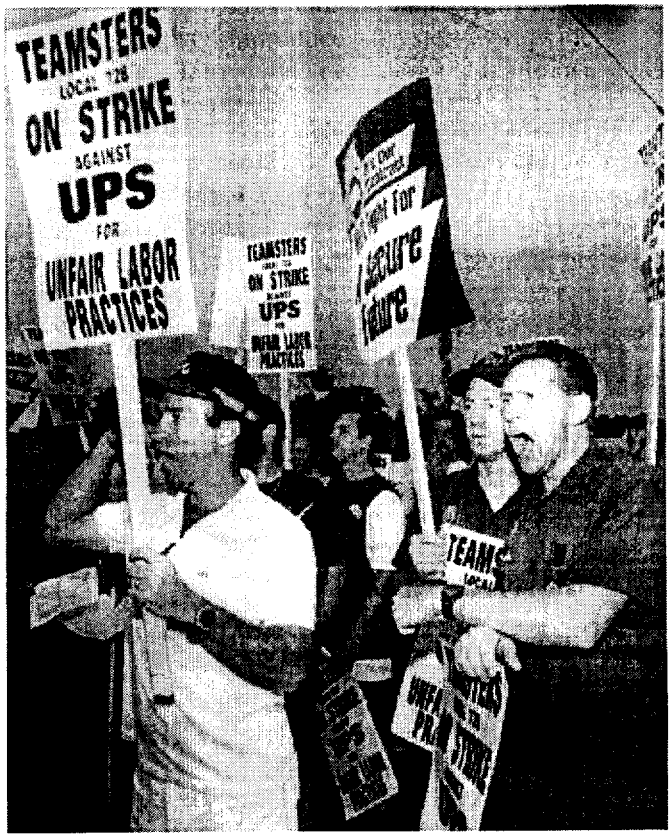
cent. As William Greider writes in his book *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism*, "With expanding production in Korea, China, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, the world auto industry (will) be able to produce 79 million vehicles. But worldwide demand (will) provide buyers for only 57 million vehicles" (p. 112).[1]

So, automakers are producing cars faster than they can sell them, but if they stop producing, they go out of business. That's just one of the insoluble problems capitalism creates. There are others. Every time productivity improves, workers get laid off. Between 1980 and 1994, thirty-two car and truck assembly plants closed down in North America, wiping out 180,000 jobs, mostly in assembly. Millions of other manufacturing jobs were eliminated in the wake of this trend. On average, 100 jobs in the automobile industry generate another 691 jobs. The general ratio in manufacturing is 100:422. In the service sector, it's only 100:147. When auto and other manufacturing jobs are eliminated, the ripple effect is obvious. The workers whose labor power adds to the glut of goods on the markets can purchase fewer and fewer of them. Also, the glut is being produced by a shrinking force of manufacturing workers. In the last 15 years, GE has laid off nearly 90,000 U.S. workers (215,000 worldwide). Since 1996, GM has axed its domestic workforce from 559,000 to 314,000. Boeing has eliminated 60,000 jobs since 1989 (Greider, p.216).

Unemployed workers can't buy cars. Yet Toyota decided in 1995 to double production in its U.S. factories.

The wave of auto plant closings that began in the U.S. next hit Europe (22 percent overcapacity) and then Japan (50 percent overcapacity). Each time production moves around the globe, the price is a shift in jobs, causing more layoffs, and widening the gap between supply and the ability to absorb it.

Every major industry in the world has followed this pattern. According to Greider: "(Take) the example of steel, where global capacity exceed(s) demand by 20 percent. Or commercial aircraft, where the capacity (is) approximately twice the market demand. Or consumer electronics. Or textiles. Or computers. The facts var(y) in each marketplace...But the overwhelming condition of the global system (is) oversupply" (p. 117).



Workers' militancy grows during strikes—but only communism can win real change for workers.

Another problem generated by improved productivity and overproduction is lower wages. On the one hand, the world's bosses constantly need to drive wages downward. However, as Henry Ford discovered at the beginning of the 20th century, workers must consume as well as produce. The problem of oversupply is compounded when the working class doesn't earn enough to buy back what it makes. This is happening today with a vengeance. In the U.S., between the late 1970s and 1990, manufacturing productivity rose by roughly 35 percent, while real manufacturing wages fell.

Everything the bosses do to save their asses sharpens the contradiction. Clinton & Co.'s NAFTA scheme was billed as a job saver. Well, hundreds of thousands of U.S. workers have been axed as a result of the flight to cheaper Mexican wages, and Mexican workers to whom U.S. production has been shifted can buy far less than U.S. workers. Manufacturing productivity has risen in Mexico by 40 percent since 1980, but real wages have fallen by the same rate (Greider, p. 75). As a result of NAFTA, Mexico now has a $15 billion trade surplus with the U.S.

[1] Greider is a journalist loyal to the Eastern Establishment, who thinks the crisis of overproduction can be solved if only the world's bosses sit down together to hammer out a deal. We aren't going to get into a long rebuttal of his reformist absurdities. However, his book is useful because it presents an overwhelming case about the depth and breadth of the current crisis and because it backs up the case with many facts. Anyone who wants information about the crisis should read the book.

THE FALLING PROFIT RATE: CAPITAL INVESTMENT COSTS RISE FASTER THAN WAGES DECLINE

The race to find ever-cheaper sources of labor power is a worldwide phenomenon. The capitalists must constantly force workers to work for less because this is the main, although not the only, way they can try to recoup the ever-increasing amounts of capital they have to lay out for production. This is the dirty little secret of the "falling rate of profit."

Let's look at the so-called computer chip "revolution" for example. The multiplying memory power of databit chips increased from 64 kilobits to 64 million between 1980 and 1995, roughly four times every three years. Technology gurus expect that the power curve will reach 256 million in 1998 and 64 billion in 2010. At each new stage, the cost to produce one unit falls by over 50 percent. Obviously, the cost to the buyer falls as well.

Sounds wonderful, doesn't it? Computers are getting faster, more powerful, and cheaper all the time. Maybe we should start believing the ads. Not so fast. There's another fly in the ointment. The advances in chip power and the cost reductions don't fall from the sky. They depend on capital investment.

The 1m factory cost $300 million in 1988. The 16m factory cost $700 million in 1993. The newest factories will cost $2 billion, and $5 billion factories are in sight (Greider, p. 484).

This contradiction reflects and affects developments in all major industry everywhere. Individual unit costs go down, but the cost for the means of production rises faster and consumes an increasing percentage of the bosses' overall outlays. Wages are ground down with a vengeance, but neither fast enough nor far enough to offset the upsurge in capital investment costs. This is the falling rate of profit in a nutshell.

The facts confirm this law. We aren't going to get into a discussion of how profit rates are calculated. Every economist has a different wrinkle. However, all available information indicates a steadily downward trend for the last 50 years. One survey by the Bureau of Economic Analysis that concentrates on manufacturing corporations shows an after-tax profit rate of 14.6 percent in 1947, 9.8 percent in 1966, and only 4.4 percent in 1992. Another, by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, shows a pre-tax rate of 18.25 percent in 1947, 10.5 percent in 1958, 4.5 percent in 1983, and 7.75 percent in 1992. In other words, over a 50 year period, the highs and lows are both lower.

The general trend is clearly downward. In the very short run, the most recent profits are up, but the increase is due mainly to the massive layoffs and savage wage cuts of the last few years. The chickens will come home to roost when millions of affected workers become less and less able to consume.

To sum up: each capitalist power improves its technology in order to produce more quickly and cheaply. As it does so, speeding up some workers and laying off others in the process, it expands its economic base. But the existing market is incapable of absorbing the full production. Thus, competition among capitalists intensifies. Eventually, the result is war. As Lenin pointed out eighty years ago, the world has been divided and redivided by the imperialists. Every area has been claimed and disputed. So the main contradiction at present throughout the world is the fierce fight over raw materials, sources of cheap labor power, and markets for increased production.

WAR DRUMS BEATING OVER CONTROL OF MIDDLE EASTERN OIL, WITH U.S. BOSSES INCREASINGLY ISOLATED

As many Challenge-Desafio articles have shown, and as we mentioned above, the Middle East is the main hot spot of the moment. Oil, the life-blood of imperialism, is the prize. Whoever controls the flow of oil not only amasses enormous profits but also exerts great power over all competitors. At the moment, the Iraqi and Iranian bosses stand at the cutting edge of the contradiction with U.S. imperialism. Both Iraq and Iran pose a military threat to U.S. domination of Middle Eastern oil supplies. Each has alliances with other imperialists.

Despite their temporary impotence, the Russians still have tremendous military stockpiles left over from the Cold War. These include a vast arsenal of missiles and bombs. Russia and Iran concluded a multi-billion dollar economic and military deal in December of 1996. Russia continues to supply Iran with arms and has major oil and gas contracts in that country. In October 1997, Russian and Iraqi bosses signed a multi-billion dollar oil deal. Russian and European bosses have made a mockery of Clinton & Co.'s sanctions against both Iran and Iraq.

Saddam Hussein still harbors grandiose plans to dominate Middle Eastern oil, possibly in alliance with his former Iranian opponents. U.S. imperialism seems to have a knack for reconciling old enemies and getting them to unite against it. The Clinton "dual containment" policy has turned out a miserable flop. Iraq and Iran continue to covet the enormous oil

reserves of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Obviously, these ambitions are a dagger pointed at the heart of U.S. rulers.

But the Russians aren't alone in backing the Iranians and Iraqis with trade and military hardware. China has emerged as a new powerhouse. It will need huge amounts of oil for its rapidly growing economic and military machine. According to Kent Calder, an Asian affairs experts with close ties to the dominant Rockefeller wing of the U.S. ruling class, China was still a net oil exporter as recently as 1992. By 2000, it will need 11 percent of total Asian oil imports, and that figure will nearly double by 2010. All of East Asia will depend on the Middle East for 95 percent of its oil by 2010 (Pacific Defense: Arms, Energy, and America's Future in Asia, p. 57).

Chinese and other Asian bosses will need more and more Middle Eastern oil for the same reasons other capitalists need it: it's cheap, plentiful and easy to reach. The Chinese have been supplying the Iranians with long-range missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads.

When the Chinese bosses aren't busy shopping to buy the United States, they build strategic Middle Eastern alliances. For the moment, their main goal in the region is a coalition with the Iranians against the U.S. The U.S.-China antagonism didn't develop overnight. Remember: China and the U.S. fought a war not too long ago (1950-53) on the Korean peninsula. In historical terms, it was "only yesterday" that General MacArthur demanded that the U.S. drop an atomic bomb on China.

The contradiction between the U.S. and China dates back well before the Korean war. The imperialists have always viewed China as an area for economic and political penetration. The tug of war goes on. The U.S. accuses China of "human rights" violations in its treatment of dissidents and use of slave labor. This is a transparent, hypocritical sham, because the U.S. is now using many framed-up prisoners as slave-laborers, to say nothing of Clinton's racist "workfare" scheme. Perhaps U.S. displeasure with Chinese prison slave-labor stems from the competition it poses to U.S. businesses. Slave labor here thus reflects a move to counter China's lower wages and compete with them and other low-wage rivals. As we have often said, racism is the U.S. ruling class's most profitable business. But racism is a two-edged sword, which also creates vast potential for developing revolutionary communist fighters. As Karl Marx wrote about the U.S. civil war: "Racism is the Achilles' heel of capitalism."

Articles published recently in Challenge and in the February PLP Bulletin explain and document sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry in the Middle East and elsewhere. They show Germany, Japan, Russia, and all other imperialists at loggerheads with the U.S. over continuing U.S. efforts to dominate Middle Eastern oil supplies. Although alliances among bosses constantly shift, because all they're really after is money, it seems reasonable to predict that in the long run most imperialist countries and their vassals will line up against U.S. imperialism. U.S. imperialism is the main road-block to the aspirations of all other bosses.

U.S. IMPERIALISM: SUPER POWER OR "STUPOR" POWER?

This is hardly a scenario that justifies claims about U.S. imperialism as the world's "only remaining super power." Yet many people continue to believe in appearances. Yes, the U.S. military crushed a third-rate Iraqi army that wouldn't fight in Desert Storm. And yes, U.S. bosses have a huge arsenal of nuclear warheads and other weapons of mass destruction. But in reality, U.S. imperialism is a giant on shaky legs. Its economy is declining faster than its rivals'. Between 1970 and 1994, the U.S. shifted from the world's biggest creditor to the world's biggest debtor nation. Since 1980, it has imported $1.5 trillion more than it has exported. Within the next ten years, U.S. debt could reach 30 percent of the Gross National Product, and no end is in sight (Greider, p. 203).

A fundamental struggle among imperialists is the competition for market share. U.S. rulers are losing out on this front as well. As liberal journalist Peter Beinart writes in the October 20, 1997 *New Republic*: "...from a long-term perspective, America's economic decline relative to other nations is indisputable. In 1950, the U.S. represented 39 percent of world GNP (Gross National Product,—ed.). In 1995, it represented 26 percent. In 1953, the United States accounted for 45 percent of the world's manufacturing output. In 1990, it accounted for 22 percent" ("The False Promise of Globalization, An Illusion for Our Time," p. 24).

The U.S. market may still be then world's largest, for the time being, but real wages are declining, and the increasingly indebted U.S. working class here can absorb only so many commodities. Imperialism constantly needs new markets to maximize its profits. This means that export is the name of the game. The bigger the business, the more it has to export. But, as the West Coast bosses' mouthpiece, *Investor's Business Daily*, points out, "...exporting is now consid-

ered a weak spot for the U.S. economy. America's foreign trade deficit surged in 1996 to $114.2 billion, its worst performance since 1988. The widening gap stemmed, in part, from a slowing of export growth" (February 26, 1997).

Along with the crisis of overproduction and the falling rate of profit, this contradiction is driving U.S. rulers to war, trade war first, shooting war next. Clinton's push for "Fast Track" legislation is just the latest salvo in U.S. imperialism's sharpening economic rivalry with its Asian and European competitors.

U.S. rulers are headed toward war, but with whom can they ally? In fact, U.S. imperialism has no real allies. Everything it does to advance or protect its own greedy interests puts it in conflict with its equally greedy competitors. So, far from being a "super power," it is really the sickest member of a sick worldwide system. U.S. imperialism is strategically weak. It can eventually be taken!

"GLOBALIZATION," CHINA, AND THE NEW WORLD DISORDER

Some say that the so-called "globalization" of the economy will bring unity among bosses and render war impossible. The opposite is the case. "Globalization," i.e. investment from one country to another, intensifies competition between the ruling classes involved. The emerging markets in China prove the point. In the 1970s, profit-hungry U.S. bosses figured out that China had returned to capitalism. They reckoned they could make a strategic alliance with China's new ruling class against the Soviet Union, which was their main problem at the time. Rockefeller & Co. also looked longingly at the potential bonanza to be squeezed from the low wages of a billion Chinese workers. U.S. rivals drew similar conclusions.

So a feeder's frenzy of investment flowed from the U.S., Japan, and Europe to China. All the imperialists got into the act. AT&T set up a branch of Bell Laboratories in Shanghai and competed with Nynex, HK Telecom, Canada's Northern Telecom, and others for the $90 billion market to wire 280 million new Chinese telephone lines. Motorola, Intel, IBM, Fujitsu, and Toshiba fought over the computer market. GM, Ford, IBM, Volvo, Nissan, Toyota, Mercedes, and Volvo elbowed each other to overtake Volkswagen, which was already building cars in China. Boeing laid off workers making $50,000 a year in Seattle to exploit Chinese workers whom it now pays $700 a year.

Globalization compounds the crisis of overproduction. How many Volvos or Fords can a Chinese worker buy on $40 a month...

On the one hand, the competition among established imperialists has intensified for the China market. And China's rulers know how to exploit existing contradictions among imperialists. When they didn't like the noise coming from Washington in 1996 about "human rights" and trade practices, Chinese bosses quickly gave $1.5 billion in contracts to Boeing's main European rival, Airbus.

On the other hand, the Chinese themselves don't intend to act like a colonized country. They have a plan to become a major imperialist power in their own right. They therefore let in foreign investment—but at a price. The price is either technology transfer or an agreement to share a part of production with the Chinese. This has three consequences. The technology transfer helps the Chinese develop as rivals to the present western and Japanese big boys. The production and marketing "offset" lowers the investor's profit rate. Finally, the deal increases the balance of trade deficit between the other imperialists and China. For example, the U.S. trade deficit with China is $40 billion and growing.

Obviously, "globalization" compounds the crisis of overproduction. How many Volvos or Fords can a Chinese worker buy on $40 a month? "Globalization" also creates a new source of supply that will start competing with other producers on the world market. China may buy Boeing jets for a few more years. But within the next decade, the PLA (Chinese military)-run Xian Aircraft Co. is on schedule to become a competitor on the international scene. This is true for Chinese autos, high-tech, electronics, chemicals, and many other sectors. As Greider writes: "China (is) not going to solve the supply-demand imbalances for the other trading nations; it is only going to make them worse"" (p.155).

But Chinese capitalism presents only the largest of many similar contradictions. U.S., French, Japanese, and other established imperialist investors run into

"offset" technology and buy-back roadblocks in India, Korea, and other emerging imperialist economies, including Australia's.

In the final analysis, "globalization" reflects the dog-eat-dog world of the profit system. No capitalist ruling class can be truly internationalist. Only the working class can. "Workers of the World, Unite" is a meaningful slogan and strategy. The bosses of the world can't unite. Each imperialist power ultimately opts for its own narrow national interests. Just as there is no "super power," there is no "new world order." Despite the Soviets' defeat in the Cold War, we still have the old world order of division, instability, greed, racism, unemployment, fascism, and war.

RUSSIA: A SICK IMPERIALIST WHO COULD GET WELL SOON

One situation worth noting is the joint imperialist attempt spearheaded by the U.S. to prevent Russia from reviving itself. In a modern version of the "Cordon Sanitaire" (the "Sanitary Zone" of anti-communist countries from Finland to Rumania established by the imperialists after World War I to stifle the Soviet Union), the U.S. is once again trying to surround Russia with eastern European nations, this time from the former Soviet orbit.

Poland, Rumania, Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia, etc. are being lured into NATO. As we know, NATO is the U.S.-dominated organization set up to check the Soviets in Europe after World War II. Political forces in Russia who recognize an expanded NATO as a threat oppose this move. Some within the Western imperialist camp also oppose it, because they understand that provoking Russia may lead to the shooting war NATO was supposed to prevent.

Although our predictions aren't 100 percent correct—we aren't soothsayers—it is possible that the Russians may be able to adopt some version of Chinese capitalism. In other words, they may pull themselves together. Recent history has shown that the Russians have the potential to regroup. Russian nationalism remains potent. The post-Yeltsin leadership may succeed in using it to rebuild the country's industrial base.

There are contradictions in everything. The current state of affairs in eastern Europe is far from permanent. It may even change rather rapidly.

THE STRUGGLE TO SMASH REVISIONISM CAN SUCCEED. THE SECRET WEAPON: MASSES OF WORKERS WON TO COMMUNIST POLITICS

So the long road of struggle against opportunism continues. The fight is winnable. We would do well to remember that it is as old as the international communist movement. Marx and Engels initiated it in their economic analysis of capitalism and their battles to make proletarian dictatorship the movement's political goal. Lenin advanced it against Kautsky, Plekhanov, Trotsky, and other right-wingers. The Bolsheviks opposed and defeated those who advocated the peaceful, parliamentarian road to socialism against the armed struggle for the seizure of political power. Stalin and his allies battled the doomsayers who objected to industrializing the Soviet Union on the pretext that socialism couldn't triumph in one country. Left forces in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution attempted to cleanse their ranks of capitalist elements.

Every fight against right opportunism has thrust the movement forward. However, as we have pointed out, the persistence of earlier errors limited the possibilities of advancement and ultimately doomed the old movement.

We enjoy many advantages over our predecessors and have far more tools at our disposal than they did. We have a great deal to learn from historical experience. We can and will learn as well from our own practice. We have a winning hand, provided that we play our cards properly.

The best way to fight right opportunism is to make communist politics primary. The best way to make communist politics primary is to build the party around its most advanced line at any given moment. At present, that line is Road to Revolution 4.5. RR4.5 is a partial development of the strategy and tactics for applying the line of Road to Revolution 4. In a nutshell, it means placing communist concepts in the forefront of all political activity. Doing this means fundamentally rejecting our own past practice as well as our predecessors'. Placing communist politics in the vanguard would be living proof of our line that we must have confidence in the working class.

The PLP believes that the working class can be won, as a mass, to communist politics and practice before the seizure of power. This is true because capitalism fails, fails, and fails again. A system that can't satisfy any of the working class's needs should and will be driven from the earth. Capitalism doesn't deserve to exist and ultimately can't survive. It serves only the

interests of a small ruling class at the expense of workers and most others.

However, we should take note of certain relevant contradictions and illusions. One important contradiction is the potential for winning many people in the still rather large middle class to a communist outlook. War, fascism, racism, slave labor, downsizing, and other capitalist horrors conflict with their basic aspirations and needs. The middle class can't escape the consequences of the system. Obviously, nuclear war will put a damper on fantasies about "making it" under capitalism.

On the other hand, although the middle class is shrinking, its continued existence in large numbers creates enormous illusions among workers. Colleges and universities are filled with young workers who enter them only to escape from their own class. The bosses hold out capitalist education as a straw to grasp. But as society sinks further and as it grinds down these young workers with it, more and more will see the futility of bourgeois schooling. Life will provide a basis for eradicating many of their illusions, especially if we are on the spot putting forth communist politics and organizing communist actions.

PLP'S HISTORY PROVES THAT COMMUNISM CAN TRIUMPH

Our own history as a party demonstrates our potential. May Day was for many years the revolutionary holiday of the international working class. Over time, revisionists throughout the world decimated its revolutionary content. Our party held firm and resurrected May Day in 1971 as a revolutionary celebration. Since then, however our line may have evolved, May Day has always been among the PLP's most successful and consequential events. Many thousands have demonstrated with us. Today, significant numbers of people march under the banners of communism and the red flag. Among our many slogans, we put forth "End Wage Slavery!" and "Workers of the World, Unite!" Our party's May Day activity proves that communism is a mass demand. It shows that many consider the party as their own. To a great extent, May Day validates our line that workers can be won directly to communism.

In scores of actions over the years, the party has revived militant anti-racism as a cornerstone of communist organizing. We have consistently explained the class basis of both racism and anti-racism. We have updated Marx's view that "labor in the white skin can never be free as long as labor in the black skin remains in chains." We have exposed nationalism as racism's twin, the virus of all-class unity for one boss or another. We have proved in word and deed that "race" and "nation" are myths useful only to the bosses. We have said and shown that neither racism nor nationalism can end until capitalism is crushed.

Many workers, black, latin, asian and white, are adopting this viewpoint. As we mentioned above, Marx was right to identify racism as capitalism's "Achilles' heel." In their march toward fascism, the bosses are promoting it to the sky. Racism means super-profits. It also has dire political consequences for workers, because it divides us and saps our collective class strength in the fight for communism.

We have also shown that male chauvinism can never disappear under capitalism. Of course, the bosses pretend otherwise. Their current attempt to "fight" male supremacist ideology and practice is the campaign to win women the "right" to participate in military combat. Obviously, calling for equal opportunity to kill and die in the bosses' imperialist military makes a mockery of the struggle to end male chauvinism.

This phony crusade is led by the Old Money forces and their puppets in the so-called women's liberation movement. The truth is that just like racism and nationalism, the special oppression of women is a class question. The rulers seek to divide men and women in order to weaken united class struggle for communism. Bourgeois ideology has created yet another myth about "inferiority" and "superiority." This myth proclaims that women are lesser beings and that super-exploiting them is therefore justified.

Black and latin women are triply exploited: first, as workers; next, as black and latin workers; and, finally, as women. Our party's efforts against Clinton & Co.'s workfare/slave labor place us in the forefront of the real fight against male supremacy. Black and latin women are the main victims of this fascist scheme.

To the PLP's credit, many women lead our organization and its work. On the other hand, we are still weak on the question of overcoming male chauvinism. We say, correctly, that racism is the cutting edge of the bosses' drive for profits and toward war and fascism. However, the super-exploitation of women runs a close second and is clearly related to all forms of capitalist abuse.

Despite the bosses' poison and our own weaknesses, we see that thousands of black, latin, and white workers—men and women—are joining the anti-

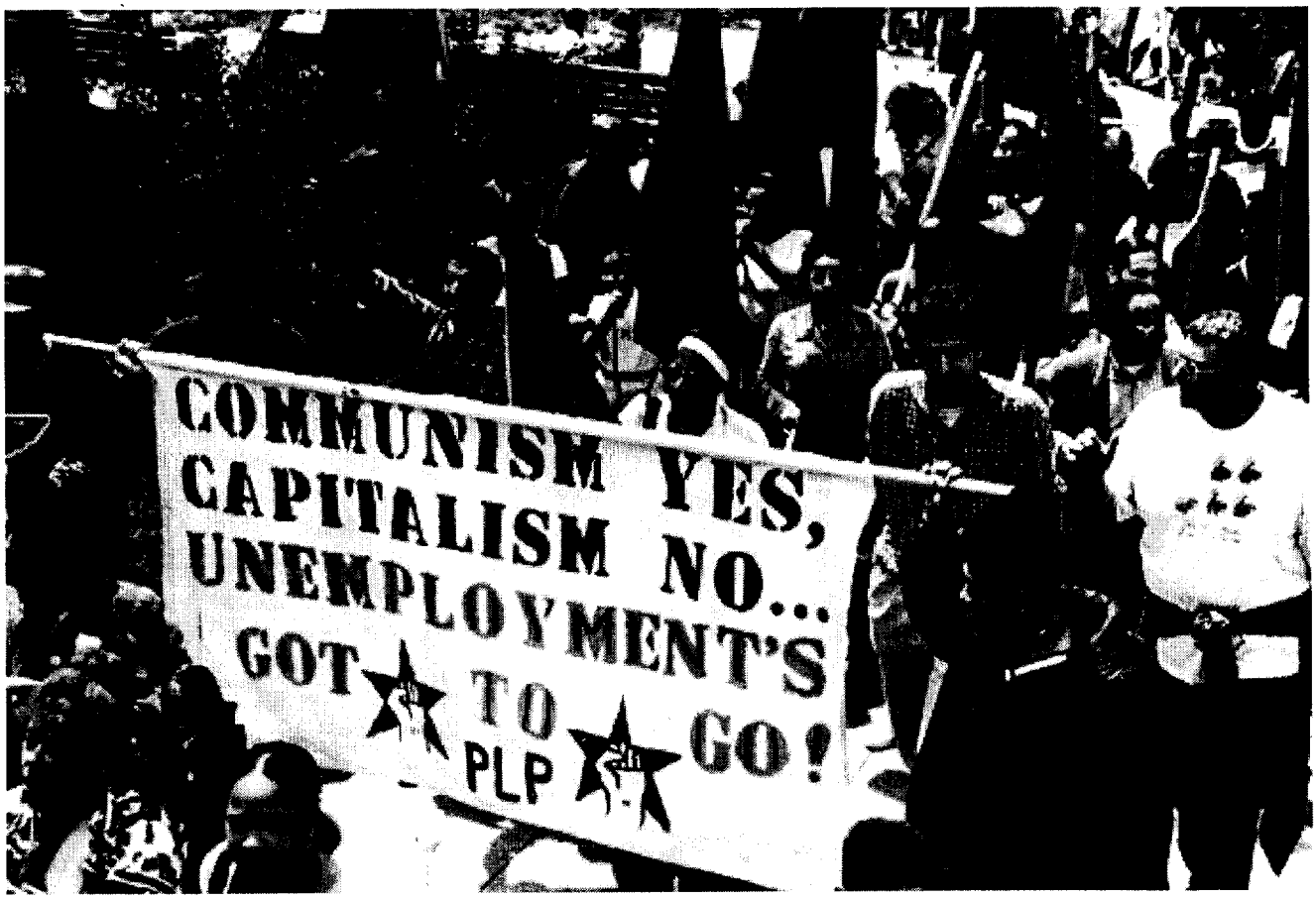
racist struggle as fighters for communism. The tens of thousands whom we have organized into anti-racist action prove the party's credibility and create the basis for confidence in the working class. The bosses would love us all to believe that it's useless to rely on anyone—except them, of course. We will see!

Our party launched the movement against the U.S. war of genocide in Vietnam. However, we didn't make communist politics primary, and we forfeited leadership over most of the anti-war movement, which eventually engulfed millions. The rulers like to portray this movement as composed primarily of middle-class, white people. They don't want to admit that half a million workers, mainly black, deserted their army. The U.S. working class soldiers weren't exactly "gung ho" over Vietnam. Fragging (shooting or tossing grenades at) officers became common. However, the bosses love to promote the fiction that workers generally supported the war. During the Vietnam period, students in PLP refused the 2-S military deferment the rulers were dangling as an anti-working class bribe. We entered the army to win soldiers to oppose the war and to join the party. Our efforts were positive but modest. We didn't recruit enough to the party.

Ironically, the Nixon gang viewed the anti-war movement as a threat to its power. So Nixon set up special police and other repressive formations to disrupt the PLP, among others, and to silence his own enemies in the ruling class. Huge demonstrations in Washington D.C. found the Capitol and White House ringed by tanks as planes flew overhead. Given the character of the movement's leadership, there was no danger that the multitudes were out to seize power. But the numbers were impressive, especially to Nixon. However, the main section of the ruling class steadily co-opted the anti-war movement and used this leverage to oust the Nixon forces during the Watergate hearings. At the time, we described this turn of events as a fight between Old Money and New Money. As we pointed out above, it's a struggle that rages on today.

This history shows that we can eventually win the political leadership of forces this numerous both inside and outside the military. We have made and continue to make many errors. However, we also have much to feel good about.

May Day in Moscow, 1937. Communistm was the hope of the world's workers then and now, but the Soviet Union returned to capitalism because it failed to see beyond socialism.



Capitalism can't be reformed. Since 1971, PLP's May Day marches have called on workers to destroy the misery of wages and profits and fight for an egalitarian society.

BOSSES' WEAK IDEOLOGICAL HOLD ON MASSES: AN OPENING FOR US

Our modest success in rebuilding May Day shows that as the party line moves to the left, we continue to grow. Since adopting Road to Revolution 4.5, we have seen a small spurt of growth. In fact, we have grown more than during the years when our practice was mired in reformism. This development is important. It indicates that large numbers of workers can be won directly to a communist outlook. We haven't yet turned the corner and still encounter difficulty in applying RR4.5 because we often hesitate to raise revolutionary ideas within the reform movement. Nonetheless, we have the potential to improve. Making communist politics primary will help us raise the most advanced ideas within the mass movement and free us from the treadmill of nickel-and-dime economic reform.

As these lines are written, the world's imperialist forces are more and more at each other's throats. None of them seems to have a solid base within its own working class. The bosses may twist and turn, maneuver and grasp, but at present, no power can field a reliable army. Although the situation could change, workers don't appear to feel much allegiance to their particular rulers. The Vietnam war exposed this trend. If Desert Storm had lasted more than a few weeks and produced significant U.S. casualties, this weakness would have become quite clear. Obviously, the Iraqi soldiers wouldn't fight for Saddam Hussein. The imperialist Soviet army wasn't exactly a juggernaut in Afghanistan.

Hitler's Wehrmacht was the last reliable capitalist military. It had a high level of ideological commitment to Nazi-style fascism. On the other hand, despite their many political shortcomings, three Red armies proved more than a match for the bosses.

The Soviet Red Army, the Chinese Red Army, and even the communist-led Viet Cong beat the hell out of their imperialist enemies. It seems that an ounce or two of communism can kick the shit out of tons of imperialism. This is because politics is primary.

We can build our forces. We can turn the bourgeois armies into mush and win their soldiers over as forces for revolution. Under the leadership of communists and pro-communists, the Soviet Red Army was unbeatable. Under capitalist leadership, Russia's army

can't beat a handful of bandits in Chechnya who supported the Nazi invaders during World War II. Communism has proved beyond a doubt that it can defeat capitalism. It will do so again and seize power. Communism will be built!

Some may call this a dream. Were a handful of Bolsheviks in old Russia mere dreamers? Were twelve Chinese communists dreaming when they founded their party in a rowboat? Or a few Vietnamese, when they organized for revolution in a soccer stadium?

The future is bright. The Red Flag will fly over the entire earth sooner or later. Possibly sooner than we think. Capitalism's growing worldwide instability will create the conditions for revolution. Just look at tiny Albania and see the fruits of retreat from socialism back to capitalism. Albania is a microcosm of world capitalist logic, in this case, the logic of restored capitalism. If the old communist movement and party had eliminated wages there, the recent insurrection, from which communist leadership was completely absent, could never have occurred. A society based on workers' needs rather than money and profit could not have collapsed so badly. If Albania had had a mass communist party, a two-bit Ponzi scheme could never have undermined it. During the years of socialism, the Albanian working class showed its desire to end racism, to meet the needs of all the masses, and to end alienation. But desire alone isn't enough. The politics have to be there as well. We must all go forward to communism.

The road ahead will be rough. Bourgeois ideology dies hard. Not even Bruce Willis can destroy it. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution took aim at "old" habits and social relations. Capitalism has existed for five hundred years. It emerged from feudalism, which had already developed many ideas that later became bourgeois in form as well as essence: private property, individualism, etc. This was also true of slavery, from which feudalism arose. So the core of capitalist thinking is thousands of years old. When most people try to ameliorate capitalist oppression by resorting to capitalist strategies and tactics, their response is understandable. This is the way the system trains us. People automatically react to problems by looking for reforms to make the profit system more livable. In this sense, Mao was right to predict a long-range struggle against bourgeois ideology.

To underscore the capitalist roots of reformism, let's talk once again about the "confidence" game. Capitalism trains us to think cynically and individualistically. This viewpoint easily leads to a lack of confidence in the working class. But, as Marx pointed out, class struggle is the engine that drives history. Under communist leadership, workers made revolutions in Russia and China. The reversal of these revolutions should not mislead us into capitalist cynicism.

Just the opposite. Previous revolutions should help us develop overwhelming confidence in the working class and in communist ideology. All processes contain contradictions. This is as true of political movements and individuals as it is of nature. We all have our contradictions. But communist practice can help us resolve these contradictions, overcome our weakensses, and advance the movement to higher levels. We should have confidence in other workers and in ourselves. We should learn to reject one-sided thinking, which fools us into seeing only the negative or the positive aspects of a process. We should consistently, vigorously, and creatively raise communist ideas and promote communist practice.

Sooner rather than later, growing numbers of workers will respond to communist leadership and in turn become revolutionary leaders themselves. Consistent basebuilding for communism will steel us and the party. The examples of such communist organizing to which we can point today have led to modest but steady party growth. Participating in all aspects of the class struggle by sharpening battles and building the party is essential to our continued growth. Remember: winning is a process, and building the party is the essence of winning. Comrades who do the work with this attitude become more and more impervious to the ups and downs of the revolutionary process.

It is, after all, a process. Doing the party's work hardens us in a good way and prepares us for the long-range effort and commitment needed to make revolution and to win others to make it. In this sense, it is trite but accurate to say: "practice makes perfect." Confidence in the working class isn't a matter of religious mysticism. It doesn't fall from the sky. It comes from communist experience and evaluation.

To try reforming capitalism is like asking the fox to guard the chicken-coop. We in PLP are learning the hard way that there are no shortcuts or halfway stages on the road to revolution. We must train ourselves and our class to fight oppression, not with reformism, but with communist revolution.

Even today, many workers respond favorably to communist ideas and to our party. Communist aspirations motivate and unite workers. Capitalist bureaucracies, decrees, bribes, threats, and punishments, do not. The bosses have their tools, and we have ours. At the end of the day, the world will become red, and "the international working class shall be the human race." Workers, arise!

MAKING COMMUNIST POLITICS PRIMARY

Workers Expose Boeing's Role in U.S. Rulers' War Drive Against Iraq

(Challenge, Nov. 13)—The U.S. ruling class is strategically weak. The present crisis with Iraq brings their weakness to the fore. The Eastern establishment old Oil money is isolated internationally, while domestic oil New Money is undermining Rockefeller & Co. at home. And, most significantly, key sections of the working class are anything but won to Rocky's plan for an oil war as a recent union meeting at Boeing showed. The bosses can be had!

On the other hand, nobody should underestimate the death and destruction the U.S. bosses can visit on the working class as they desperately hang on to their shaky empire. Every speech at a union meeting like the one last Thursday at Boeing, which called for a mass demonstration against prison labor and linking slave labor with the bosses' plan for a new oil war, hastens the day when we can put an end to the devastation of imperialism. There's not a minute to lose!

IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE ON THE JOB PREPARES WORKERS FOR UNION MEETING

Last Thursday's union meeting was preceded by a week of intense discussion and debate on the Iraqi crisis. The Party and friends fought to explain this crisis as the natural outgrowth of Old Money's absolute necessity to control oil in the "greater Middle East." Seventy percent of the world's known oil reserves are in this crescent shaped area comprising the traditional Middle Eastern countries and the Caspian region.

"They called it the Gulf war," said a machinist. "but that was only an abbreviation. It was really the Gulf-Exxon-Mobil...war." In case any of us had any illusions about Boeing's role in all this, the company chose the very day of the union meeting to announce the appointment of William Perry, Clinton's former Secretary of Defense, to the Board of Directors. Perry is also a trustee of the Carnegie Endowment for In-

ternational Peace. The Carnegie Endowment just published a thesis on America's manifest destiny in the greater Middle East (Strategic Geography and the Changing Middle East by Geoffrey Kemp and Robert Harkavy).

"How do you spell that?," asked another wag when he heard about the book. "Carnegie Endowment for P-I-E-C-E, as in Rocky wants a piece of the Middle East?!"

"You may be right about imperialism, but what's the alternative?" asked a third worker. "Building for communist revolution is the only alternative we workers have," answered a comrade. "But that hasn't worked," he objected. "How can you defend communism from those who would usurp all the power and turn it back into what we have now?"

"By having many more discussions like this. The Party will fight for millions of workers to think strategically. We'll have the tool of state power on our side. We're not stupid. We can understand these things as well as—even better—than the Ivy League educated mouthpieces of the bosses. We're taught to think only about our jobs and, at most, about our own families, but we are capable of much more than that. We can shape the world—we have no other choice!"

Although he wasn't "ready to buy it" yet, it did give him pause to think. These discussions gave us the courage to raise the issue at the union meeting.

MORE THAN POLITE APPLAUSE

"Passing resolutions against Boeing's use of prison labor is not all we can do," began the speaker at the union meeting. (At previous meetings, Union leaders whined that passing a resolution was all we could do because of the contract.) "For starters, we can call a statewide demonstration against prison labor."

The speaker didn't stop there. Bush had compared Saddam Hussein to Hitler to justify Desert Slaughter in 1991. If you want to make comparisons to Hitler, what about slave prison labor! The Nazi regime was the most notorious example of using slave labor to build up a war machine. Just who is more like Hitler: Saddam or the Boeing Board of Directors? The Boeing Board of Directors condones Nazi-like prison labor to build U.S. imperialism's war machine. That same Board is ruled by Rocky & Co., in whose interests our sons and daughters will be sent to kill and be killed in the Middle East. By now, even lower level union officials were hanging on every word. This was not the usual fare you hear at union meetings.

The speaker summed up his remarks by repeating his call for a mass demonstration. He received more than polite applause. Workers at both the meeting and in the shop want to follow up on this opening. When the bosses start their next oil war, we workers are preparing to finish it with communist revolution!

What Should Communists Do?

Leading workers in attempts, often in vain, to stand still, will not lead to communism. That is the conclusion of RR4.5, that workers in struggle, no matter how militant, do not come to fight for communism out of the reform struggle. They fight for communism because communists have won them away from the reform struggle; because communists expose the nature of capitalism, the limitations and futility of reform and concentrate on raising the need for the Party and revolution. Workers are won to communism because the Party emphasizes the political struggle over the economic struggle.

RR4.5 takes from Mao the idea that "the ideological superstructure is primary to the economic base." This contradicts the long-held concept in the communist movement of economic determinism. It was economic determinism that led the Russians to believe workers wouldn't work without continuation of the wage system. Economic determinism holds that workers cannot be motivated beyond immediate self-interest, that politics and political motivation or inspiration are only an extension of economic interest. Economics first, politics second. Mao turned his around. He wasn't denying that ideas have a material base; he was just stating that politics is primary in practice.

WINNING WORKERS TO COMMUNIST CONSCIOUSNESS

The question of how to move workers with communist consciousness is as old as the movement. The Subbotnik campaign in the Soviet Union in the late 20's was the first time—outside of the revolution and civil war—that workers worked for "free." The Communist Party called on workers to contribute their Saturdays to industrialize the country and build socialism—and millions responded. This was

one of the keys to the rapid growth of the Soviet Union as an industrial power.

The Chinese took this many steps further. They disproved the deterministic thinking that peasants could not be won to socialism. Marx and others had said that peasants had the characteristics of the middle class, were small scale, individual producers and owners and therefore their class interests were with capitalism. The Chinese experience, however, showed that peasants could see their needs as working class needs. We pointed out at the time in RR3 that this was proof that the whole world was now more than ready for socialist revolution.

The Cultural Revolution offered more evidence and examples that, as the Red Guards said, "politics are primary." One incident was the derailing of a trainload of Soviet military equipment heading for Vietnam via China. The revolutionaries took the correct line that the Soviets were out to derail the Vietnamese struggle. They knew there were imperialist strings attached to the military hardware and put forward "no aid from Soviet revisionism." The Soviets were out to bribe the Vietnamese into changing their political and military strategy. (They succeeded).

ARE THE ODDS REALLY AGAINST US?

We today face a situation where the "odds" are against us. We're a small Party in a period of reaction and mass cynicism, when the popular thinking is mired in the failure of our movement and little hope for our class. Masses of workers, bearing the brunt of the bosses' relentless attacks, are exhausted with today's needs. Their lives are a daily effort of often desperately trying to keep from going backwards, hardly thinking of tomorrow.

At the time of the Russian revolution, nobody, except for the Bolsheviks, thought that revolution was possible in "backward' Russia. England or Germany or the U.S. were the likely candidates for the socialist breakthrough. What could explain the victory in Russia? All the odds were against them!

Today we have an advantage the Bolsheviks didn't. We have a rich history of communist efforts to learn from. But if we ignore what history is telling us, we will be doomed to capitalism for that much longer. Fighting for reforms does not get us communism.

The work in D.C. Metro can help the Party understand how to better put RR4.5 into practice. Privatization of the transit system is shifting the burden of transportation from the ruling class's government onto the workers' backs. Private bus companies will not have government subsidies or aid. It's budget cutting and wage cutting, as workers employed by the new bus system will have lower wages, benefits, etc. This is in line with the general trend towards lower wages, tiered wage systems, welfare repeal, Clinton's call for the government to bring on worker trainees, etc. In other words: fascism applied to the wage system, the impoverishment of tens of millions so the system can sustain its crisis.

HOW CAN WE TELL WHEN WE'RE WINNING?

The only goals by which we should gauge the success or failure of this struggle is, 1) recruitment and 2) development of mass consciousness of specific communist ideas.

What are the main communist ideas that we should interject into this struggle? Well, who are the workers affected by this attack? As is often the case, the bus drivers are virtually all black and so are the workers that will be gouged. In the capital city of the richest of capitalist countries, the rulers are launching an aggressive attack on the whole working class. The contradictions could hardly be sharper. The white rulers are grinding down black workers, in the latest of their attacks on the entire working class of Washington. A government which spends about a trillion dollars a year, one-third on payments to the banks, one-third on maintaining a military to support U.S. imperialism, and one-third on the "infrastructure " of capitalism, is in such crisis that it must squeeze pocket money from the most oppressed and exploited.

"PRIVATIZATION" AND INCREASING RACIST TERROR AGAINST WORKERS

The sharpness of the racist attack is highlighted by the fact that on any given day, 40% of the black men in Washington, DC are in the grips of the "justice" system. This means that most bus drivers and the families of workers who ride the buses have someone close to them directly under the bosses' gun. The Party has to raise the connection between the privatization and the sharply increasing racist terror against workers. The issue is not primarily wages and working conditions. The issue is the failure of the profit system and its need to increase racism to make up for its failure. The issue is the need for the Party and communist revolution as the only solution.

The sons and daughters of many of these drivers are being sent to the new jail going up in DC. Those that

escape jail are being prepared for low wage, part-time work, or worse. Many will ultimately wind up in the military, cannon fodder for one or another imperialist adventure. Saving public transit or high wages (we're not for higher wages—we're for no wages!) won't shield them from capitalism.

Calling for spreading the union is not what we want. That strangles the struggle. It encourages wrong thinking: for a stronger union and more bargaining power in the reform fight. It also limits the struggle to drivers. This undermines the more far-reaching political understanding and prevents workers from seeing this as an attack on the working class as a whole which has Party-building as its strongest response.

If we ignore what history is telling us, we will be doomed to capitalism for that much longer. Fighting for reforms does not get us communism.

More militancy? Strikes? For what, to throw a monkey-wrench into privatization? That's what the union wants to do with lobbying and lawsuits. Militancy and strikes can be useful, but only if they build the Party. There is big potential gain for the Party during militant strikes but only if some group of strikers are won to turn their backs to the struggle over privatization and instead embrace the Party.

The struggle over privatization is of even less consequence when workers consider what is going on in the world and the country. The drive to fascism is thrust from the inter-imperialist rivalry leading to world war. War, like intensifying post-OJ racism and the fascism that links both, are issues that transcend narrow, economic struggles and cry out for class conscious, communist understanding.

We will recruit more workers and spread more communist ideas with our efforts in this direction. Privatization is an aspect of the rush to fascism, and fascism must be smashed. This can only be done by the growth of the Party and victory of communism. We should be getting out these ideas to every bus driver and as many other Washington workers as we can.

Strikes that we call for should be political strikes aimed at the racist ruling class, to show the strength of the workers and the Party, to build revolutionary forces, à la May Day.

In Colombia, thousands of workers were organized by the union movement to support one section of the Colombian ruling class vs. another. The Party became a little active but not active enough around this. It's an ongoing situation with a president in power there that the US wants to get rid of, huge attacks on the Colombian working class, and active death squads. This is true also in Mexico, Peru, Ecuador and many other places. We are relatively quick to act on strikes or economic attacks on workers but slow to respond to more "political" events which are precisely those that make the need for the Party clear.

MULTI-TIER WAGES AND PERMANENT "TEMPORARY" WORKERS

Another situation is among postal workers. Automation is taking a toll nation-wide. There is intense speed-up. Over the past several contracts, the bosses have instituted a multi-tier wage system which includes everything from part-timers to permanent temporary workers. Most workers, at least in the big cities, are black. This also seems to be true of the lower and mid-level bosses. The situation is so antagonistic that a specially called union meeting in Chicago attracted more than 600 workers to complain. (Most of the union leaders are also black.) The letter carriers' union took out an ad on the op-ed page of the New York Times to complain about 53,000 unresolved grievances. What we have is a heavily black work force facing a sharpening racist attack from mainly black bosses.

We have the beginnings of a postal workers' club in Chicago. They could/should get more involved in the unions. These unions, unlike most, draw from the whole city and have maintained considerable following, with hundreds attending the regular monthly meetings. Union activity is an opportunity for basebuilding, developing contacts, friendships, becoming aware of and responding to a wide range of issues, current thinking among the workers, etc.

What should our comrades do, beside developing *Challenge* networks, making friends, etc.? Should they pursue a more vigorous approach towards the mounting grievances? No, not if their line would be pushing militancy for reform only. This is a dead end. If you win, you lose. The many workers who say, "what's the difference, you can't win" have a significant sliver of truth in their cynicism.

The problem is, those workers have no alternative. They have given up the fight. If we said, "yeah, you're right, you can't win on their terms, grievances, contracts, etc., therefore, we should build the Party to destroy the post office..." we would be doing our job.

Should they expose and attack the unions' reliance on black politicians as allies against postal bosses? Absolutely, but how? During OJ2, we should have gone to these unions and every other union calling for antiracist strikes and demonstrations. We could have linked OJ to the growth of fascism, elimination of welfare, introduction of workfare, prison labor, increasing police terror and the need for the Party and revolution. This is a criticism of the leadership. We jump at strikes, call for job actions over cuts, quickly put leaflets when there's a layoff, but hardly get around to leading politically on these issues.

SMASH THE IDEA THAT CLASS STRUGGLE IS LIMITED TO ECONOMIC STRUGGLE!

Something on the magnitude of OJ doesn't come along that often, but other opportunities for raising the need for the Party and communism come up regularly. If we were not still stuck in the method of work that defines class struggle narrowly as the economic struggle, we would find ways to give leadership to broader issues. The nature of the system and the class struggle give us a steady stream of opportunities. One such issue was the Girl X case in Chicago. Hundreds, at least, of workers outside union or bosses' leadership, organized to raise money and other activities to support the raped girl. The outpouring was a mass phenomenon.

Had we been looking for such a thing, we would have gotten involved early on with the approach of turning the feelings of revulsion into anger at the system. We should have issued a PL leaflet condemning the system which turns workers, even youth into commodities, things, to be used, enjoyed, exploited, enslaved and thrown away, etc. We could have moved some workers to discuss why the fascist system is responsible for these circumstances, the role of gangs, drugs and police, etc. We could have raised the history of the housing projects and the contradictions between the interests of the real estate industry/banks and working people. We should have called for a demonstration at a bank or at City Hall.

Some comrades have raised that a strict interpretation of RR4.5 will put us on the sidelines, turn us into an educational society. Besides the obvious, that there is never any shame in having the right line regardless of where it puts us, this isn't so. RR4.5 strengthens our potential to initiate struggle, if need be, and direct struggle towards a communist conclusion. Focusing the Party's work away from the economic struggle, towards more politica campaigns will get us to the heart of the matter: capitalism doesn't work; workers need to join and build PL.

How Can Communists Do It?

VETERAN PLER POINTS THE WAY—BRING COMMUNIST POLITICS TO THE WORKERS

(A Letter to the Editor in Challenge-Desafio took the Party to task for not providing sufficient leadership. We reprint here the series of articles responding to the letter, and explaining the Party's ideas on carrying out a communist line in the mass movement.)

The paper does on occasion provide insight about how the line should be carried out in the mass movement. For example, the article, "A Mass Base For Communism Grows In Brooklyn Hospital," shows how our Party is being built among hospital workers.

Other articles will improve on this as we evaluate how to make communist politics primary in our work. This has never really been done, at least not by us. Usually, we have made reform primary, and communism secondary. Enough said. Let's see what we can come up with. First, a little story. When I worked in a factory in Buffalo, NY, I was the "intermediary" for one of the Communist Party's underground leaders. He asked me to see the steel organizer at Bethlehem Steel, to get a report, or description of the work. The steel organizer told me, "I pick out the most backward worker in my department. If I win him, I can win anyone!"

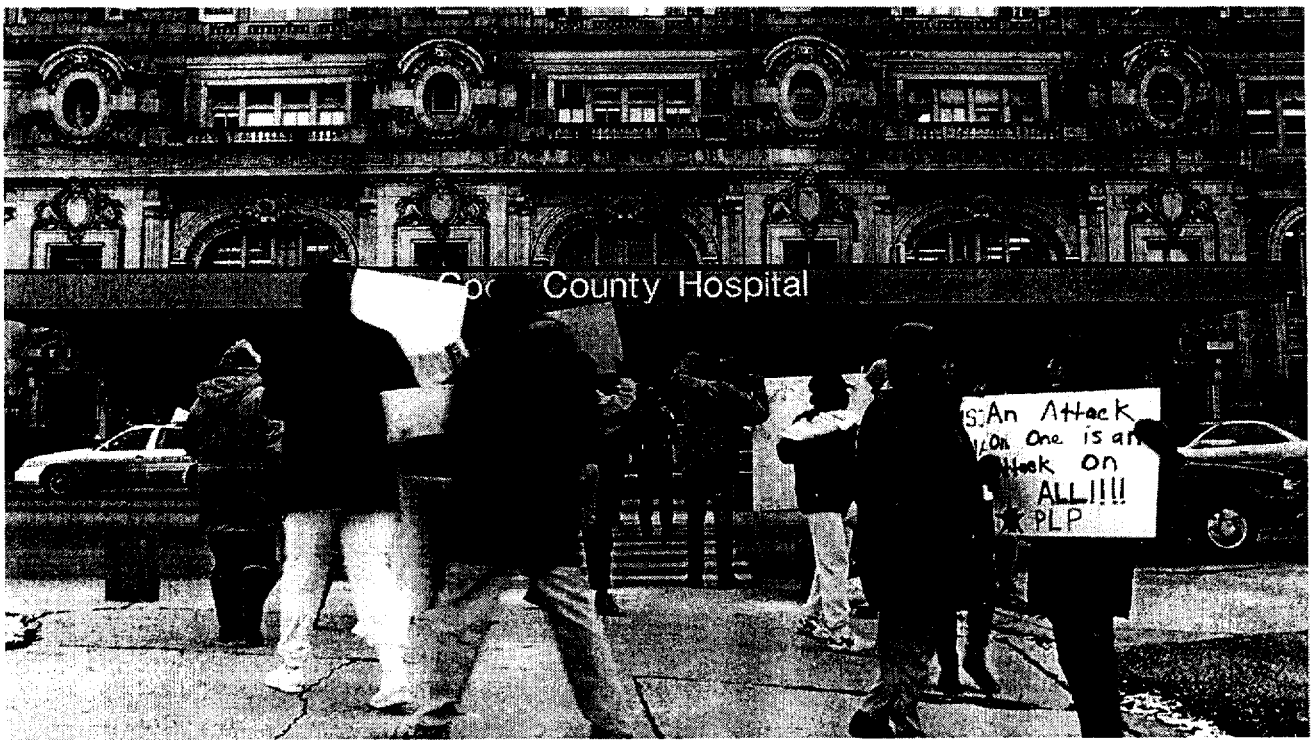
When I reported this to the Party leader, he almost fell out. This is not the example we want to follow. Our work in shops or organizations should have a layered strategy. Our overriding aim should be to recruit, recruit, recruit and build communist clubs. In every grouping, we should increase Challenge readership, enlarging our base, which will help us to recruit. Party clubs and study-action groups should be set up in order to win ourselves and our base to the Party's activities and line. This will also lead to more recruitment. The point is, we can't rely on anyone or anything but ourselves and the other workers. Revolution will not fall out of the sky. It will come from persistent long range communist outlook and activity.

Communists must earn the leadership of the working class. You already knew this. Good! In getting to know the "lay of the land," we should begin to single out the most politically advanced workers. This can be done in a myriad of ways. One is by seeing who reads Challenge and what they think about it. Another litmus test is, who seems ready to fight the bosses on any issue? Often an anti-racist attitude can go a long way in sizing up a person.

Regular social contact is a must for building the Party. If days go by without seeing workers outside of work, that's bad! In a shop or union, it's easy to be overwhelmed by economic reform issues. Among the many things we should keep in mind, within the economic issues, is how we can raise and pursue the idea, that the factory does not belong to the boss. Whose factory is it, theirs or ours? A wage increase will not solve our problems. One way or another, the boss will take it away!

This leads to another question. Why do we have to beg, grovel, struggle for a wage increase, or against a wage cut, if the factory is ours? How does the factory get returned to us? Not only do we sometimes have to seize the factory, but we have to crush the state apparatus of the bosses—their government. We have to build our own state power and rely only on our own efforts. Previously the bosses dictated to us; now we can dictate to them and control our own destiny. We participate critically in reform struggles, but we make communist politics primary. Again, the factory is ours, they have taken it from us; we must take it back!

So an economic reform fight develops. We made all the points about who owns what, and who should run society. But the workers want that quarter raise, or don't want to take a quarter pay cut. Some workers agree with us and others don't. Do we support a strike, go on strike? Sure! We should make the action more militant, if we can. We should skillfully and patiently keep raising our communist ideas. We use the opportunity, both in a mass, public way and in discussions with particular workers, to raise the need to abolish the wage system, which binds workers to exploitation. We could raise that a more intense,



Dec. 1997 PLP demonstration at Cook County Hospital, Chicago. Revolution will not fall out of the sky. It will come from persistent long range communist outlook and activity, especially at the workplace.

prolonged strike, spreading the struggle industry-wide and nation-wide, could go a long way to building the Party, the road to power. Look, we can become stronger than they are. They are few, we are many, and with communist ideology, we are eventually unbeatable. In other words, we should use every struggle to increase the confidence and communist consciousness of the workers.

In the course of any sharp battle, many issues come to the forefront which allow us to raise communist ideas. Why won't the bosses give us a raise? This can introduce our thinking on competition, internal contradictions, the real state of the economy. Class struggle can seriously question the rulers' ability to run society. A system that can't provide jobs or decent health care, should be smashed with communist revolution.

Usually racism is a factor in any struggle. This can give us the edge to push class, multi-racial unity, to explain why racism exists, and to show that there is no such thing as race. Often in a strike, the bosses call out the cops. This raises the role of the police and which class they serve. And of course, this relates to the development of fascism. Building a communist base and involving ourselves with workers on a day to day basis, enable us to raise the whole ball of wax.

WHAT WE ARE AFTER: LEADERSHIP OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS AND SOLDIERS

We are out to win the political leadership of masses of workers. Specifically, we need to build a base within the vital sections of the working class -- auto, steel, electric, chemical, coal, etc. In addition to basic industrial workers, we must organize inside the rulers' armed forces, made up of mostly working class youth who can't find stable civilian jobs. This economic draft applies mostly to black and latin soldiers.

If industrial workers and sections of the military were won away from the bosses and led by PLP, the rulers would be dead. Shorn of workers and a reliable military, the ruling class is impotent.

Some say, "This sounds so difficult, and unrealistic. There must be a short-cut." Usually, the so-called easy way means creating false hopes and illusions about the reform movement and its leaders. For years we have been saying and proving that the labor leaders and virtually all reform leaders are in the hip pockets of the bosses -- they are agents of the ruling class, devotees of capitalism and rabid anti-communists.

Slowly but surely we must patiently build our forces in the shops, schools and military. More and more we must challenge capitalist ideas in the mass movement.

Perhaps a small error that we make is to believe that labor leaders are "sellouts." They are not. They never represented us. They have always served the bosses' interests, never ours. If they sold out, they would only act against their masters' interests. "With friends like this, who needs enemies?"

An error that we make is to believe that labor leaders are "sellouts." They are not. They never represent us. They have always served the bosses' interests.

In most cases militancy in the working class won't happen in a vacuum. How and why will workers become more militant? The bosses are locked in deadly competition for resources and markets with other rulers. Their servants (reform leaders) know this. The bosses have instructed them not to rock the boat; otherwise it will decrease the bosses' ability to compete.

It's important for us to explain this to workers. We should show how economic competition among bosses is a process that ultimately must lead to war. And it is workers and their children who will have to kill and be killed for the bosses' profits. So, what is significant for us is not only to talk about sex, the weather and other people, but to talk about politics.

Strikes have dropped drastically. But, on occasion, some union leaders call a strike. They do this in order to pander to the anger of their members. The strikes, and the occasional marches, as in Detroit, are attempts by the union leaders to hang on to what is left of their dues-paying members. They try to create the illusion that they help their members.

Union leaders without a base are of no use to the bosses who are hell-bent on war and fascism. And, as you may recall, the last big newspaper strike in Detroit was abandoned on terms completely favorable to the bosses. The most militant thing the union bosses do is to serve the interests of the rulers. Actual mili-

tancy can't come from the union leaders' activity. Militancy is essentially created by angry workers organizing with communist ideas for revolution.

Thus, the purpose of the reform struggle and reform leaders is to divert us from a revolutionary course of action. And, as if to rub it in, negotiations over reform demands involve us in settling with the bosses for something less than demanded. So if we go to a union meeting (if anyone is there), we should expose the leaders as the agents of the bosses, who are negotiating away our interests. And it should be pointed out in shop discussions how international competition inevitably leads to war. The only recourse for workers is revolution.

The reform leaders are the enemies of the working class who involve us in reform struggle in order to maintain leadership over us and to divert the workers from revolutionary ideas and struggle.

Without the reform leaders, the ruling class would be in bad shape. Workers need revolutionary communist leadership, not capitalist leaders. In this period, reform struggle is inevitable. We should participate in reform struggle with critical support. We should point out that reform struggle is useless and diversionary. Workers can achieve meaningful militancy with communist leadership and use the reform struggle to build the communist movement.

BUILD COMMUNIST CLUBS AND GROUPINGS IN ALL INDUSTRIES AND THE MILITARY

We can eventually build communist clubs and groupings in all industries as well as the military. Over and over again we must show that you cannot reform capitalism. Basically, capitalism can only get worse and attack workers even more. And we can use the reform struggle—if it exists—to expose the failure of reformism.

Is it a contradiction to expose reformism but to be involved in reformist struggle? Yes, it is. But the only way to resolve this contradiction is not by abstention but by participation. Another way to resolve this contradiction and go on to a higher level of class battle is to build the Party. By making communist politics primary we can handle this contradiction in a skillful way. But if we allow ourselves to grovel at the bosses' feet in reform, making reform primary, even if we win the reform, we lose the battle.

Is this complicated? Sure it is. That is why we need more and more practice and writing about our experiences in the reform movement.

To sum up: participation in, not abstention from, the reform struggle is needed. Recruit, recruit, recruit is the order of the day. Serious militancy can only develop with communist leaders. Occasional spontaneous struggle for reform can be useful only if communists use them to win workers to the left by making politics primary and building the Party.

POLITICS CAN BE RAISED ABOUT EVERYTHING

Sometimes we are reluctant to raise political issues on the job or within different mass organizations. Hesitation often stems from the mistaken belief that workers are not interested in things outside their immediate on the job concerns or daily living. As it turns out, workers are interested in international, national and local political issues.

A few articles in Challenge on workers' responses to articles on mass murder in Africa by imperialists and their local henchmen indicate that there is fairly wide interest in this question. One recent issue of Challenge described the relatively large mass movement built by the Democrats and their liberal "left" stooges on the issue of rent control. There is little doubt that we can raise communist politics around this question with other workers and friends in the mass movement. We could have used this issue to slowly develop our communist leadership over groups of workers.

Tyson bit Holyfield's ears. Nonsense, you say. Well, the brutality and gangsterism in the boxing game enable you to raise zillions of questions. A system that encourages brutality, sadism, and 'bread and circuses' is rotten to the core, and shouldn't exist. We are sure that many workers either watched the "fight" or talked about the chewed ears.

What about Michael Jordan and his trillions? Jordan is a phenomenal athlete, but a typical entrepreneur. Remember his coarse statements about Asian workers working for pennies on Nike shoes. In other words Jordan couldn't care less, and said something to that effect when questioned about his relationship to Nike.

What about "family values?" We're for close, constructive family values. But the rulers' hypocrisy around this question knows no limits. From the philandering of Clinton and Kennedy to the filthy exploitation of women in all aspects of culture, capitalist family life is weak. Just look at the 50% divorce rate. What about low wages, no wages, or lower wages of women, blacks and latins. All this, among many other things destroys family life.

Once again war, fascism, and racism come to the fore. Almost every issue on and off the job can be connected to these questions. This is no exaggeration. For example: Lay-offs, ("downsizing") usually can be explained by the "crisis of overproduction," which increases national and international competition.

We are not only the Party of the working class, we are a working class Party.

The constant improving of production methods results in increased productive capacity that can't be used. This crisis forces the rulers to bear down on workers, using racism, fascism, increased exploitation in one form or another.

This situation must lead to all types of wars, ultimately world war. Based on our plan of concentration in key areas and consistent communist work, combined with the growing inability of workers around the world to live in the old way, our Party will grow and grow some more. National and international PL organizations will eventually give us the leverage to move for power in one and another country. Using our base in one area can give us the ability to spread out.

But, as the man said, you have to start some place. Given the unevenness of all processes, there is always a first. A good critical letter in last week's Challenge said, "the logical place to start recruiting is those workers with whom we already have a tie of some sort." Presumably these ties will be political. Undoubtedly, since everyone is not the same, the workers we have the closest political ties with will get recruited. If we do not have political-personal ties we won't recruit anyone. But that's not the case.

The ones, twos and threes we recruit now are crucial. Slow recruiting can ultimately lead to mass recruiting. As our letter writer points out millions of workers will be open to communism. A small, cadre (leadership) Party is not what we are after. Millions of workers armed with some understanding of communism will enable us to take power and hold power more successfully than our predecessors.

The bosses said, "It couldn't be done." It was done in China and Russia! Power was lost by the workers in both countries. Again the bosses rail "you see, we told you it can't be done." Facts are "stubborn things." It is slowly being done by us. Our Party will take advantage of capitalist contradictions.

Fascism will enable our Party to take advantage of the glaring capitalist weakness of fascism. The Party can strengthen itself so that it can never be blown away, and it will grow. Capitalist wars will prove that you cannot live with the profit system. Workers are learning (maybe most have) that their interests have nothing in common with the bosses and will increase the class struggle with our leadership. Patient, persistence, more intense practice will win the day. "With feet on the ground and heads on our shoulders we will vanquish all that stands in our way."

Building the Party at Work

Road to Revolution 4.5 is a powerful weapon in our arsenal. The problem is, we haven't quite figured out how it works. We have decisively broken with reformism, at least on paper. A comrade who has spent most of the past 30 years trying to build the Party on the job and in the unions could write a very long list of what not to do. But the point of this piece is to try to give more concrete leadership and direction to building a mass, illegal PLP, on the job and in the enemy's mass organizations, for the dictatorship of the proletariat and communist revolution.

For the record, we are not only the Party of the working class; we are a working class Party. As the recent cadre school showed, our Party is carrying out serious revolutionary work in auto, aerospace, garment, mass transit, health care, and more. More young comrades are entering the military and the work force. Hundreds more are in small shops. There has been small but significant growth at Ford, Boeing, Methodist, Jefferson, and Muni, and we made important advances last May Day at Methodist, Jefferson, and Metro. The point isn't to pat ourselves on the back. Rather, the point is that if we give better leadership in this period of deepening splits among the rulers, increasing fascism, and the growing threat of war and civil war, we can build a mass communist movement of workers, soldiers, and youth that can

give the rulers and their misleaders more than they can handle. The key is to maintain a fighting Party, bring our line into the mass movement, and take advantage of all opportunities to seize the political offensive.

A MASS COMMUNIST BASE MAKES ALL THINGS POSSIBLE

This isn't the Marine Corps. We aren't looking for "a few good men." We are building a Party of millions with a base of millions more. To use the "iceberg" analogy, the Party will be wide and deep. Our approach to basebuilding should reflect this strategic outlook. Wide and deep. This means having personal/political relations with many people on many levels. No easy task. It means organizing our lives around our co-workers, those we are fighting to lead. The main goal of all our work is recruitment. Ones and twos, leading to clubs and more clubs.

Challenge is one of the main barometers of how we're doing. CD is a mass organizer on many levels. First and foremost, it is the main way we develop a mass base for the Party and communist ideas. CD is crucial to developing workers' understanding of the crisis of capitalism, the splits in the ruling class, the sharpening inter-imperialist rivalries, the threat of war, and all the main aspects of our line. Most important, it makes clear the necessity, and possibility of communist revolution.

We have to do a better job at winning more workers, in and out of the Party, to write for the paper. By and large, those who write for the paper tend to make more use of it. Where the paper has a regular readership, and where there is political struggle with that readership, we are in a better position to influence the class struggle. This doesn't just mean more militant actions, but actions around aspects of our line, leading workers to ultimately join the Party. These workers, the "left," can lead many more. Boeing workers consistently attacking the bosses at production meetings, and the "rolling thunder" marches that preceded the last strike, are among the better examples.

Developing a wide circulation for the paper, based on a network of non-Party distributors, is what Lenin and Luis refer to as the "scaffolding" that surrounds what we're building. That scaffolding is on many levels, and we can stand and work on each of them.

While the paper is important, it is not the only measure of basebuilding. In fact, we should have some knowledge of a person when we first show them the paper. And we should have good relations with workers who aren't won to reading the paper yet. The struggle must always be to deepen the ties. The stronger the ties, the sharper we can struggle with someone. If you don't know them very well, you probably won't know what to struggle with them about. And even if you do, they may not be open to it. Strong ties create the unity that is needed for sharp, protracted personal/political struggle, and it works both ways. That's an aspect of "relying on the workers."

Superficial ties lead to mis-estimates, unrealistic plans, disappointments, and ultimately writing people off. Knowing workers off the job is a big part of getting to know them. How do they live their lives? What is their family life like? Are they loners? Are they anti-racist? Some people talk a good game, but have very little confidence in others, and so they won't struggle with them politically or show them the paper. Some have drinking or drug problems. Others are very open politically but are very busy with the kids, a husband that wants them home, or are very active in church. We can't be mechanical.

As we get to know a wide range of people, we have to concentrate on the most advanced. In general, this means those that read and distribute the paper, are anti-racist, not isolated, and militant. We should look for those active in the union, church, or community, people who have a base they can win.

CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE FIGHT FOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE WORKERS

The class struggle is constant. In this period of economic crisis, sharpening inter-imperialist rivalries, and deepening splits among the rulers, the class struggle will intensify in the form of more severe economic attacks against the workers and more racist police terror. The only solution is communist revolution. The reform leaders are enemies of the workers, defending their masters against the competition or the communists. They are mobilizing the workers for fascism and war. They use reform struggles to keep workers chained to wage slavery. Our job is to challenge the reform leaders, and capitalist ideas, in the mass movement. We wage the class struggle to build the Party.

In the shops and unions, economic issues dominate. Contracts, wage cuts, layoffs, speed-up, harassment, suspensions, etc. We should enter the economic struggle with a plan to move our base to the left, and into the Party, and create a mass base for aspects of our line by fighting for a set of communist ideas. For example: wage slavery, class dictatorship, we produce the wealth and they own it, anti-racism, interna-

tionalism, and a system in crisis, can all be raised in a mass way on the shop floor and in the union hall. By raising ideas that strike at the heart of the profit system, we can make the case that winning the reform demand is not the answer to our problems. At the same time, we can create excitement among the workers, as they take off the blinders the union leaders want them to wear, and consider the world.

We can fully develop these ideas to their communist conclusions, by writing for Challenge and Party fliers. These can be distributed in a mass way, by a secret network of workers. This is an important part of moving our base closer to the Party. It means through one-on-one or more collective struggle, winning workers to advance and defend communist ideas and the Party.

Our outlook for work in unions should be the same as military work: Build a mass Party with a mass base to smash the enemy and their mass organizations.

When a fight erupts, or if we can pick one, we want to push it as far as we can. Job actions, strikes, confrontations with bosses or union hacks, can all help to clarify our line and help defeat illusions and reformist thinking. They can drive a wedge between the misleaders and the workers, and move many workers into the Party's orbit. Of course, if we aren't constantly fighting to make communist politics primary, these same actions can have the opposite effect. Politics must always be in command. As long as we are fighting to build the Party, the class struggle can be a vehicle for building confidence, and communist consciousness among the workers.

As the capitalist crisis deepens, and the splits intensify, more "political" and "economic" issues will overlap. Prison labor is an issue we are fighting at Boeing and in transit. Workfare/slave labor is a growing issue at more work sites, and a mass issue in NYC. The UPS strike and the fight for control of the Teamsters union is a graphic example of the deepening split in the ruling class. These are sharp manifestations of the rise of fascism, and give us the opportunity to sharpen the contradiction between reform and revolution. Do we want poverty or power? Will the union leaders organize the concentration camps? Wage slaves with union cards are still wage slaves, etc.

Then there are more political issues, not specifically "job related," that we should be fighting around. War and racism are the big ones, especially the issue of racist police terror. The dogs in blue are off the leash, terrorizing and murdering young workers on a daily basis, to force us into accepting poverty, racism, and war. Workers have a deep hatred for the cops, and almost everyone has someone caught up in the criminal justice system. This is fertile ground for winning masses of workers to take up the fight against fascism, and see communist revolution as the only way out. A Party-wide campaign against police terror, fought for in the shops, unions, and other mass organizations, can change the nature of the struggle, and the nature of our work, leading to more political actions on and off the job. It can put the Party, and the workers, on the offense. Again, all of our work must be aimed at recruitment, and winning the political leadership of the working class, especially in basic industry and the military.

STILL MARCHING INTO THE ENEMY'S CAMP

In general, our outlook for working in the unions should be the same as military work. We want to build a mass Party with a mass base, to smash the enemy and their mass organizations. This is a protracted struggle that will take many twists and turns. The key is a mass Party with a mass base. This means making communist politics and basebuilding primary.

The deepening split among the rulers and the rise of fascism, is creating a lot of activity in the unions. On the one hand, the union leaders are trying to stay in business. More significantly, they realize they are useless to their masters without a mass base. Most important, the main section of the ruling class needs the unions to guarantee labor discipline in basic industry, increase productivity, drive down wages, and secure their war machine. They also need a mass base among the workers to defeat New Money and its mass base. The liberals and revisionists are the foot soldiers building the unions and a mass reform movement that leads right into the concentration camps.

This is the backdrop for the marches in Watsonville and Detroit, the UPS strike, and a modest increase in organizing. The AFL-CIO plans to run 2000 candidates for office by the year 2000 (which could put the Labor Party out of business), and is trying to "organize" workfare workers. Viewed in the context of New Money/Old Money, working in the unions is organizing in Rockefeller's army. Viewed in the context of coming war and full-blown fascism, a mass, illegal Party deeply embedded on the job and in the unions, will be able to function under any and all circumstances, advance under attack, and lead the fight for power.

Primarily we want to fight for the political leadership of the workers and to build a mass communist base. Working within the rulers' mass organizations requires "a hard line and flexible tactics." Too often, we have a flexible line and hard tactics. This combination of right opportunism and a mechanical style of work leaves us isolated, politically and organizationally. The main problem has been weak leadership. Since the adoption of RR4.5, we haven't given good enough leadership on how to do the work. While some confusion is inevitable, the lack of leadership only compounded the problem. As a result, some comrades have held back, fearful of making reformist errors.

If we are clear that politics are primary, than RR4.5 gives us more flexibility and room to maneuver in the unions. We are not tied to a reform program or Party-led reform organization. We are free to challenge to union hacks and their political hold on the workers from many vantage points; official union positions, organizing, civil rights, or political action committees, reform movements, election committees, etc. If any of these options are open, we should explore the possibilities, providing we have a political base for the Party, and a readership for the paper, who help us develop a plan for Party building. Whatever role we play tactically should be used to advance our overall strategy of exposing the role of the unions, defeating reformism, and building a mass communist movement. The political issues of war, racism, unemployment/slave labor, splits, and police terror should guide the work. Again, a Party-wide campaign against police terror will help give direction to the work.

Once we challenge the leadership, they will counterattack, whether or not they know we're in the Party. With a base for the Party, any attack can be turned into its opposite. We may lose a position or some access to the workers, but we can expose the union leaders and sharpen the contradiction between them and the workers. With some skill, we can recruit more workers to the Party, and continue the process. Again, we are not fighting for leadership of the union. We are fighting for political leadership of the workers.

BUILDING A BASE IN THE WORKING CLASS

Building a base for communism in the working class means developing social, political and family relations based on collectivity, internationalism, anti-fascism, anti-racism, anti-sexism, and especially the consistent ideological struggle over communism and the need to build the Party to take power. In developing these kinds of relations, we are developing the basis of a mass Party, and the basis of a new communist society.

Building these kinds of relations should be the all-consuming passion of all the members of PLP and our base. This commitment and passion to spend most of our time with our friends from work or school should be seen as the new, collective way to live, enjoy ourselves, struggle, and resolve the problems of life. This is no "sacrifice" by a chosen few, but a life organized around relations based on communist principles.

The ruling classes of the past, and especially the capitalists who rule today, have maintained class society and oppression through individualism, nationalism, racism, sexism, and anti-communism. By building a communist base, we want to fight to destroy in ourselves and our friends these capitalist ideas that keep us in chains, and fight to strenghten communist ideas that will free us and enable the working class to take power.

Base building is a healthy process of struggle. It's full of contradictions. Base building is the Party's strategy to build a mass revolutionary communist Party, which will lead millions to carry out the revolution. Base building will continue to be our strategy during communism. The new communist society will be based on meeting the needs of the international working class. There will be a protracted fight to build a world without borders, racism, or exploitation. A society like this represents the aspirations of millions of workers around the world. Our goal is to make communism a reality, by destroying the fascist terror in which we live.

These relations are based on unity and struggle. The struggle and the unity should be planned with care, using strategy and tactics designed to strengthen our friends. Correct methods of struggle have to be practiced. The ideological struggle needs to be primary. It's the motor to build unity at a higher level. It is the way to win workers to be communist leaders, to build a mass Party capable of taking power and building communism. But if there's no unity, the struggle will not be successful.

The current inter-imperialist rivalry to control capital (including the vital resource of oil), markets and labor, is sharpening. This sharpens the oppression of workers, and the struggle among workers. This rivalry and the capitalist crisis is the main contradiction in the world. Whether we realize it or not, this contradiction affects all aspects of our lives and those of millions more. The bosses plan to destroy the lives of millions of workers. The imperialists of Japan, Germany, Russia, China, and the US are in a deepening crisis of overproduction. This crisis produces the sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry. The bosses will resolve their crisis through imperialist

war. The bosses are beating their drums of war and preparing new massacres against the international working class.

In the US and worldwide, the bosses are accelerating their fascist plans, dividing workers with nationalism, patriotism, and getting them to fight other workers. The US bosses are disciplining their own class and also the working class, concentrating capital in fewer hands, and unleashing racist terror against the youth, cutting public services, forcing those on welfare to work for minimum wage or less, and increasing unemployment. At the same time, the bosses are waging an ideological campaign to try to pacify the workers and win them to support one set of bosses against the other, and attack other workers.

In the past, the communist movements built a broad anti-fascist base to defeat fascism, but they didn't build a mass base for communism. During the Second World War, the Red Army destroyed Hitler's fascist hordes and inspired millions of workers around the world to fight bravely to defeat the fascists. These experiences give us confidence that we can destroy fascism in the current period. Unfortunately the old communist movement didn't follow the road to communism, as the only way to destroy fascism, but instead permitted capitalism to maintain its power and therefore opened the way for the development of fascism and imperialist war once again.

Building a base for communism means convincing the workers of the need to destroy the bosses' state, eventually taking power and building a mass Party that will rule society. It means winning workers to see themselves as revolutionaries, fighting for and building a communist society, organizing work without wages, money or classes. Political, collective incentives must motivate humanity, rather than material, individualistic ones. Are we giving the workers we know the necessary tools for this fight? Do we think about this when we visit our co-workers in their homes? When we sell them Challenge?

FIGHTING FOR COMMUNISM ISN'T A POPULARITY CONTEST

Building a communist base will enable us to build the Party under conditions of fascism and imperialist war. With Road to Revolution 4.5, the Party is deepening our understanding of building a real base for communism. The practice of the old communist movement, and part of our own practice, has been to build reformist organizations or participate in them, like unions, or committees, with the goal of moving the masses to the left. But mostly when we worked in these organizations, we moved to the right, making communist ideas secondary or sometimes hidden completely. We don't want to repeat these errors. We need to work in these mass organizations (unions, neighborhood organizations, churches, student groups) because that's where many workers are, or will go, to fight against fascism and war. As fascism deepens, more workers will enter into the fight against it. They will look for leadership. We'll give it. But we're going to build a base for communism, making our communist line primary. We have to learn from the good and bad experiences of the past. Communist base building is our secret weapon. Its full of contradictions. Our job is to resolve them in favor of the Party.

Building a base isn't just wanting to be popular. Our goal isn't just that the Party be respected from afar. We want to build a mass base of people committed to communism, to the Party and to serve the working class. We must develop cadre committed to building a mass base to recruit in a more on-going way and mass way, to the Party. This is a struggle that the Party has to win. It's in our hands!

RECRUITING IN GARMENT SHOPS

In July of 1993, we met F. through a friend of the Party during a strike in the garment shop where he worked. We started visiting him every week and he bought Challenge. He eagerly read each Challenge cover to cover. He liked it a lot. But in this period, he never came to Party activities. It turns out, though, that F. had long political discussions at lunch time in which many workers participated. One day F said, "the Mexican government is very diplomatic, because it has relations with both the US and Cuba". Another worker, M., answered him that all the capitalist governments, including Mexico, the US and Cuba, are corrupt exploiters. At the end of this discussion, when each worker went back to his machine, F. told M., "Look, I have some friends who think like you...do you want to meet them?"

A month later, M. participated in his first social-political activity with the Party. It was a barbecue after work and included a discussion about communism. M. brought a friend, V., who shared an apartment with him. After this event, comrade J, who knew F., began building a base with M. and V.

One obstacles in developing a communist base and winning new Party members has been our reformist relations with the majority of workers.

He saw them off the job about three times a week. They discussed sports, communism, how bad TV programs were, how hard their lives were, etc. They had a lot of both unity and struggle. M. was impressed by our openly communist line. He'd been active before, but hadn't been exposed to communist politics. Because of his experiences with the FMLN, he was a little cynical. There was a lot of struggle with M. and V. over the Party's estimate that workers can be won to communism, that leaders don't automatically sell out—it all depends on what you're fighting for and what you win the workers to. M. really liked the Latin American video the Party had made. It helped recruit him. He showed it to his friends. With F., there was a lot of struggle about the nature of the Zapatistas . A few months later, after they had participated in several social activities and meetings with PLP, M. and V. decided to join the Party, and they got F to join too and formed a new Party garment club.

During 1994, M. started to work at Jim Fashion, a garment factory. Together with his friends, he organized a soccer team and built up a group of ten Challenge readers. He concentrated on three workers who seemed to be the most stable and to have the respect of the rest of the workers. In this factory, he organized political discussions with the workers at lunch time about Challenge and about organizing a union. The group of ten gave leadership to many strikes against lowering the piece rate and against firings. In May of 1995, the work level went down and many workers had to look for other jobs, including M. In this same year, F. went back to his country of origin, where he continues to organize for the Party. F. has his strengths and weaknesses, like everyone else. The Party was able to benefit from his strengths.

M. and V. started to work at Start Fashion, and started to making friends with many workers. Some of them started to read Challenge. Again the lunch breaks were converted into study groups, where, this time, they talked more openly about the Party's communist line. Four months later, the comrades were organizing their first strikes, to stop wage cuts. 80% of the 150 workers followed their leadership. The paper sale went from ten to thirty. They started visiting workers in their homes and trying to organize dances and study groups. In spite of their popularity in the factory, few workers have been involved in our activities outside the factory.

Comrades M. and V. have participated in study groups and schools about dialectical materialism and political economy. Their understanding of communist ideas has deepened. The struggles in the factory produced new work stoppages and Challenge continued to be a point of discussion. "Bad newspaper", said the boss, "Don't read it." But many workers kept reading it. However, the workers didn't come to Party activities outside the factory. What was the problem?

One of the obstacles in developing a communist base and winning new Party members has been our limited, reformist relations with the majority of workers. They see our comrades as leaders of the strikes, as those who would guarantee everything about the struggle in the shop. The unity in the factory around the reform struggle was strong, but the ideological struggle and base building were weak. The anti-communist attacks by the bosses had their effect on the workers and on our comrades, and they temporarily retreated. Without a communist base inside and outside the factory, this was inevitable.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL/POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Other comrades of PLP in the garment concentration developed stronger ties with M. and V. and started a sharper struggle to change their attitude and help them have a longer term approach towards base building with their co-workers. The plan of concentrating on a particular group of workers to win them to the Party is key. To do that, we have to integrate our lives with those of the other workers. Two of these workers have gotten closer to the Party, participating in social and political get-togethers. There is still a long road to travel with these two new friends. We have to deepen our relations with them.

M., V., and J. (another Party member) made the plan of renting a larger apartment together in order to have more social and political activities with their friends from work. They share an apartment and spend a lot of time together. This is good because they debate and learn the Party's line together. But base building involves spending time with workers who are less advanced and struggling with them to change. That means we have the confidence that workers can change, that they're just as smart as we are. We're not more special or gifted—others can grasp what we have grasped—and more.

In the last months of 1996, comrades M. and V. started to take more initiative in Challenge sales and to help give leadership to the Party. In these experiences of the last three years, these two comrades have developed into more committed cadres. Now they are more open to develop communist relations with the other workers, integrating the class struggle, ideological struggle and building social ties with the workers. This is a successful, on-going, not completed, struggle. M. is now organizing a soccer team with his co-workers after work. J. and V. are active in a church where many garment workers attend. We will pay more attention to the question of how to take advantage of this to deepen our ties and work with the may workers who participate in the social activities of this church. We are also joining other mass organizations related to the garment industry.

THE COMMUNIST TRIPOD: IDEOLOGY, FIGHTING THE RULERS, FRIENDSHIPS WITH WORKERS

Development of communists needs these three key ingredients: ideological struggle, class struggle, and social relations.

We have to stand on these three legs. Ideological struggle is the key, but without the other two, we can't build anything. Material conditions by themselves, or peoples' experiences alone, will not win workers to communism. People don't just learn from their own experiences that we need a communist revolution. Through struggle, we can give them the tools they need to draw communist lessons from their experience. If we apply these truths, the base and membership of the Party will grow massively in our concentrations at work and school.

All the members of the Party need to build a communist base. There must be a sharp internal struggle so that each member, each club, and each area has a plan to develop and expand these bases. This struggle will help to develop the revolutionary cadres the Party needs, members committed to bringing communist ideas to the working class and developing collective social relations over time. This practice will be a model for the rest of the working class.

Mao said, "In serving the working class we find obstacles and opportunities. These are relative and under certain conditions one can be transformed into the other...The obstacles stop us when we don't understand the laws that govern things (contradictions). But with practice we resolve even the most difficult obstacles and we advance on our road. Practice is the source of all truth, and wisdom and ability comes from it."

Liberalism and opportunism are obstacles we can overcome. "I took my friend shopping, to buy the things he needs and then I told him that he had to come to the meeting", commented a garment worker and PLP member in a garment meeting in LA. When he was criticized for his liberalism, he defended his position saying "we have to do anything to bring people to the Party."

BREAKING DOWN INDIVIDUALISM

One of the major obstacles we confront, which is the one of the main weapons in the arsenal of capitalist ideology, is individualism. "I'll do what I feel like, not what the collective wants or needs." Individualism is an obstacle to our revolutionary goals of serving the working class and the Party. The process of base building and ideological struggle with our friends will give us confidence in the working class. We have to commit our lives to move groups of workers into the Party and the fight for communism. This should be the central thing in our lives.

The opportunities are there every time that we're with our friends, no matter if we're shopping, going to the movies, to dinner, to the park to watch a football, basketball, or soccer game, wherever. We have to take advantage of these opportunities to put forward our line and to challenge capitalist lies and illusions. That's part of our work. This doesn't mean that every time our friends say something we're going to say, "you're wrong. Here's the right answer." Of course not. The workers aren't blank slates, or empty bottles, which we will fill with ideas. They have hundreds of experiences that can be used to better understand the poison of the bosses' ideas and

the need for communism. Mao said, "we have to learn from the wisdom of the masses."

HELP WORKERS LEARN TO POLITICIZE THEIR PERSONAL PROBLEMS

We need to use the method of investigation, listening to be able to learn about our friends' contradictions and how they are related to the main contradictions in the world. That's how we can show them the relation between their "individual" problems and the decline of capitalism, and development of fascism and war.

The comrade that we mentioned above who took his friend shopping and then to the Party meeting, has a list of about 50 friends. Some read Challenge, others know the Party. But a weakness is that he's looking for the already developed, ready-made, revolutionary—something that doesn't exist! Unity with friends is good and necessary. Sometimes it appears easier and we are satisfied with it. "I have a lot of friends, but they don't want to come to Party activities." But what guarantees a communist base is the ideological struggle. Sharpen the contradictions, challenge capitalist ideas and explain communist ideas in as friendly a way as possible. We should have patience with ourselves and others. We'll learn more in the process of carrying out this plan.

The club has made a plan with this comrade for him to concentrate on a group of 5 co-workers and their families. The struggle is that he start a long term relationship of friendship and ideological struggle. At the same time the collective is helping to visit these people and integrate them more into the Party's orbit. Visiting these workers together, we've seen that these people have great appreciation for our comrade and that they respect the Party. We've organized social activities and study groups to develop stronger ties with them.

The five families that we picked are not necessarily the ones that are working closest to this comrade, but those that we think at this time are the most stable, and the most willing to develop a relation based on the Party's ideas. We picked those who have ties with their co-workers and are respected by the rest. Our goal is that these same workers develop a political base with their friends, and become Challenge sellers. With this comrade, we're struggling to change a base based on liberalism to a base based on communist ideas, with the perspective of mass recruitment. In the factory these five families can become five rivers bringing dozens of new members and friends of the Party. There are 500 workers in this factory. Over 100 have seen Challenge, some from hand to hand sales, and more from sales outside the factory. Our goal is a network of 100 inside the factory.

MASS COMMUNIST NETWORKS CAN BE BUILT INSIDE THE SHOPS

We know this is possible. We've done it before. In 1980, O. worked in shoe factory with 1000 workers. The workers wanted to organize a union, and came to the Party for help. We struggled with them to organize an openly communist led union (our line at the time). They disagreed, and went to the Teamsters. We participated in the campaign. At the same time, the Party put out communist leaflets attacking the Teamsters and calling on workers to join the Party and fight for revolution. During this campaign, the workers spent a lot of time together, in meetings, dances, playing soccer. We had a network of friends who circulated 100 papers inside the factory. This was done by two members along with 8 friends. Over the course of a year, these 8 friends joined the Party. Unfortunately, when the factory closed, little by little we lost most of these people—because we didn't make the ideological struggle for communism primary.

In 1991 we met "E and A" during a strike in a garment factory called JIC. The strike was against firings and cuts in piece rates and was being led by the Anti-Racist Garment Union, with the backing of the Party. Months after the strike the activity in this factory lessened, but we maintained ties and friendship with A and E. For several years they read Challenge and once in a while they came to Party activities.

In 1994, during a strike in the garment factory Good Times, they again looked for the Party's leadership. The strike was being led by UNITE and because of their liberal goals, their anti-communism, and the Party's activities to support the strike, they attacked our friends hard. Our friends defended themselves and openly defended the Party. This gave us the opportunity to develop broader relations, through Challenge and our food collections, with many of the other strikers. This was part of the summer project and helped the Party in LA and the youth who came to the summer project. At the end of the strike A. and E. joined the Party and tried to bring Challenge to their friends and family.

In 1996, we began a struggle with them to take more leadership in the club and in the public sale of Challenge. They resisted the struggle. After the summer project, they said they were disappointed not to see the movement grow more rapidly. They had some questions about our attack on the racists on July 4th. They had serious questions about our line on latino politicians and voting. Their activity with the Party decreased and they said that they wanted to continue reading Challenge and being friends with us.

The struggle with them continues. In the factory where one of them works, there is a Party member who is trying to form a Party committee there. This couple got closer to us during a reform struggle. As the political struggle sharpens, sometimes there are advances and sometimes retreats. But we shouldn't fear sharpening the ideological struggle with our friends at the same time we explore different ways to work with them. Our relation with them is at a higher level than when we met them in 1991.

In the light of the current discussion about splits in the ruling class, we can better show our friends that the latino politicians are doing the work of the Rockefeller wing of the ruling class to win latino workers to the system, and their children to the army to fight a war for Rockefeller's oil. That way we can expose the system better and show our friends that the Party's alternative is the only one, and be able to win them back to the Party.

BUILDING COMMUNISM, LIKE GROWING CORN, TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE

In building these relations many times we get desperate when we don't see quick changes. We're used to everything fast. Fast food, instant capsules of local and world news, quick divorces, etc. When we decide who to concentrate on, we should investigate, get to know them, analyze their contradictions. If we sharpen the struggle with them, we'll see changes (rarely quickly). If we don't sharpen the struggle, they'll more likely move to the wrong side. Capitalist ideology will get stronger.

The farmworkers who know the process of cultivating corn don't get desperate about it. When they throw seeds into the ground, they know that if it rains, and if they constantly pick the weeds, the seeds will grow slowly but surely. The time comes when the growing plant will be able to resist any wind or weed. And soon the plant will begin to give its fruits, creating millions of new seeds. Can we know the method of developing (cultivating) communists? Certainly!

We shouldn't fear sharp ideological struggle with our friends at the same time we explore different ways to work with them.

When we're involved in class struggle, we always meet very good people who look to us for leadership. Then the struggle really starts—to win them to the Party. You don't win every battle, but you keep up the fight. We need to apply the dialectical category of urgency and patience, together with unity and struggle. Unity is necessary, and struggle is key.

The working class, led by the Progressive Labor Party, can destroy fascism and build a communist society. Our goal is to build a communist base, first with a few more, then tens, hundreds, thousands and then millions of workers, students, soldiers. That's what will guarantee a mass Party and victory for communism. We're fighting individualism. "What can I do to further the well-being of the international working class ?" should be our slogan. The Party is the seed of communism. The more members the Party has, the stronger the working class will be its the fight to destroy fascism with communist revolution.

FASCISTS VS FASCISTS

OLD/NEW MONEY SPLIT AMONG BOSSES CAN LEAD TO WORKERS' REVOLUTION

Who will rule the USA? Violently opposed camps of established and emerging capitalists are now fighting for state power. Neither group deserves it. Both want it merely to serve their own greedy profit interests. No gang of bosses can govern society in a way that will serve workers. The working class alone, which makes up a crushing majority of the population, must hold power. This goal can be accomplished only through communist revolution. And communist revolution can come about only under the leadership of a Party such as the PLP.

Every day brings more turmoil among the rulers. Politicians engage in worse than usual backbiting and mudslinging. Militia members plot and terrorize. The White House comes under investigation. Scandals rock the armed forces. Businesses ferociously attack one another. Sharpening antagonisms underlie and unite these seemingly unrelated events. Newer capitalists are stepping up their bid to grab power from older capitalists; armed conflict becomes a possibility. The Old Guard retaliates ruthlessly against its domestic enemies and, at the same time, moves closer and closer to war in the Middle East.

We need to appreciate fully the nature of the current period and understand its specifics. War and fascism are developing rapidly. Our party's work must conform to this reality. Workers' lives and the future of the communist movement depend on it.

In the midst the bosses' conflicts, we must not fall into the trap of viewing the major capitalists as the "lesser evil." We have all seen pictures of the anti-government, petty capitalist militias training in the woods. But we should also bear in mind the 300,000 acres of California desert the US Army has acquired to prepare for Exxon's next Mideast massacre. We have seen the callous ruthlessness of Gingrich & Co.'s "Contract on America." But we should never forget the millions of workers thrown onto the streets

or into bondage by racist liberal Clinton's slave labor welfare "reform."

Relying on "progressive" segments of the capitalist class is lethal to the communist movement. The "United Front" approach helped undo revolutions in Russia and China and stopped many others before they got off the ground. No such "lesser evil" capitalist exists. Bill Clinton is no better than Newt Gingrich or Dick Armey. The victims of Colin Powell and Timothy McVeigh are equally dead. We must see both sets of bosses as our enemy.

How does the present analysis apply to our day-to-day party building? Let's look at a specific example. Those of us who work in schools are bound to be caught up in the controversy that sets Christian fundamentalists and "school choice" advocates against Clinton's push for national standards and improved schools. The people we work with cannot reject the profit system unless they see what drives the reformers. The bigger capitalists need better trained cadre to compete with foreign rivals, in the marketplace today, on the battlefield tomorrow. Exposing Clinton's calls for standards as a war cry can be an important organizing tool among students, parents, and workers in the schools. In the military, it is not enough for us to attack the openly racist and male supremacist forces. They, in fact, serve the smaller group of bosses. We must also, and mainly, combat the major bosses who for their own ruthless self-interest are trying to tone down overt racism and attacks on women within the ranks. Understanding that the Establishment wants an all-inclusive, effective, cohesive military that can fight World War III helps guide our work. On the job, it's necessary but insufficient to expose the demagoguery of open fascists like Pat Buchanan. Unless we also unmask the "new" AFL-CIO Sweeney leadership as Rockefeller puppets, we will fall into a deadly reformist trap.

On one side of the struggle among billionaires stand the owners of old-line corporations like Exxon, Mobil, General Motors, General Electric, AT&T, IBM, Chase Manhattan, Citicorp, and the larger Wall Street houses. For most of this century, they have dominated the economy and controlled all the governmental means of coercion: lawmaking, the courts, the police, and armed forces. But newer industrialists want power now. And they have interests that clash head on with the Establishment's, especially its need for a massive Mideast oil war. The struggle takes many forms. It rages in the world of business, on Capitol Hill, in the Pentagon. The Oklahoma bombing opened yet another front.

BIGGER BOSSES NEEDING TO RULE A WORLD THAT'S SLIPPING AWAY SEE WAR AS THEIR ONLY WAY OUT

The old-line firms operate internationally and face intensifying competition from Asian and European rivals. They require a government that has the outlook of ruling the world, one willing to risk working class GIs' lives anywhere in their search for maximum profits. The more powerful capitalists must have a tax structure sufficient to fuel their vast war machine. The Establishment also demands stable economic growth and low inflation. The former keeps potential rivals down; the latter ensures that Old Money's vast investments won't be repaid in worthless dollars. While it pillages the rest of the world, Old Money jealously hoards domestic resources for itself under the guise of environmentalism.

The Rockefeller family and the companies it controls lead the Establishment. John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil monopoly spawned oil giants Exxon, Mobil, Amoco, and Chevron. The family's fortune underpins Chase Manhattan, Citicorp, and many "non-profit" institutions. Rockefeller influence reaches the highest levels of government. Bill Clinton was a protégé of Winthrop Rockefeller. David Rockefeller discovered Jimmy Carter. Henry Kissinger was an employee of Nelson Rockefeller, who became vice president himself. Hundreds of other old, wealthy, mainly Eastern, families—DuPonts, Mellons, Whitneys, Cabots, and Dukes, to name a few—and the huge corporations they own make up the Establishment. Their control of finance capital and the apparatus of the state let them lord it over smaller bosses.

SHARP DIFFERENCES SPLIT NEW FROM OLD BOSSES

But New Money capitalists, clustered around the domestic energy business, are grabbing market share from the Old Guard in key areas. To battle the Establishment in Washington, they have taken over much of the Republican Party. The Republicans' top donors, the Kochs of Wichita, Kansas, currently marshal New Money's forces. Their wealth comes from Koch Industries. Largely by stealing oil from the Osage tribe in Oklahoma, David Koch and his brother Charles built up the firm their father had founded into the second largest family-owned company in the US, with over $20 billion in yearly sales of oil, gas, coal, and chemicals. Koch's Oil Patch allies include Pennzoil, Coastal, the Hunt family, and a host of natural gas producers.

Oil companies by themselves, however, do not exclusively make up New Money. Many up and coming firms have interests that coincide with those of the Oil Patch. They seek to curtail government interference and want tax laws that will let them amass wealth quickly. Microsoft typifies the high-tech firms uniting with the Oil Patch. Its founders own and run it. With spectacular revenues that permit it to maintain "no material long-term debt," as its financial statements boast, Microsoft stays free of the bankers. Intel falls into the same category. (Not coincidentally, Intel has on its board the chairman of British Petroleum, the number one producer of crude in the US) The owners of thousands of relatively young businesses large and small, tired of having their earnings confiscated by the IRS for the big boys' benefit, consider their interest linked to the Kochs'.

ROCKEFELLER'S FOREIGN FOES ARE NEW MONEY'S PALS

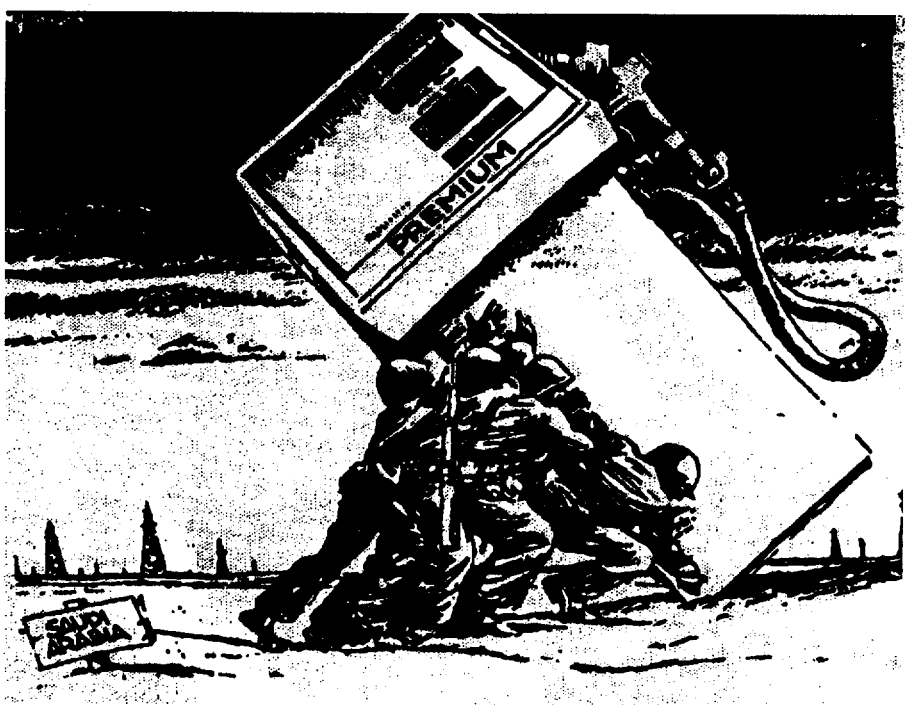
When New Money ventures abroad to escape regulations that stifle it at home, it unites with Rockefeller enemies. The Coastal oil firm of Texas, under fire from the feds for pollution and discrimination, bought Iraq's first supertanker load of crude when US-imposed sanctions were eased in late 1996. After rebel Laurent Kabila took over the Congo and broke diamond and gold contracts with the old-line Anglo-American cartel, Pat Robertson rushed in waving wads of cash he had fleeced from his televangelism flock. Hunt Oil had substantial dealings with Libya's Khaddafi before US warplanes tried to kill him.

Bibi Netanyahu's Israel is for now the upstarts' most lucrative foreign outpost. Netanyahu provides highly-skilled, poorly-paid Russian workers to the high-tech industry under a strict "No Arabs Allowed" policy. Intel's $1.6 billion semiconductor plant employing 1,500 at Kiryat Gat represents the largest single private investment in Israel. Rupert Murdoch owns the biggest research and development firm in Bibi's segregated Jerusalem. Unlike earlier leaders, Netanyahu rejects Israel's traditional role as a watchdog for US Big Oil's Mideast operations.

Netanyahu's ties to US "ultraconservatives" run deep. When Netanyahu became prime minister, the first American he spoke to was Trent Lott. Clinton, sorely disappointed by the Israeli election results, had to wait. Arthur Finkelstein, the political consultant who had helped re-elect Jesse Helms, directed Netanyahu's campaign. In early 1997, it was clear that Bibi's attacks on Arabs were sabotaging Rockefeller, Inc.'s designs for the region. The Christian Coalition placed a full-page ad in the *New York Times* defending his push for an Arab-free Jerusalem. Another link lies in Newt Gingrich's wife's role as an officer of the Israel Economic Development Corporation. The IEDC raises money in the US for investment in projects like a new, state-of-the-art high-tech manufacturing plant in the Negev Desert.

PETROLEUM IS THE PROFIT SYSTEM'S MOST COVETED PRIZE

Oil is not the only point of conflict between Old Money and New, but its importance to capitalism makes it the chief one. The main section of US capital has two compelling reasons for making control of Mideast oil at the expense of the Oil Patch its top priority. In the first place, Middle Eastern oil costs less. And the Establishment's factories need cheap energy to compete globally. A report on national energy policy the Clinton administration released in 1996 said, "the US economy realizes hundreds of billions of dollars in benefits annually by using relatively low cost imported oil rather than relying on more expensive domestic sources of energy." So imports now make up more than half of US consumption. The second reason is



the tremendous leverage a grip on Persian Gulf oil gives US multinationals over their foreign rivals. Two thirds of Exxon's earnings come from producing oil overseas and selling it in Europe and Japan. But the Rockefeller camp's grip on the Mideast is slipping. So it is beefing up its Gulf forces for a massive invasion to retake the oil fields. Iraq appears the first likely target.

HIGHER PROFITS IN MIDEAST FREEZE ALASKA WELLS, BURN OIL PATCH

Because there's nothing in it for them, the Oil Patch decries the Old Guard's imperialism. It complains that, even now before the shooting has started, the Pentagon's permanent presence in the Mideast amounts to a $90-dollar-a-barrel subsidy to the likes of Exxon and Mobil. A full-scale land war would carry an astronomical price tag. Early in 1997, a delegation of Republican senators from Alaska, Montana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Utah, states that produce oil, gas, coal, and uranium, took a look at the war preparations: "I was just aghast when I saw what was going on, in terms of planning, by the expansion of Aviano (Air Base in Italy), expansion of the Kuwait deployment, the expansion of the deployment in Saudi Arabia, without any consultation with us," said Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska (AP, 3/30/97). A 1996 policy paper from the Cato Institute, a think tank founded and funded by the Kochs, proclaimed "The United States has no interests to justify the risks and costs of attempting to manage Persian Gulf security. Washington should withdraw US troops."

Cheap imported oil means high profits for larger US industries, but it threatens the independents' survival as capitalists. Rice University of Houston published *The Oil Makers* in 1995, a collection of interviews with independent oil bosses. In it, Pennzoil's founder Hugh Liedtke said, "The gradual deterioration of any kind of regulation on the price of incoming crude...is the principal cause of the deterioration of the domestic industry. Various areas of the country have axes to grind. It's a modern version of the Civil War. The Northeast wants cheap fuel oil and cheap natural gas to run their industry and heat their homes" (p. 32). The war is causing the Southwestern bosses staggering casualties. Imports of oil from the Persian Gulf surged more than 600 percent from 1985 to 1989. Employment in oil and gas dropped from 708,000 in 1982 to 354,000 ten years later. In 1981 an average of 4,500 rigs searched for oil and gas in the US. Today the rig count stands at 966 and is falling.

Liedtke gets close to the heart of the conflict when he protests "the cost of keeping the Army, Navy, and Air Force in the Mideast, keeping Israel armed to the teeth, and providing arms to other nations in that area." But it's not just to protect the majors' low cost oil wells that the Pentagon stations 50,000 troops permanently in the Middle East. The US threat is also meant to rein in competitors, like the French, Japanese, Russian, and Chinese firms now developing Iraq's and Iran's petroleum infrastructure. There is one overriding reason why the Pentagon will keep a presence in the Gulf at any cost. The bigger US bosses need to control the flow of capitalism's lifeblood to their foreign rivals.

What the Oil Patch tycoons want most is to open up Alaska, particularly the Arctic Natural Wildlife Refuge, for oil drilling. Whenever the smaller oil barons try to expand production there, the big boys swat them down. The Supreme Court in 1997 squashed $1 billion in drilling projects by deciding that Alaska's coastal waters fell under federal, not state, jurisdiction. Laws inspired by the Rockefeller-backed environmental movement keep the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge off-limits to the wildcatters. The publicity the Establishment media lavished on the *Exxon Valdez* incident galvanized public opinion against further development in Alaska. And much of the multi-billion-dollar fine that Exxon paid for the spill now goes to enforcing anti-drilling environmental laws in the state (*New York Times*, 9/11/97).

GREEN MOVEMENT IS THE COLOR OF OLD MONEY

The environmental movement, comprising the Sierra Club, the Environmental Defense Fund, Worldwatch Institute, and others, receives $40 million a year from foundations set up by three families: the Pew Charitable Trusts, the W. Alton Jones Foundation, and several Rockefeller family funds. The Pews founded Sunoco; Citgo made the Joneses rich; the Rockefellers inherited the greatest and bloodiest oil fortune in history. These "friends of the Earth" have been raping it (and killing workers in the bargain) for more than a century with their oil spills, toxic waste, and strip mines. Clinton's Environmental Protection Agency, however, prefers to target Koch Industries with over 300 pending indictments for pollution. In 1996 it hit the Kochs with the largest fine—$55 million—ever levied under the Clean Water Act.

Every year Worldwatch publishes an influential book-length report called *State of the World*. According to its editors, "the idea for *State of the World* originated in a discussion with Larry Rockefeller....We are pleased to have received core funding support from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the

Winthrop Rockefeller Trust." Donald Hodel, however, the Oklahoma energy baron who recently became president of the Christian Coalition, finds such good works uncharitable, "They raise more money each year to spend on environmental issues than the two major parties spend on presidential elections every four years. The law right now is on the side of the extreme environmentalists, and that's a 'good reason' you can't open the ANWR" (*The Oil Makers*, p. 342).

The Oil Patch gang retaliate with their own self-serving philanthropies. In 1977, Charles Koch founded the Cato Institute in Washington, DC, a think-tank to rival Old Money's Council on Foreign Relations and Brookings Institution. The Koch family has been its chief financial support ever since, having given it over $21 million The Cato Institute employs four dozen scholars who churn out books and articles that favor the New Money barons. Making use of op-ed pages, television appearances, speakers' tours, and news conferences, the institute boasts of generating "ideas that find their way into legislative proposals." One way is through House majority leader Dick Armey of Texas, who works closely with Cato.

The Cato Institute's program defies the domination of US policy by the likes of Mobil and Chase Manhattan. It counts among its "major areas of emphasis:" opposing government efforts to regulate the energy industry; demonstrating the counterproductivity of most business regulation; challenging environmental claims; promoting a policy of strategic independence and nonintervention; and exploring alternatives to the Federal Reserve System. Cato has published such studies as: "Time to End the Alaskan Oil Export Ban" and "The Futility of Raising Tax Rates." Koch foundations pumped $9.3 million into Citizens for a Sound Economy, "now an important weapon in the assault on government interference in business" (*Nation*, 8/26/96).

CATO INSTITUTE IS A PIPELINE FOR KOCH'S OILY IDEOLOGY

Many of the tax reforms in the Republican's 1997 budget bills were forged in Koch's policy foundries. "In an October 1995 monograph on the capital-gains proposal in the Contract With America, the Cato Institute argued that the proposal would unlock hundreds of billions of dollars in property and other assets that investors have held onto" *New York Times*, 8/22/96). Lowering the tax on capital gains (profits) by 30% benefits bosses on their way up trying to accumulate capital. Microsoft's top lobbyist Grover Norquist "applauded the cuts in capital-gains taxes and a planned decrease in estate taxes" (*Investor's Business Daily*, 6/10/97) because his boss Bill Gates will have less of his multi-billion dollar bonanza confiscated by the IRS.

New and Old Money expend countless dollars and immeasurable effort on electoral politics. Not only does each camp want to control law-making for itself, but holding power requires a mass base in the working class. It's true that millions of workers don't vote. But millions of others do. And millions of workers, voters and non-voters, are influenced by one party or another through organizations as diverse as the AFL-CIO, the NRA, NOW, and churches of all denominations. After winning broad support and many seats in Congress in the 1994 "Gingrich Revolution," the upstarts are now locked in a struggle for the Republican Party.

BEER BARONS AND BIBLE BELTERS JOIN WILDCATTERS TO SET GOP POLICY

In March 1996, the Council for National Policy met in Orlando, Florida, to set the agenda for the conservative wing of the GOP Texas oil millionaire Nelson Bunker Hunt had founded the CNP in 1981, as Eastern banks, led by Citicorp, were hounding him into bankruptcy. Its current members include heavy-hitting power brokers Trent Lott, Jesse Helms, and Dick Armey. Ralph Reed and Pat Robertson of the Christian Coalition belong. Grover Norquist, Microsoft's top lobbyist, and Don Hodel, the outspoken Oklahoma energy mogul, play key roles. Funding for the CNP comes from the Coors family, who want to sink their brewery billions into oil exploration but are blocked by environmental regulations. Howard Ahmanson also contributes heavily. His bank, Home Savings, lends to homeowners in California and has cleaned up on the energy and high-tech booms there. Home Savings shares two directors with El Paso Natural Gas.

After a keynote speech on "Why Government is Becoming Obsolete," the group took up obvious concerns like foreign policy and tax reform. But then it addressed partial-birth abortion and "the President and Military Personnel." According to *Whatever It Takes*, journalist Elizabeth Drew's account of the 1996 campaigns, bible-thumper Reed developed the abortion plank as a way to win Catholics and broaden the ultraconservatives' appeal. "Partial-birth is the issue on which there is the most consensus," said the pragmatic preacher, (p.161). And it is now clear that the Oil Patch sparked the firestorms over adultery in the military that would later trouble Clinton.

BUCHANAN-MILLIKEN CAMP IS A FACTION WITHIN A FACTION

Not only had the Oil Patch-California axis gained the upper hand over the Rockefeller wing of the Republican Party; it had also bested the Buchanan forces. Patrick Buchanan represents yet another sector of US capital, manufacturers who stand to lose their shirts from Clinton's free trade drive, those whose factories and farms are bound to US soil. A South Carolina textile tycoon named Roger Milliken forked over $2.1 million to the Buchanan campaign. Milliken knows that he could never compete with cloth made by virtual slave labor in Asia. Calling for high tariffs on imported manufactured goods and immigration restrictions to "protect US-born workers' jobs," goals not necessarily shared by the Koch camp, Buchanan garnered 3 million primary votes. Eventually, however, textile proved weaker that energy and high-tech.

The CNP met again in San Diego in August just before the GOP convention there. The Koch family had become the party's biggest donors. Throughout that summer, Norquist and Reed functioned for all intents and purposes as chairmen of the Republican Party. Meeting in weekly strategy sessions, as Drew reports (p.11), they hit on a plan to unite rank and file members of the Christian Coalition, the National Rifle Association, the National Federation of Independent Business, and other groups into a "Leave Us Alone" coalition directed by New Money. Koch Industries bankrolled NFIB events in San Diego (p. 112). Norquist found time in his busy schedule to speak at the convention of the Koch-funded Libertarian Party, a Libertarian press release reveals.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO KOCH OIL

In June 1997, Donald Hodel became president of the Christian Coalition, blowing its religious cover completely. The only sermon Hodel had ever preached was the anti-Rockefeller creed of the independent oil and gas producers. He had fought their fight as Reagan's interior secretary and Bush's energy secretary. Hodel sits on the boards of directors of several energy companies, including the huge Columbia Gas system. In 1994, he co-authored *Crisis in the Oil Patch*, a book-length attack on environmental regulations, the Alaska oil drilling ban, Big Oil's Mideast investments, and the government's undying support for them. In the 1996 elections, the Christian Coalition went from pew to pew seeking votes for Koch's apostles. "With almost 2 million members and an annual budget of some $30 million, it is now acknowledged to be perhaps the most influential single faction in Republican Party politics. The organization distributed some 45 million voter guides just before last November's elections through a network of 125,000 churches. In many congressional districts it has become virtually impossible to get elected without the support of its members" (Reuters, 6/11/97).

WORKING CLASS IS THE TARGET OF BOTH FACTIONS

The Democrats were just as busy enticing workers into the Rockefeller camp with liberal bait. Clinton forces worked through the AFL-CIO, the National Education Association (a non-AFL-CIO teachers' union), the National Abortion Rights League, the Sierra Club, and the League of Conservation Voters. Unions offer workers minor concessions that mask capitalism's atrocities. While the AFL-CIO and Clinton were celebrating a small hike in the minimum wage, AT&T, GM, and the rest continued to slash better-paying jobs by the millions.

Labor unions represented 20% of the delegates at the Chicago convention (Drew, p. 141). Like the conservative GOP, pro-Rockefeller unions took a grass roots approach to the campaign. The AFL-CIO enlisted shop stewards to get out the vote . Winning seats in Congress took second place to winning the hearts and minds of the workers. "The AFL-CIO targeted not anti-labor politicians *per se* but districts with many union members" (p. 73). One of those was Seattle-Tacoma in Washington State, "the epicenter of the fight over control of the House" (p. 186). The allegiance of Boeing workers will be critical for Rockefeller & Co. in the coming war. The Democrats managed to unseat arch-"conservative" Randy Tate in that race. Down but not out, Tate has since become chairman of the Christian Coalition.

KOCH POWER PLAY SPLITS GOP DOWN THE MIDDLE

About a month before the election, conservatives leading the Republican Party decided to abandon candidates Dole and Kemp because they were too close to the Old Money forces that had once run the GOP Dole's policy of "tolerance" on abortion betrayed his loyalties. A decade earlier, Charles Koch had pegged Dole as "just another Establishment pragmatic politician with no moral principles" (*The Nation*, 8/26/96). Koch knew Dole's ethics well. Payoffs from Koch had often bought Dole's help in legislative matters. "Conservative" GOP leaders forced Dole to give up his Senate seat and then spent their time and money getting true believers elected to the House and Senate. At the time of the convention a clairvoyant article in *Business Week* (9/26/96) noted

the Koch faction's frustration, "For now, they're stuck with Bob Dole and Jack Kemp, candidates they don't completely trust. But as they look to the next millennium, they are bent on remaking a Republican Party in their image. A party that Bob Dole, Jack Kemp, and Corporate America won't recognize as their own."

NEW MONEY REPUBLICANS SHOVE DOLE AND GINGRICH OVERBOARD

Now even Newt Gingrich, standard bearer for Contract With America, has fallen victim to the purge. In July 1997, a cabal of Republican representatives led by Dick Armey, Tom DeLay, and Bill Paxon tried to oust Gingrich from his post as Speaker of the House. In their eyes, Gingrich had betrayed the Oil Patch's cause by "caving in" to Clinton on Establishment-sponsored bills like Nafta, the $50 billion bailout of Mexico, and the chemical weapons treaty (this treaty provides for direct US and UN monitoring of the petrochemical industry). All three would-be assassins earned a rating of zero, of a possible 100, from Rockefeller's League of Conservation Voters. Armey is recognized as the Cato Institute's closest collaborator in the House. DeLay has made energy deregulation his life's work—along with lowering taxes on profits. Paxon in many ways personifies New Money's expansion into territory once held by the enemy. Through his district run several of the gas pipelines that enable Koch's eastward onslaught. And Paxon appeals to Catholic voters, reflecting New Money's desire to broaden beyond its traditional Protestant base. Although Gingrich remains, *Business Week* (8/25/97) foresees Paxon replacing him in 1998.

But the Establishment has no intention of yielding the GOP to its enemies. On the heels of the plot on Gingrich came the standoff between Bill Weld and Jesse Helms. Weld of Massachusetts demanded that Helms of North Carolina take action on his appointment as ambassador to Mexico. Helms claimed that Weld's support for the medicinal use of marijuana made him unfit for a job that involved stemming drug traffic. But even the most obtuse media pundits could see that Mexico and drugs had nothing to do with the matter. This was a fight for control of the Republican Party. Weld proclaimed, "I am not Senator Helms's kind of Republican." He certainly isn't. Weld's money is so old that his ancestors gave some of it to Harvard in the 1630s. The Wall Street brokerage Weld's grandfather founded, White Weld, now forms part of the Merrill Lynch empire. Weld's policies are indistinguishable from Clinton's and Gore's: reduce the budget by cutting social programs but retain a liberal cover on issues like abortion and the environment. The Rockefeller wing of the GOP seems to be grooming Weld for a run at the White House in 2000.

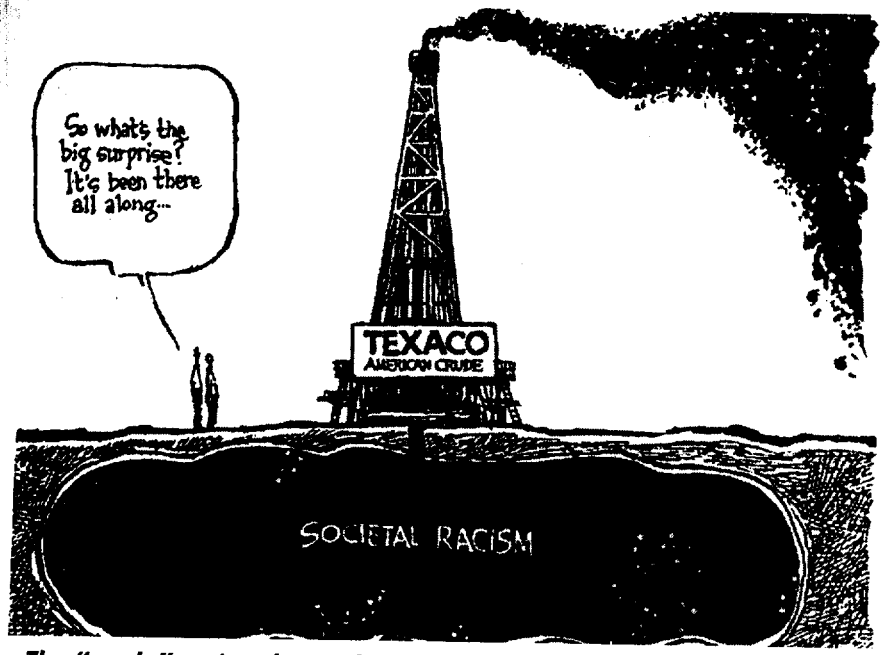
ROCKEFELLER TO CLINTON: STOP SELLING YOURSELF TO TWO-BIT BOSSES

At present, the battle for the most powerful post in the state apparatus—the Presidency—currently plays out in an endless torrent of scandals and investigations. Understanding which side the various attacks on Clinton are coming from is critical. On one hand, Murdoch's press sensationalizes sex allegations Paula Jones made to the ultra-"conservative," Coors-funded *American Spectator*. On the other, federal courts and congressional campaign reform committees seek to divorce the presidency from all kinds of small-fry capitalists, whether the name is Huang, Riady, or McDougal. New Money wants to weaken Clinton's control. The Rockefellers want to make sure that their creature keeps on serving them and them alone.

Bill Clinton comes from the small town of Hope, and he has loyalties to Tyson, Wal-Mart, Arkla gas, and other Arkansas capitalists, but he owes his political soul to the Eastern Establishment. When Winthrop Rockefeller arrived in Arkansas in the 1950's, he brought New York-based International Paper with him. Clearcutting on 800,000 acres and running a mill at Pine Bluff that spews out 2 million tons of chemicals a year, IP soon became the state's worst polluter. As governor, Clinton helped the timber barons plunder the Arkansas countryside by asking no more than voluntary compliance with lenient environmental regulations.

IP rewarded Clinton first by setting up the Whitewater deal, in which the Clintons got to buy at half price riverfront property the paper company once owned. Then IP started pouring funds into the Democratic Leadership Council, a collection of young anti-labor hacks that Old Money was grooming for national office. The DLC played a key role in launching Clinton from Little Rock to the White House. Banking and railroad heiress Pamela Harriman headed fundraising for the 1992 campaign.

Clinton has performed invaluable services for Wall Street financiers, who need a stable dollar. He has reduced the deficit through budget cuts like the recent welfare massacre, preserved low inflation by keeping tens of millions out of work, and maintained productivity levels by allowing wave upon wave of wholesale firings. But chasing the fast buck, turning Lincoln's bedroom into a Motel 6 for the newly rich, and



The "crude" racism that embarrassed Texaco officials when tapes of the meetings became public was no news to racist bosses anywhere!

dishing out favors to Arkansas cronies displease Clinton's Establishment masters. Most of the Little Rock crowd have left Washington in disgrace or a coffin. Agriculture secretary Mike Espy got the ax for giving chicken king Tyson tax breaks. Long gone, too, are Vince Foster and the rest of the Rose law firm that accompanied Clinton to the White House.

NEW MONEY'S ANTI-GOVERNMENT STANCE LIT OKLAHOMA BOMB

Before their buyout of the Republicans, the Kochs tried to insinuate themselves into government through the Libertarian Party. The Kochs virtually purchased the party in the late 1970's, and David Koch ran as its vice-presidential candidate in 1980. Charles Koch picked Libertarian Party chairman Ed Crane to head the Cato Institute. Although Libertarians won only 3% of the national vote and about 170 local offices, they deeply influenced many people.

The Libertarians' ideology and organization link the Kochs' stance against government interference to the massacre of 168 people in the Oklahoma federal building. Invigorated by the Kochs' cash injections, Libertarians hatched the militia movement. A typical Libertarian candidate, David Bergland, vowed to abolish the CIA, FBI, IRS, Social Security, and public schools. If citizens wanted national defense, he said, they could band together and contract for it voluntarily. John Walker, who ran for Congress as a Libertarian in 1992, formed the San Diego militia. In 1996, Oklahoma bomber Terry Nichols's brother defended the militia movement at meeting of the Michigan Libertarian Party. Making it clear that they deplore the Feds more than the massacre, the Libertarians' official comment on the blast began, "The tragic bombing in Oklahoma City should not be used as an excuse by the government to restrict civil liberties." The militias may prove to be the crude beginnings of a New Money army.

THE *TIMES* DARES CALL IT TREASON

Koch & Co. and the militias have the same enemies, Big Oil and Establishment banks. "The Mountaineer Militia considered waging 'holy war' on the government, with Sen. Jay Rockefeller and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan as top targets, FBI affidavits show. The assassination revelations came in the case of seven militia members charged in October with plotting to bomb the FBI's national fingerprint records center in West Virginia" (AP, 6/13/97).

On June 20, 1997 the *New York Times*, the Establishment's foremost newspaper, printed an op-ed piece by A.M. Rosenthal. It warned Clinton to curb the militias before they tore the nation apart. "At least 858 groups, including 380 armed 'militias,' were active in 1996—a 6 percent increase since before Oklahoma City. They operate in every state, according to Klanwatch, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala....Nothing has been done that diminishes the vivid likelihood that these gangs will carry out or inspire other bombings in other cities." Comprehending the threat to his Old Money bosses, Rosenthal pulls no punches. He uses the language of civil war. "There has been not much leadership from the President against armed racism and rebellion....They call themselves militia and patriots. But they are exactly what a prosecutor said about Timothy McVeigh—traitors."

UPSTARTS' GAS PAINS BOSTONIAN ARISTOCRATS

Growing economic power emboldens the Oil Patch to commit treason in the face of the Establishment's counterattacks. Koch runs the largest network of oil and gasoline pipelines in the US, twice the size of second-place Amoco's system. Six New Money

companies—Hodel's Columbia, El Paso, Coastal, Occidental, Williams, and Koch—own 77% of the nation's natural gas pipeline mileage. Of the big players in gas lines, only two, second-place Enron and eighth-place Duke Power, represent Old Money. Old-line Tenneco once held fourth place, but, short of cash, it had to sell its pipelines to El Paso for $1 billion in 1996.

"Conservative" lawmakers have transformed the gas and electric energy industry through deregulation. As they dismantle the rules that guaranteed the big utilities monopolies in gas distribution, New Money outfits are making great inroads into the domains of the Old Guard. Coastal has in the works a $320 million pipeline that will bring gas to Boston. Columbia's $600 million Millennium line will supply New York City. Deregulation let Koch capture Bay State Gas in Massachusetts and Connecticut Natural Gas as outlets in 1995. These moves directly challenge Establishment bigwigs like Boston's aristocratic Cabots, who until recently had an absolute lock on the region's gas business. The upstarts are also fighting their way into electric power. "Calenergy, a large independent power producer, announced that it had begun a hostile attempt to buy New York State Electric and Gas Corp. a utility that serves 804,000 customers in upstate New York. The bid is aimed in part at giving Calenergy a base in the Northeast to sell its electricity as states like New York, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts move toward opening their utility markets to competition, allowing customers to choose their power suppliers" (*NYT*, 7/22/97). Based in Omaha, Calenergy "has thrived by being unregulated." In September 1997, NYSEG successfully beat back the hostile takeover bid, but the war is far from over.

Microsoft, with Intel by its side, continues its conquest of huge sectors of the high-tech market. Bill Gates just threw a $150 million lifeline around the neck of Apple, its lone rival in operating systems. But the Establishment is mounting a counteroffensive. *The New Yorker* profiled anti-Microsoft champion John Doerr in its August 11, 1997, issue. A venture capitalist deeply involved in Democratic politics, "Bill Clinton and, more frequently, Al Gore seek his counsel." Doerr "is often characterized as a stealth challenger to Bill Gates—as the ringleader of a coalition of Silicon Valley firms that are out to thwart Microsoft's quest for global hegemony." The money Doerr raises for firms including Sun and Netscape is decidedly old. The article opens with Doerr chatting up investors at Morgan Stanley's New York offices. Later it specifies university endowments as another main source of Doerr's war chest. His partner is newspaper heir William Randolph Hearst III.

THE IMPERIALISTS STRIKE BACK

As the upstarts gain strength, the Old Guard concentrates its forces with the full blessing of Clinton's regulatory agencies. The takeover of Dean Witter by Morgan Stanley and of Salomon Brothers by the Travelers Group signal the beginning of a merger frenzy that will leave investment capital in the hands of a few Establishment firms. Chase Manhattan and Merrill Lynch are contemplating a marriage that would make the new firm the third largest bank in the world, the object being both to compete with Germany and Japan and to further the Establishment's control of finance in the US Other mergers aim at driving New Money out of the arms trade. Boeing has swallowed up McDonnell-Douglas and Rockwell's military business. Raytheon has bought Hughes and Texas Instruments. These buyouts, planned in part by the Pentagon, ensure that only Old Money companies will make warplanes and missiles for the coming oil war.

Union Pacific Resources' hostile bid for Pennzoil shows Old Money trying to destroy one of its Oil Patch foes by exploiting its weakness in the international arena. Needing like all emerging capitalists to grow or die, Pennzoil invested heavily in exploring the newly found ocean of oil beneath the Caspian Sea. But, without the clout of an Exxon, Pennzoil dealt as a junior partner with European, Japanese, and Russian firms, which would ultimately control the flow of the oil. Rockefeller & Co. cannot let these strategic assets pass into enemy hands. So it enlisted Union Pacific to wipe Pennzoil out.

PENNZOIL TRIES TO BREAK INTO THE MAJORS, GETS BEANED THREE TIMES

Pennzoil was founded by Hugh Liedtke, a life-member of the All-American Wildcatters Club of Houston, and a partner of George Bush in his Texas oil prospecting days. Liedtke longed "to build an American oil company large enough to rival the huge, international conglomerates" (Steve Coll, *The Taking Of Getty Oil*, 1987, p. 245). The conglomerates, however, had other ideas and the state power with which to enforce them. A Federal court awarded Getty Oil to Texaco when Pennzoil tried to buy it up in the 1980s. Pennzoil got $3 billion in damages, but had to stay in the minor leagues. By 1994, Pennzoil had stealthily built up an 8.9% stake in Chevron. The Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department stopped that takeover dead by fining Pennzoil

$2.3 million for non-disclosure. Union Pacific Resources, on the other hand, was spun off in 1996 by the Union Pacific Railroad, one of the Establishment's oldest war-horses. To this day the Rockefeller family and New York's aristocratic Brown Brothers Harriman bank dominate ownership of the railroad. The offspring didn't stray. Boston's Fidelity, a Brahmin-run investment house, owns the largest block of Union Pacific Resources' stock.

On July 7, 1997, Union Pacific sent Pennzoil shareholders a letter urging them to sell. "It charges that Pennzoil has wasted $3.0 billion received in a settlement from Texaco, that it may not be able to afford to develop its prize overseas assets in the Caspian Sea and that UPR has done a better job of managing its assets than Pennzoil. Union Pacific also demanded to know how Pennzoil's involvement in the Karabakh offshore field in the Caspian would be funded, given the lack of pipeline capacity and the capital needed to fund the project" (Reuters, 7/10/97).

OIL PATCH PENNZOIL AIDS RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE BOSSES

The Eastern bankers are really objecting to Russia's complete control of the deal. A consortium of Russia's Lukoil and Italy's Agip holds 62.5% to Pennzoil's 30%. All oil produced in the landlocked region would have to be shipped in Russian pipelines, over Russian territory, guarded by Russian troops. UPR complains that whatever Pennzoil invests in Karabakh it hands to Moscow on a silver platter. Reuters says, "the company also questioned whether Pennzoil had the finances to fund its domestic and international exploration and production programmes, noting that Pennzoil had sold stakes in some of its most highly leveraged fields in Azerbaijan. Pennzoil sold half of its stake in the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli block earlier this year for $130 million, leaving it with a 4.8 percent stake in Caspian Sea project."

These fields lie within the region Exxon itself is desperate to develop as a future replacement for Persian Gulf sources. What angers the Rockefeller camp is that Pennzoil at first tried to sell the stake to the Japanese. On April 2, 1996, Pennzoil issued a press release stating, "Itochu will pay Pennzoil approximately $132 million in cash for a 5 percent interest in the ACG unit. James L. Pate, Pennzoil's chairman and chief executive officer, said, 'This is a tremendous

opportunity for the company and its shareholders. We are pleased to have Itochu join us in developing Azerbaijan's vast hydrocarbon potential.'" Old Money was less pleased. A Pennzoil press release dated July 30, 1997, suggests that serious strong-arming had gone on the meantime. "Split of the 5 percent share includes 3.0006 percent to Exxon; 1.4705 percent to Itochu; and 0.5289 percent to Unocal," it said. Rockefeller had snatched the lion's share from the Japanese. Now the more powerful faction, weary of chastising Pennzoil on a case-by-case basis, seeks to eliminate it. If the Old Guard win, the Oil Patch will be forced to step up their fight for survival on every front: economic, political, and military. Pennzoil could win this battle only by finding a "White Knight." France's Total or Elf might come to the rescue. But that outcome would plant on US soil the bitterest rivals of Exxon and Mobil. Whatever happens, the basic conflict is sure to sharpen.

In the recent Texaco racism scandal, the bigger bosses used their state power to eradicate Oil Patch forces at work inside an old-line company. Texaco's New York board of directors have had trouble with some of their Texas-rooted executives since the company's founding. In 1996 a number of employees charged two Texaco executives with discriminating against black workers and making KKK-style racist comments. Jesse Jackson, the Rockefeller brothers' "Man of the Year" in 1978, drew national attention to a case that had already become federal. The executives were forced to resign and Texaco was fined. But Rockefeller and the US government don't give a damn about stopping racism. Genocide, as in Vietnam or Iraq, and racist superexploitation of workers on every continent are their stock in trade. The Texaco executives' real crime was cutting a deal with British Petroleum to sell Alaskan crude to Japan. This scheme would have seriously reduced Japanese dependence on Rockefeller, Inc.'s Mideast oil. It also would have raised Oil Patch hopes for expanding production in Alaska. A New York Times editorial later praised Texaco for canning the racists and for focusing again on "international matters."

OIL FIGHT LUBRICATES ASSASSINS' TRIGGERS

An earlier version of the capitalist dogfight that centers on oil led to the Kennedy assassination. Kennedy's cabinet reflected the Old Money interests he defended. Dean Rusk of the Rockefeller Foundation was Secretary of State. Robert MacNamara of Ford Motor headed the armed forces. McGeorge Bundy of Harvard and old Boston money advised on national security. Kennedy had two chief goals: countering the Soviet menace to US imperialism and keeping a lid on an economy that was about to boil over. Kennedy

initiated genocide in Vietnam; at home, he waged a war for stable money. But the Kennedy program of low growth, low inflation, and high taxes that benefited the money-center banks crippled business owners who were just beginning to strike it rich, particularly oil field developers. Kennedy intended to abolish the Oil Depletion Allowance, which exempted a large part of oil well profits from taxes. To the wildcatters, the terms of the write-off were sacred. "Twenty-seven and a half percent of gross income up to fifty percent of net income, world without end, amen" intoned a US Senator (*The Control of Oil*, p. 192).

Whoever fired the fatal shot in Dallas, some facts cannot be disputed. Lyndon Johnson of Texas became president, and his first major act in office was to restore the depletion allowance. Jack Ruby, the man who prevented a public trial of Kennedy's murder by killing Oswald, was a "business associate" of the Southwest's leading independent oilman, H.L. Hunt, the David Koch of his day (Ruby, in fact, was Hunt's pimp). Ruby had papers from Hunt in his pocket when he was arrested. Not incidentally, multi-billion dollar plans for a new headquarters for NASA suddenly shifted from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Houston. The Rockefeller wing had to get New Money out of the White House before it could take revenge. It accomplished its purpose in Watergate. The Ford-Rockefeller administration that followed Nixon abolished the Oil Depletion Allowance. Then in the late 1970s, when Hunt's sons tried to get a foothold in finance by cornering the silver market, a group of banks led by Citicorp sued the Hunts for fraud and won such a devastating judgment that the Hunts had to sell their houses to pay it.

John Hinckley's attempt to assassinate Reagan showed at least part of the Oil Patch striking back. The Hinckley family owned Vanderbilt Energy, an oil and gas exploration company based in Texas and Colorado. The Hinckleys socialized with George Bush, then a great benefactor of the Oil Patch. Hinckley himself belonged to a Nazi outfit in Texas, a prototype of the militias. Did visions of Jodie Foster really drive Hinckley to shoot Reagan? Or was it capitalist self-interest? The stalking story only backed up an insanity plea and ensured that no trial would take place. Reagan had won the Southwestern vote with the same sort of populist, fundamentalist claptrap that the Christian Coalition spouts today. But by the time Hinckley pulled the trigger, Reagan had clearly sold out to big business, and his Mideast policy was strangling firms like the Hinckleys'.

ARMED FORCES READY FOR WAR—WITH ONE ANOTHER

All capitalists protect their property by force of arms. The more powerful US bosses have a worldwide imperialist war machine that they hope can defend their sphere of influence from Russian, Chinese, European, and Japanese imperialists. But New Money's main enemy is Old Money. Because the Establishment's overseas war efforts harm them, the upstarts are stepping up their struggle for control of the US armed forces. The entire military apparatus, from the grand strategy of the Pentagon to the allegiance of the GIs, is at stake.

Large blocs of capital organized as nations continually fight over markets and sources of labor and materials. Trade wars turn into shooting wars.

As Lenin demonstrated in *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, the profit system makes war inevitable. Large blocs of capital organized as nations continually fight over markets and sources of labor and materials. Trade wars turn into shooting wars. To guard its shrinking slice of the globe, the US Establishment must be able not only to send troops anywhere but to mass decisive numbers of them on the ground where and when US might is threatened. With declining success, Rockefeller & Co. have followed this course since 1944.Vast armies occupying Western Europe and the Far East enabled the US Establishment to corner more than half the world's trade briefly after World War II. All-out wars, however, couldn't keep Exxon and GM from losing half of Korea and all of Vietnam. In Iraq, a US-led force 750,000-strong wiped out the equivalent of the population of Washington. But because the US land army retreated, Big Oil didn't gain a single additional well. Establishment strategists now hope to correct that error with a second, permanent invasion.

The Oil Patch and their high-tech allies have not yet reached the stage where competing with foreign ri-

vals is their paramount concern. They have little use for vast armed forces overseas. To watch over its foreign investments, which are growing fast but still tiny compared to Old Money's, New Money for now depends on local bosses, usually Rockefeller foes, like Netanyahu in Israel and Kabila in the Congo. The upstarts apply what leverage they have over US military policy in favor of a shield of air defenses. Although New Money's business outlook is hardly isolationist, the term fits its current military strategy.

UPSTARTS DREAM OF WARFARE BY REMOTE CONTROL; ESTABLISHMENT NEEDS GROUND FORCES BACKED BY A-BOMBS

During the Cold War, an umbrella of intercontinental ballistic missiles and Strategic Air Command bombers once served as the Establishment's second tier of armed force—behind the troops in Europe—against the Soviet Union. New Money high-tech defense contractors profited from the Air Force's purchases. But dwindling resources are leading Rockefeller & Co. to reduce, although by no means eliminate, their nuclear arsenal as they focus on a strategy for land war. The cuts hit hardest at the sophisticated but less immediately practical systems that New Money milks like cash cows. The fate of the B-1 bomber tells the story.

The Kennedy administration began the B-1 project in 1961 to counter the Soviet Union's growing nuclear arsenal. Rockwell of California was to build a long-range craft that could deliver only nuclear weapons. An overriding need for conventional arms put the B-1 on hold during the Vietnam War. New Money's champion Nixon revived it. Rockefeller protégé Carter canceled it. Paying off his West Coast backers, Reagan actually started building the B-1. Useless to the imperialists, the plane did not see action in Desert Storm, nor does it now fly over Iraq or Bosnia. The entire fleet idles in the US, half of it at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, Texas, where it pumps $300 million a year into the local economy.

But let us not misunderstand. The Rockefeller forces have not given up nuclear weapons. They were the first and only group to use them. John J. McCloy of Chase Manhattan directed the US bombing effort in World War II right through to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two things will eventually lead the Establishment to play its nuclear trump card. First, there will be rebellions in the broad-based land army it hopes to assemble. Black, Latin, Asian, and white, female and male working-class youth will quickly see that Rockefeller's interests are not theirs. But Rockefeller & Co.'s need to control its profit sources will not have changed. Like cornered rats, they will fight with everything they have, including nuclear arms. Second, a prolonged conflict with a secondary power like Iraq will at some time draw in major imperialists, like Russia and China. They will see their own vital interests at stake and can bring far superior forces to an Asian battlefield. The bigger US bosses keep nuclear missiles constantly aimed at Russia and China. When the chips are down, they will fire them.

FRONTING FOR GM, POLITICIAN LURES BLACK YOUTH TO SLAUGHTER

John Conyers, a liberal black Democrat who represents both Detroit and its wealthy suburbs has spoken out in Congress against "waste" and "fraud" in the B-1 project. What this tool of Ford, GM, and Chrysler objects to, in fact, is the Oil Patch's unwillingness to back the Establishment's next Persian Gulf war. The Big Three originally installed Conyers in office to win black workers to fight in Vietnam. He's doing the same job today, as US troops prepare to invade the Persian Gulf region. But Oil Patch politicians attack the land-war concept. Fresh from a tour of the Mideast, Republican Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska complained, "Military officers in command in the field cannot oblige our nation to long-term overseas expenditures or deployments" (Associated Press, 7/16/97).

"Star Wars" or the Strategic Defense Initiative has a similar history. In the last decade of the Cold War, top Air Force officers and West Coast high-tech tycoons came up with the idea of an impermeable network of missile defense that would sharply reduce the need for troops overseas. A book by Donald Baucom, *The Origins of SDI* (1992), identifies Joseph Coors as SDI's leading civilian proponent. A Coors subsidiary sells sophisticated ceramic devices to the Air Force. Beyond lining his pockets from those sales, Coors hoped to diminish US influence in the Mideast. For years Coors has been trying to develop oil and gas reserves on its vast land holdings and has consistently been swatted down by the Rockefeller environmentalists. The stronger capitalists won out. Star Wars was a casualty of Desert Storm.

The Establishment deals with critics inside the military harshly and swiftly. As the Pentagon geared up for Desert Storm, Gen. Michael J. Dugan, the Air Force Chief of Staff, announced, "The Joint Chiefs of Staff have concluded that US air power including a massive bombing campaign against Baghdad is the only effective option" (*Wash.Post*, 9/16/90). Generals Schwarzkopf and Powell (a self-described Rockefeller Republican) had Dugan fired the next day.

ESTABLISHMENT SINKS OIL PATCH ADMIRAL, SPITS ON HIS GRAVE

In 1994 the Navy published an interview with Chief of Naval Operations Jeremy Boorda. In it Boorda called "dependence on imported oil" one of "four principal dangers." He further identified himself with New Money by saying, "you should not put troops on the ground unless they are commanded by US forces or by NATO command." Boorda envisioned the Navy conducting a sort of suborn Star Wars. He proposed building a fleet of "arsenal ships," with crews of 20 or so sailors, that would serve as launching pads for hundreds of long-range missiles. But the Rockefeller/Clinton camp needs a far different Navy, one that can help ferry hundreds of thousands of ground troops to the Persian Gulf. The second highest ranking Navy officer in the nation killed himself in 1996. Newsweek magazine was about to publish an article that could end Boorda's meteoric career. It dealt with Boorda's wearing of medals he had not earned—the naval equivalent of falsifying a resume. "Maybe he'll put a gun to his head," mused the article's author (AP 5/20/97). That Boorda fired through his heart didn't bother East Coast bluebloods Katharine Graham and Ben Bradlee, who own Newsweek through the Washington Post Co. When William Perry, Clinton's defense secretary, pronounced Boorda's eulogy, he made it clear that Old Money would not allow traitors to sabotage their oil wars. Perry began, not with kind words for the admiral, but with a moving parable about the warship *Theodore Roosevelt's* deployment in the Persian Gulf .

Rockefeller & Co. well understand that oil comes out of the ground, not the air. Relying on air power won't result in control of the Mideast's oilfields. That's the message of an article by Gen. William E. Odom that appeared the Rockefeller mouthpiece *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 1997). Odom stresses the need for ground troops: "The forward deployment of US forces in the Middle East, in Europe, and northeast Asia is no less critical now than it was during the Cold War." Mideast oil is his immediate target, "Prepositioned equipment makes a lot of sense for the Persian Gulf area." Odom downplays the effectiveness of airpower in combat, "The overwhelming majority—70-80 percent—of Iraqi tanks were destroyed by army tanks and attack helicopters, not by strategic or tactical aircraft." Odom urges the Navy to focus less on obsolescent aircraft carriers and more on "sealift capacity," transporting masses of troops and supplies. In Desert Storm, says Odom, the US outdid the Normandy invasion, moving more tonnage and personnel over the Atlantic in 1990-1991 than it had across the Channel in 1944. But Odom calls this triumph hollow. What took months could have been done in weeks, he says, if the Pentagon had invested in the right kind of ships and planes. Odom ends with a jab at the Oil Patch, "American retreat from forward ground force leads inexorably to disengagement and isolation." The Cato Institute calls its Mideast policy "Constructive Disengagement."

DESPITE OIL PATCH HOPES, MIDEAST WAR WILL MAKE BOOTS MUDDY AND BODIES BLOODY

An editorial in the *Air Force Times* (5/12/97), a publication for career personnel, "lifers," summed up the dispute over how the next war will be fought:

A strange debate is going on now in the Pentagon. It is strange because the two sides are so far apart, yet they never publicly concede it is going on. The issue is one of bedrock importance to national security and deserves the fullest of airings. On one side are those who cling to the traditional—some would say outdated—belief that massive numbers of well-armed foot soldiers are the key to future military victories. The "muddy boot" disciples, currently led by Marine Gen. John Sheehan, the commander of the US Atlantic Command, discount the value of high-technology weapons systems. They insist that only soldiers on the ground can take and hold the enemy's land. Sheehan's views are important because he has emerged as a leading contender to become chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when Army Gen. John Shalikashvili retires in the fall. Opposing that view are most of the top Air Force leaders. Their compelling argument is that increasingly it is and will be technology—particularly space and air-based technology—that will provide future combatants with the decisive advantage. That technology will provide both instantaneous information about the battlefield and the ability to control the skies—and space—above it.

In many ways, top level Air Force commanders seem to be acting as hitmen for New Money. An Air Force court acquitted the Air Force captain responsible for downing two Army helicopters and killing 26 soldiers in Desert Storm. The Pentagon held an inquiry into the crash that killed Commerce secretary Ron Brown. It found the Air Force officers who let his plane take off in bad weather guilty of criminal disregard for safety. The upstarts loathe the Commerce Department because it helps established firms make deals abroad. Conservative representatives in the 104th Congress narrowed their pledge to shrink government to "kill just the Commerce Department (Drew, p.102). Another Pentagon panel singled out Air Force Gen. Terry Schwalier for neglecting pre-

cautions against the truck bomb that killed 19 servicemen in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Oil Patch allies cite the blast as a reason why the US should leave the Middle East.

TOP AIR FORCE GENERAL QUITS ON ADVICE OF OIL PATCH SENATOR

In July 1997, the Air Force's highest ranking general, Chief of Staff Ronald Fogleman resigned rather than punish Schwalier. Before walking out, Gen. Fogleman had discussed the matter with Alaska's Senator Stevens, a harsh critic of the Pentagon's Mideast operations. Defense secretary Cohen had two reactions. He decided to hold Schwalier responsible despite Fogleman's protest. Then Cohen replaced Fogleman with a general whose support for a Mideast land war was unquestioned. Fogleman had a reputation as a Star Wars strategist. He was an "outspoken advocate of air power and the Air Force's ability to conduct warfare around the globe and even in space" (AP, 729/97). Fogleman's replacement, Gen. Michael Ryan, won his land-war epaulets as an aide to Generals Powell and Shalikashvili, who had masterminded the Desert Storm invasion. Later Ryan headed the Air Force's European command. Its main mission is to back up US ground troops in Germany and, now, in Bosnia.

The Air Force owes its separate existence to Southwestern arms and electronics makers who got rich in World War II and richer still in the Cold War. With its emphasis on bombers and missiles that strike from afar, it a has proved the least adapted of the services to the Establishment's imperialist designs. The Air Force seems to be uniting with the militias as New Money's military arm. Jesse Helms' 1996 warning that Clinton "better have a bodyguard" when he visits bases in North Carolina (mentioned in NYT, 8/2/97) reflects a military split from top to bottom. In 1995, a lowly soldier named Michael New became the poster boy of the Koch camp by refusing to don a UN uniform. In Congress, Representatives Helen Chenoweth of Idaho, a militia sympathizer, and ultraconservative Tom DeLay of Texas co-sponsored a bill protecting servicemen who conscientiously objected to wearing UN uniforms. The Oil Patch's paramilitary has taken up the cause. "An undercover investigation of militia activity led to the arrests of seven people accused of plotting to attack American military bases they believed were training UN troops," began an AP dispatch (7/23/97). Two of the seven planned to bomb the Army's Ft. Hood in Texas.

TO FIGHT WORLD WAR III, ROCKEFELLER NEEDS "FULLY INTEGRATED" CANNON FODDER

The battle for control of the armed forces goes beyond strategy and tactics. Who should be in the military in the first place? and the very much related question, What ideology will they fight for? are in hot dispute. Gen. Fogleman had drawn up in 1996 a "Little Blue Book outlining "core values" he wanted instilled in his cadre. According to the *Air Force Times* (2/23/97), "changing demographics that will require the Air Force to draw its members from a more sociologically and economically diverse pool," worried the general. Without using the words, black, latin, white, or conservative Christian, a retired officer explained what Fogleman meant, "If you grow up in a single-parent family and are raised on the streets, you have values—street values. If you are raised in a two-parent family that goes to church every Sunday, you have very different values." The crusade against adultery in the Air Force that torpedoed Gen. James Ralston, Clinton's choice to head the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Lt. Kelly Flinn, the Air Force's first female bomber pilot, goes back to Fogleman's little blue bible. It thundered at "adulterous fraternization." Fogleman pines for a lily-white, all-male Air Force whose members heed the preaching of Oil Patch evangelists like Don Hodel and Ralph Reed. But Fogleman's ex-boss Clinton touts a "fully integrated" military.

US imperialists need forces large enough for World War III and therefore the loyalty of black workers, who form an essential segment of the labor force. "We must have the full use of the total personnel power of the nation," Army General Willard Paul told Congress in 1948 (Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero*, 1997, p. 24). So the bigger bosses take an equal opportunity approach to mass murder and get help from civil rights, feminist, and other liberal movements. The NAACP celebrates the 50th anniversary of the integration of the services under Harry Truman, who dropped the A-bomb on Japanese civilians. Clinton salutes the black airmen of World War II. Colin Powell, former head butcher in Rockefeller's Iraq slaughterhouse, takes his rags-to-riches act on the road to lure black youth into the barracks. Next on the imperialists' agenda comes making the military more friendly to women—before they go off to war. Cheered on by the National Organization for Women and the major media, the high command punishes the officers responsible for Tailhook and sergeants who rape. And pressure from the Clinton White House finally compels the Citadel and the Virginia Military Institute to instruct women in the arts of killing for

Rockefeller's profit. Unemployment and the Immigration Service are steering young immigrants who hope for citizenship straight to the enlistment office.

BUT KOCH WOOS WHITE OFFICERS, AND FARRAKHAN BLACK SOLDIERS, AWAY FROM ROCKEFELLER LINE

The armed forces, however, seem to be slipping from the Establishment's grasp. Thomas E. Ricks, who follows military affairs for the *Wall Street Journal*, wrote a revealing article, "The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society," in the July, 1997, issue of *Atlantic Monthly*. "Open identification with the Republican Party is becoming the norm," warned Ricks, "and the few remaining liberals in uniform tend to be colonels and generals." Mid-level brass identify with the Koch wing of the GOP, "the junior officer corps, apart from its female and minority members, appears to be overwhelmingly hard-right Republican and largely comfortable with the views of Rush Limbaugh." Ricks observes a breakdown in the command structure, "civilians are now apparently less able to get the military to do what they want them to do than they were during the Cold War."

Some commanders, says Ricks, are beginning to consider Rockefeller liberals, rather than Iraqi or Iranian oil bosses, as their main enemy. "In a December, 1994, article in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, William S. Lind, a military analyst who has been influential in the doctrinal thinking of the post-Cold War Marines, wrote with two Marine reservists that American culture is 'collapsing.'" They decry the "multiculturalism" pushed by the "elite" in the universities and media at the expense of "our Judeo-Christian" culture." The *Wall Street Journal*'s man finds dire portents in "the conclusion that Lind and his co-authors drew: 'The next real war we fight is likely to be fought on American soil.' "

The Establishment can't automatically count on the loyalty of black workers in its coming wars. Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam movement has shown an ability to build a pro-boss, anti-Eastern Establishment base both within and outside the military. The Black Muslims' history of uniting with Rockefeller's foes dates back to the eve of World War II (see accompanying article on the NOI). The Japanese, in the 1930s, established a connection with the Black Muslim movement led by Elijah Muhammad. Japan's agent, a Major Takashashi, succeeded in persuading a splinter group of Black Muslims known as the Development of Our Own to rally behind the cause of the emperor. In a 1942 raid, the FBI arrested twelve black leaders, including Elijah Muhammad, for allegedly seditious activities. (John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*, 1986, pp. 173-175.)

Just as Elijah Muhammad had welcomed alliances with imperialist rivals of the US, Farrakhan has developed ties with Islamic nationalists who are in political and economic conflict with Rockefeller & Co. Libyan leader Khaddafi has made substantial donations to the Nation of Islam. Libyan oil is now mainly under Italian and French control and thus competes with the US majors' Persian Gulf empire. Texas oilman H.L. Hunt, one of Farrakhan's strangest bedfellows, owned Libya's biggest oil concessions until Exxon and Mobil's machinations drove Khaddafi to kick all the US firms out. Led by Farrakhan and others, close to a million black workers took part in the Million Man March. Their willingness to fight for US Big Oil can rightly be questioned. That's probably what Farrakhan told Khaddafi when he flew to Libya right after the march. Today the Nation of Islam organizes at military bases around the U.S.

Chinese villagers feeding soldiers of the Communist Party's Red Army in 1937. The Russian Red Army struck the first blow against imperialism during World War I. In the next revolution, we intend to finish the job.

Armed with a communist analysis and led by PLP, workers will transform a bosses' war for profit into a war for communism

Only a shared, fundamental opposition to the main wing of the US ruling class can explain the Nation of Islam's links to open racists. In 1960, H.L. Hunt began donating to the Nation of Islam in order to foster a dialogue among the Nation, the Ku Klux Klan, and the American Nazi Party. The reigning king of the wildcatters hoped that separatism, racist and nationalist, would counter the campaign to transform workers' struggles against racism into the pro-Establishment civil rights movement. This unholy alliance against the Rockefeller camp's hold on state power continues. In October 1985, leaders of several white supremacist organizations met at a farm 50 miles northwest of Detroit, where during a "unity conference," they "announced their support for Mr. Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam." Present were leaders of various Nazi, KKK, Christian Patriot, Posse comitatus, and militia groups from all regions of the US (*Washington Times*, Nov. 5, 1985).

ESTABLISHMENT WIELDS OIL AS WEAPON AGAINST MOSCOW AND HOUSTON

Continual imperialist conflicts worsen tensions between Old and New Money. In the early 1980's, US rulers still saw the state capitalist bosses of the Soviet Union as their fiercest competitors. Demonizing it as the "evil empire," the Reagan Administration, devoted itself to hastening the collapse of the USSR Old money suffered from the spread of Soviet influence, and Old Money reigned in Reagan's White House, despite his cowboy image. His Secretary of State, Al Haig, had most recently sat at David Rockefeller's right hand on the board of Chase Manhattan. Treasury's Donald Regan came straight from Merrill Lynch. Defense boss Weinberger had worked to elect Nelson Rockefeller president.

Reagan's strategy for undermining the Soviets included arming the rebels in Afghanistan, secretly aiding the Solidarity movement in Poland, and driving down oil prices. Every one-dollar reduction in the price of oil would deprive the Soviets of $1 billion in hard currency income. To effect the price rigging, which Weinberger called "economic warfare," the US needed the cooperation of the Saudis, the world's biggest oil exporters.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan terrified the Saudi royal family, who were certain that their own oil-drenched realm was Moscow's ultimate objective. The old watchdog Iran was now lost to the US-Saudi cause. So US bosses got into the protection racket. The Saudis would pump more oil, lowering prices, in return for US military muscle like state-of-the-art fighters and AWACS planes. More importantly, in April 1981, Weinberger announced that the Pentagon was beefing up Jimmy Carter's Rapid Deployment Force into the 300,000-troop-strong US Central Command, which would have the same mission as the RDF, safeguarding Mideast oil fields for Big Oil.

Saving Riyadh savaged Houston. Third-generation wildcatter Glenn McCarthy remarked, "The deal [the Reagan Administration] made with the Saudis to keep the price of oil down in return for military protection...was to the direct damage and detriment of the domestic oil industry. They admit they knew at the time that it was going to cause severe damage to the industry" (*The Oil Makers*, p. 135). By early 1986, cargoes of crude from the Persian Gulf were selling for $6 a barrel, down from almost $40 in 1980. Petroleum analysts calculated that any price below $10 "would stop development investment for the bulk of US oil." According to Daniel Yergin, author of *The Prize*, "the new consensus was evident in the United States—in the government, on Wall Street, in banks, among economic forecasters. The gains from falling oil prices (higher growth and lower inflation) would outweigh the losses (the problems of the energy industries and the Southwest)" (p. 760).

BUSH TRIES AND FAILS TO CREATE UNITY BETWEEN WARRING FACTIONS

Vice President George Bush rescued the Oil Patch allies from annihilation at the hands of the bankers. In April 1986, he met secretly without Reagan's approval with both the king of Saudi Arabia and its oil minister, Sheik Yamani. Since the Soviet threat was waning, Bush got the Saudis to agree to raising prices, which would, of course also raise their revenues. By June, Yamani was at Harvard University delivering a major speech in which he preached "stability" at $15 a barrel. Domestic producers could now squeak by.

Bush tried to play the ultimately impossible role of mediator between the Establishment and the Oil

Patch. The son of a partner in New York's most prestigious private bank, Brown Brothers Harriman, Bush leapt into the Texas oil boom that followed World War II. His job was to spread the wealth and head off the kind of strife that had erupted into armed conflict a generation before. Big Oil and the independents fought gun battles over East Texas pipelines during the Depression-caused glut. Bush provided Hugh Liedkte with capital for an oil and gas drilling outfit called Zapata Exploration. (But when Liedkte decided to go national by starting Pennzoil, Bush broke with him.) In the opulent profits-for-all days of the 1950's, oil bosses of all stripes—Bush, Getty, the Hunts, Howard Hughes—co-existed in Texas in relative peace with the majors.

As president, Bush continued to soothe the Oil Patch. He expanded the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to 1 billion barrels under a special provision to buy from wells producing 15 barrels a day or less and doled out $2.5 billion in tax breaks for US oil and gas exploration. Establishment critics dubbed Bush's energy policy "Drain America First." Pressed by Congress to sell off 10 million barrels from the strategic reserve to lower prices, Bush refused. Tellingly, Bush vowed to open the ANWR to drillers, but never did.

BLUEBLOOD BUSH BETRAYS ESTABLISHMENT; 500,000 IRAQIS DIE

Bush's inability to keep a foot indefinitely in both camps led directly to Desert Storm. Plans for that war originated with Jimmy Carter, like Clinton a Rockefeller protégé. After US rulers had lost Iran, Carter proclaimed, "Any attempt by an outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." As part of an overall military buildup under Carter, the Rapid Deployment Force was created and began desert training. When Saddam Hussein first threatened to seize Kuwait's oil fields in 1990, Bush seemed perfectly willing to let him. Bush sent his Ambassador April Glaspie to Baghdad that Summer to tell Hussein, "we have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts' like your border disagreement with Kuwait."

Iraq's subsequent invasion brought the Oil Patch a very short-lived windfall. Prices shot up beyond $40 a barrel but dropped as soon as the first preparations for war had gotten under way. But the owners of Exxon, Mobil, and Texaco could not and would not let Bush give away a key source of their profits. Sometime between summer and fall, Old Money reasserted its control over White House policy. US bombs began falling in January 1991. By February, a US-led force of 700,000 troops was inflicting inhuman horror on working-class Iraqi soldiers and civilians. US planes systematically murdered fleeing Iraqis with gasoline bombs. US officers had plowblades put on tanks to bury Iraqi soldiers alive in their foxholes. Attaching no value to the lives of the 500,000 Iraqis it killed, the Pentagon put a $100 billion price tag on the war. "Allies" coughed up half. Afterwards, the Establishment made Bush pay for his costly wavering. It ran Ross Perot against him in the 1992 election to split the conservative vote and ensure a Clinton victory.

BOSSES' CONFLICTS BRING DANGER AND REVOLUTIONARY OPPORTUNITY TO WORKERS

Various factions of US bosses have been at each other's throats since 1776. Southern plantation owners and Northern bankers, merchants, and manufacturers united to break away from British bosses, but fierce conflicts kept erupting. They bickered constantly about monetary policy. Slave owner Jefferson of Virginia bankrupted many merchants in Boston and New York by slapping an embargo on US shipping. When the two sides could not agree that wage slavery was more profitable than the old kind, they fought the Civil War, the bloodiest North America has ever seen.

Although we cannot predict in exact detail how the current battle will unfold, the sides are well defined, and it's clearly getting more vicious. As New Money gains strength, we could see the growth of militias and more Oklahomas or even worse violence from fighting within the military. Old Money will try by force to keep the upper hand. While armed conflict within the US looms as a distinct possibility, imperialist war remains a certainty. Workers' lives are at stake in any case. Every day draws Rockefeller, Inc. unavoidably closer to a land war in the Middle East, probably first with Iraq. The US is more isolated and its foes better prepared than ever. Casualties will make Desert Genocide seem tame; the next oil war could quickly turn nuclear. Even if it doesn't, antagonisms with first-rate imperialists like Russia, Japan, and China, over oil and other sources of profit, are sharpening into direct confrontations that sooner or later will break out into nuclear world war.

In the past, a Marxist-Leninist approach has enabled our Party to analyze important events. The PLP exposed the Kennedy assassination for what it was, not a tragedy or the work of a few isolated head cases, but New Money rubbing out an Old Money chief. We

told workers that the wicked witch was not dead when Watergate drove Nixon out; Rockefeller had simply regained control. We revealed that GM and other Establishment forces had spawned the movement against nuclear power. We showed that the US mission to Somalia had nothing to do with humanitarian aid and everything to do with strategic oil shipping lanes. More recently, we point out that the strike at UPS mainly involved, not workers' hours, but a struggle among bosses to wield the investment clout of the Teamsters' $60 billion pension fund. Our purpose has not been merely to provide good information. Using this kind of information, we have been able to organize tens of thousands to fight for communism, while others sold out to "lesser evil" politicians, union hacks, and Establishment-led "anti-war" and environmental movements.

History shows that workers can seize power during the bosses' imperialist and civil wars. But only if they see and understand these conflicts as they develop, will workers be prepared to fight. Armed with an a communist analysis and led by a communist party—the PLP is the only one now in existence—workers will transform a bosses' war for profit into a war for workers' dictatorship and communism.

NOTE: The cultural and ideological aspects of the bosses' fight lie outside the scope of the present piece. A future article will look into the ways the two main factions use the media, education, religion, and other means of persuasion. What, for example, are the two distinct forms of racism pushed on workers? Who owns the universities and how does what's taught in them benefit one side or the other? What's behind the dogfights over the media? Why are serious rifts developing in every major religion? What's the class content of the battle raging over national standards in education?

SPLITS WITHIN SPLITS

Clinton, Gephardt Fight Over How Best To Shove War and Fascism Down Workers' Throats

Challenge **Editorial, Jan. 7, 1998**

A serious rift has developed within the main, Rockefeller wing of U.S. capitalists. Its current political form is the argument in the Democratic Party between Clinton/Gore and Missouri Representative Gephardt, who is now allied with the heads of key industrial unions. The crucial issue involves getting the union hacks to make the working class swallow the Eastern Establishment's plans for fascism and imperialist war. This is a dispute within the Old Money camp of U.S. capital, whose bosses have the same fundamental interests but who disagree on how best to serve them. There are contradictions within everything, including the Rockefeller gang.

Since the 1996 presidential elections, the PLP has correctly analyzed the sharpening conflict between the Old Money forces of the Eastern Establishment and New Money upstarts in the domestic Oil Patch and sections of the high-tech and arms industries. However, until recently, we have been slow to grasp the full significance of the Gephardt phenomenon, which has been developing for the last two years. This fight within the Rockefeller forces exposes Gephardt & Co. as the bosses' main liberal strategy for misleading workers at the present time.

SPLIT OVER "FAST TRACK"

Clinton suffered a big defeat in November when his Fast Track trade bill went down the tubes. We analyzed Fast Track as a desperate gambit by U.S. imperialists to recover their dwindling share of world markets in the face of sharpening competition on all sides. But Fast Track wasn't stymied by the America First, Buchanan-style isolationists and Oil Patch bosses alone. Leading the charge against it were Gephardt, South Dakota Sen. Daschle, former Clinton Labor Secretary Robert Reich, the bosses of the IAM, the UAW, and the United Steelworkers, as well as many leading economists and "experts" who have deep ties to the Eastern Establishment think-tanks.

These are all loyal servants of the largest U.S. capitalists. But they disagree about how to discipline the working class for imperialism's goals in this period. Gephardt & Co. are hardly opposed to U.S. imperialist investment abroad. They killed this trade bill because they thought it was unworkable and unsellable to the trade union leaders. These sellouts of the working class saw this bill as cutting into their profits in the form of reduced union membership dues. "The real question involves not whether to be 'internationalist,' but on what terms—and with what effects on our society at home," writes Gephardt adviser Robert Kuttner (*Economic Policy Network*, Dec. 1997).

The Fast Track faction, led by Clinton and David Rockefeller, know that unregulated foreign investment will mean millions of U.S. job losses. Their plan is to shove layoffs down the workers' throats and then pretend this is good for the economy. Gephardt and the faction he fronts for want to revive the language of the Roosevelt New Deal in an attempt to win workers' allegiance by

tossing out a few crumbs, like a minimum wage hike, some promises to protect pensions, as well as the maintenance of Social Security and Medicare as government-run programs.

REVIVING THE UNIONS, CONTROLLING THE WORKERS

The Gephardt camp thinks that a revived union movement is crucial to controlling the workers. When the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* praise the recent UPS strike to the skies and call the strikers heroes, you know that something rotten is afoot. On the other hand, Gephardt's establishment opponents fear the rise of unions in any way and torpedo potential reformist misleaders like Teamster boss Carey, whose fundraising scandals were exposed in the Wall Street Journal.

The union hacks are businessmen first and foremost. They opposed Fast Track because it would cut the dues income that forms their economic base. They've allied with Gephardt because his plan gives them a better chance of stemming their losses and protecting their profit source.

The rise of Gephardt began before the 1996 presidential elections. The main think-tank associated with him is the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), headquartered in Cambridge, MA, a stone's throw from Harvard. In 1995, its president, Jeff Faux, started making the rounds of big union conferences, turning them into rallies for "pro-worker" Democrats. West Virginia's Jay Rockefeller was a headline speaker at the United Mineworkers' bash. Apparently, Jay and his uncle David are on opposite sides of this spat. Well, even Rockefellers can disagree sometimes, as long as the dividend checks keep coming in. Gephardt took over subsequently at the UAW, IAM and steelworkers' meetings.

In February 1996, the EPI published *Reclaiming Prosperity: A Blueprint for Progressive Economic Reform,* by MIT economist Lester Thurow. Gephardt donated a publicity blurb for this book. The EPI was founded by Thurow, Robert Reich, and UAW economist Barry Bluestone. Its main funders include the Rockefeller Foundation, the C.S. Mott Foundation (General Motors money), and the Russell Sage Foundation (Cabot gas and banking money).

Preparing for the 1996 elections, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, led by Gephardt and South Dakota Senator Daschle, launched the "Families First" initiative on behalf of "hard-working...Americans." Families First held a series of "hearings" about issues related to workers' problems. The format included politicians, intellectuals, and rank-and-file workers. Jay Rockefeller turned up at one, as did Kennedy, Senator Joe Biden, Representative Barney Frank, and other liberals. The expert speaker on Medicare was Lawrence Chimerine, former head of Rockefeller's Chase Econometrics.

GEPHARDT ON THE OFFENSIVE— TO SAVE CAPITALISM WITH WORKERS' PENSION FUNDS

Fresh from his recent victory over Fast Track, Gephardt went on the offensive again. Speaking at Harvard's Kennedy School for Government early this month, he said: "If you don't temper capitalism, it's a race to the bottom. Capitalism left alone will defeat itself..." (*Boston Globe*, 12/5).

These are all loyal servants of the largest U.S. capitalists... they disagree about how to discipline the working class for imperialism's goals.

So Gephardt & Co. see the stakes as nothing less than the survival of the profit system. By "tempering capitalism," he means to use pro-worker rhetoric as a cover for centralized state control over the economy at home and plans for war abroad. Thurow spells out the Gephardt economic program in his book. It includes proposals that sound like "all good things" but that really pave the way for state capitalism, i.e. fascism. For example: a single-payer health care system, the "constructive" use of federal spending for economic growth and "full employment," national initiatives for worker training, and a "businesslike" capital budgeting approach to federal spending. Thurow, Gephardt, et al. are all for a version of the current racist Clinton/Gore workfare

scheme that "employs" former welfare clients at slave wages while laying off salaried workers.

But it gets worse. Funding for some of these programs will come from the $2.6 trillion invested in workers' pensions. Until now, this treasure has been used largely to finance multi-billion dollar Wall St. speculation like corporate takeovers. But the more far-sighted capitalists behind Gephardt have a social-fascist agenda for these pensions. And the union piecards are 100% behind them. "In a scramble to build more clout, labor leaders [in 1998] will look less to the picket line and the bargaining table, and a whole lot more to the corporate boardroom" (*Investors Business Daily*, 12/11).

Until Gephardt entered politics, he worked from 1965 to 1977 for the St. Louis law firm, Thompson and Mitchell, whose key clients include American Express, Anheuser-Busch, Chrysler, Procter and Gamble, and Shell Oil. The firm's specialty: defending these bosses before the Labor Department and representing them in suits over civil rights violations and employment discrimination.

In other words, the AFL-CIO's new darling and the savior of the working class turns out to be a racist, strike-breaking union buster.

Gephardt's voting record leaves no doubt about his support for U.S. imperialism's military interventions. He backed Clinton's invasion of Haiti. In 1995, he voted to keep U.S. troops in South Korea and Japan. Last year, he voted for a $245 billion 1997 military budget—$10.6 billion more than Clinton had requested. But that's just for openers. Gephardt & Co. demand massive military action to defend the tottering Rockefeller Middle Eastern oil empire. The Gephardt EPI think-tank is closely associated with the Eastern Establishment's Brookings Institution, whose director of Foreign Policy Studies, Richard Haass, wrote: "...the United States will only have a limited number of occasions to use force against Iraq, and it must make the most of them...U.S. diplomacy can succeed only against a backdrop of the availability of military forces and the will to use them" (Brookings Policy Brief No. 7, 1996).

SPLITS EXPOSE BOSSES' WEAKNESS

So the Gephardt forces pose a double threat. Their program is calculated to suck in many workers and thus prepare for a far wider and deadlier war than Clinton could ever hope to wage without mass political support. The new New Dealers specifically focus on winning the working class in basic war industries to support "pro-labor" Democrats. These murderers understand that you can't make bombers, bombs, and tanks, without a reliable labor force in the airplane, automobile, steel, and coal industries. Gephardt and his advisors Thurow and Robert "Fourth" Reich want to ensure that U.S. imperialism's basic arms-making capacity survives globalization.

But this wing of the Establishment is also severely limited by the current crisis of overproduction. U.S. capitalism is slipping. It doesn't have the resources that made FDR's New Deal viable. This is presumably one reason why these bosses are so anxious to control the pension funds.

Like the life and death fight between New and Old Money capitalists, the tactical rift within the Rockefeller camp exposes the rulers' fundamental weakness. Let them squabble amongst each other! We will build our own revolutionary forces. These parasites and killers can all eventually be taken. Understanding the true class nature of the Gephardt forces is critical to our Party's present organizing efforts. This is a curve ball the bosses have thrown at us. We must avoid swinging at it. The only New Deal workers need is communism. Perhaps Mao Zedong summed it up best when he was still a revolutionary communist: "Know yourself, and know your enemy; and you will win a hundred battles."

WHOSE FINGER WILL BE ON THE TRIGGER?

RULING CLASS FACTIONS FIGHT OVER CONTROL OF THE MILITARY

SPLITS IN THE MILITARY FOLLOW SPLITS AMONG BOSSES

The road to communist revolution will be forged in the crucible of world war. Who will win the millions of working class soldiers and sailors in the imperialist armies? Will they turn the guns around and fight for communism, or will they remain imprisoned in the bosses' ideology and under the bosses' leadership?

These are becoming the crucial questions of this historical period. What our Party does or fails to do within the bosses' armed forces will determine the answer. To date, because of opportunist errors we have made, our efforts in the military have been weak. Slowly, too slowly, we are recognizing and attempting to correct them. Part of the correction involves understanding contradictions within the military. Our knowledge will increase as our organizing improves. However, even from the outside, we can begin to see that the rulers' strategic weakness provides us with great opportunity.

The U.S. military is split by the same internal conflict that divides the Eastern Establishment, Rockefeller-led liberals from the domestic oil barons, from New Money sections of the high-tech and arms industries, from domestic textile moguls, and from others. Challenge has written extensively about this struggle. Nowhere is its potential to erupt as civil war more obvious than in the military.

Thomas E. Ricks, a military affairs expert who covers the Pentagon for The Wall Street Journal, clarified this in an article in the July 1997 Atlantic Monthly. In his article titled, "The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society," he bemoans "the long-term downward trend in the number of officers willing to identify themselves as liberals." By "liberal," he means loyal to the interests and strategy of the Eastern Establishment. He makes this crystal-clear in identifying the majority of the junior officer corps as "overwhelmingly hard-right Republican and largely comfortable with the views of Rush Limbaugh." Ricks goes on to distinguish this position from "the

Growing numbers of tomorrow's generals owe their allegiance to the Oil Patch. They have a different strategy from Rockefeller's for the military and fascism.

compromising, solution-oriented politics of, say, Bob Dole."

When the chips were down, Dole always lined up behind Rockefeller's foreign policy. He voted for NAFTA and Clinton's $52 billion bailout of the Mexican Peso in 1993. The Dole Republicans basically favor the Rockefeller plan for an infantry-dependent military that can be rapidly and massively deployed by sea and air to defend U.S. Big Oil's Middle Eastern holdings.

Ricks places the majority of the junior officer corps with Rush Limbaugh and the "hard-right Republicans," meaning that growing numbers of tomorrow's generals, admirals, and joint chiefs of staff owe their allegiance to the Oil Patch, the New Money bosses and the Jesse Helms/Buchanan bosses who don't have extensive foreign holdings. Therefore they have a different strategy from Rockefeller's for the development of the military and fascism.

OFFICERS DO NOT WANT TO OBEY ORDERS FROM WHITE HOUSE

The likely consequences, implies Ricks, should make Rockefeller shudder. He quotes an Army major who surveyed the political attitudes of Marine officers: "...the results indicate the potential for a serious problem in civil-military relations in the United States." In other words, Ricks is raising the possibility that many of these officers may disobey the orders of Eastern Establishment politicians. The correct word is "mutiny." Ricks underscores that the Marines aren't the exception: "They should be viewed as an indicator not of where the U.S. military is today but of where it is heading."

With their so-called all-"volunteer" army, Rockefeller & Co. solved one problem only to create another. A generation ago, while their Vietnam genocide was still going on, class struggle both within and outside the U.S. military had turned the bosses' armed forces into a shambles. Enlisted troops regularly rebelled, deserted and shot their officers. In a major defeat for U.S. imperialism, the draft was terminated in 1973.

But an economic draft still exists. Children of the rich don't enter the military of their own accord. Neither do middle class youth, except in anti-Rockefeller strongholds in the South and Southwest, where many enlist for ideological reasons. Most "volunteers" come from the ranks of the most oppressed black, latin, and white working class youth, for whom the military represents a chance to eat and an alternative to unemployment or prison. But individual material incentive is a wafer-thin basis on which to win ideological commitment. If Rockefeller, Inc. gets its way, millions of young men and women will be called upon to kill and die for the foreseeable future in a succession of wars that will ultimately lead to world war. "Be all that you can be" and "the few, the proud" aren't exactly inspiring slogans to win masses to this scenario. Ricks understands this and warns against it.

SPECTER OF CIVIL WAR IN THE U.S.

Ricks also understands that the most ideologically committed people in the U.S. military at any level are those who'd prefer marching for the Oil Patch & Co. than for Rockefeller. The Citadel, Texas A&M, and the Virginia Military Institute supply a big share of the Army's officer corps. Timothy McVeigh is a good example. And, as Ricks points out, McVeigh has plenty of admirers among the Oil Patch's base. Ricks quotes a December 1994 article in the Marine Corps Gazette by William S. Lind, an openly fascist "military analyst" who has influenced the doctrinal thinking of the modern Marines. It's the usual, racist, anti-communist attack on those who "hate our Judeo-Christian culture," and, with a word or two changed, it could come from any rag published by the "Christian Right." However, Ricks sees that its true significance lies in the conclusion: "The next real war we fight is likely to be on American soil."

So the specter of civil war has been raised. One possibility involves using the military to crush working class rebellion on the home front. The main wing of the ruling class has done this throughout its history. When workers rebelled in Detroit in 1967, President LBJ rerouted the 102nd airborne division from its planned Vietnam butchery to the Motor City.

More recently, although many people don't know it, the Marines were sent in to help the Los Angeles cops during the 1992 rebellion there. Here the picture isn't so rosy for Rockefeller, Inc., because the Marine officers didn't always follow orders. More to the point, a New Money-friendly Marine major named Timothy Reeves, wrote a paper warning about the growing need to use the U.S. military within American borders. Ricks quotes him: "The trouble, he said, is that a variety of U.S. laws inhibit the execution of domestic missions. In Los Angeles, Reeves said, when faced with a choice between violating doctrine (i.e. military need, -ed.) and violating federal law, some Marines chose the latter. Reeves called for major alterations of U.S. law to enable the Marines to execute these new domestic missions, just as they execute missions changes abroad—changes that could carry long-term consequences for U.S. civilian-military relations."

This is obviously a recipe for a form of fascism, but it's not necessarily the form of fascism that Rockefeller, Inc. want to develop. Their goal is millions under arms to defend U.S. capitalist interests and investments abroad, not a military primarily for domestic use led by officers unwilling to obey commands from the White House.

Among the solutions Ricks proposes is the restoration of the draft, which he considers politically necessary in the near future for the Eastern Establishment's class requirements. As more and more workers die in the bosses' foreign holocausts, the military won't be sellable as a "career alternative" to unemployment, and a draft, including women, will become a necessity just to give the imperialists enough cannon-fodder. But even before that happens, Ricks and the rulers he backs see the draft as a way to bridge the sharpening contradictions within the military.

KILL AND DIE FOR BOSSES, OR FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM

Regardless of the timetable, these contradictions are bound to sharpen, as is U.S. imperialism's growing need to launch foreign wars. The question remains: on whose side will millions of soldiers and sailors march? For racist Rockefeller's blood-soaked oil profits? For the selfish interests of the fascist New Money billionaires? Or for the Progressive Labor Party, the working class, and revolutionary communism? Will the inevitable mutinies be misled into the deadly grasp of one side into the deadly capitalist conflict or led toward proletarian dictatorship and our class's liberation?

Regardless of timetable, these contradictions are bound to sharpen, as is U.S. imperialism's growing need to launch foreign wars.

We musn't minimize the difficulty of organizing within the bosses' military. It will take serious, skillful thought, preparation, and commitment. On the other hand, we should recognize the growing splits within it as sure signs that both gangs of greedy capitalists are strategically weak and eventually beatable by masses of revolutionary-minded workers. No faction of bosses can serve workers' interests. No military machine designed to fight for the profit system can lead the working class anywhere but to the grave. We continue to have a world to win and vast, growing opportunities with which to win it.

CAPITALIST CONFLICTS AND THE NATION OF ISLAM

Clockwise from top: Elijah Muhammad, Larouche, Farrakhan and Rockwell—ruling class factions use white racists and black nationalists as their tools.

From its beginnings in the 1930s through its Malcolm X years in the late 1950s and early 1960s, to the Farrakhan era of the 1980s and 1990s, the Nation of Islam has been courted by contending factions of bosses and has in turn sought to develop alliances with these fellow fascists.

THE 1930S: THE NATION OF ISLAM AND WORLD WAR II

During the 1930s, as World War II approached, U.S. rulers were worried about the loyalty of black workers to U.S. imperialism. Despite its reformist weaknesses, the revolutionary implications of anti-racist union organizing by the Communist Party had deeply frightened the ruling class. Secretary of War Stimson and Gen. Marshall also expressed grave concern that black people in the United States would respond positively to Japanese anti-white propaganda. In a confidential interview, Marshall told the press in August 1943: "(I) would rather handle everything that the Germans, Italians, and Japanese can throw at me than face the trouble I see in the Negro question."

Beginning in the 1930s, the Japanese fascists sought to exploit their rivals' political weakness in this area. Their agent, Major Takashashi Satakata, established a connection with the Black Muslim movement led by Elijah Muhammad. Takashashi succeeded in persuading a splinter group of Black Muslims known as the Development of Our Own to rally behind the cause of the emperor. In a 1942 raid, the FBI arrested twelve black nationalist leaders, including Elijah Muhammad, for allegedly seditious activities. The Japanese also established a relationship with Robert O. Jordan, "a charismatic black sometimes called 'Harlem's Hitler,' who also was arrested after Pearl Harbor; estimates of Jordan's followers ranged from five hundred to five thousand." Secretary Stimson was "convinced" that some black leaders "were receiving payments through the Japanese ambassador in Mexico." (John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*, Pantheon Books, NY, 1986, pp. 173-175.)

This should not be discounted as a trivial episode. In the first place, a major reason why the U.S. ruling class hired Swedish social scientist Gunnar Myrdal to conduct his landmark study An *American Dilemma* was their concern that black recruits would not fight for U.S. imperialism in World War II. Black soldiers had returned from World War I to Jim Crow, the

KKK, and violent racist mob assaults. They were not likely to swallow another round of empty promises that if they fought "for their country," they would be granted equal rights upon their return. U.S. rulers hoped that Myrdal's promise of gradual reform would induce black soldiers to fight for the red, white, and blue.

This recent PLP demonstration in Los Angeles pointed out that the cops can't be reformed—they serve a rotten system that must be destroyed.

Moreover, both Japanese and German imperialists made significant efforts to arouse nationalist revolt against U.S. imperialism throughout the Western Hemisphere. They made significant inroads in Latin America not only among European-American populations, but also among indigenous Native American (Indian) populations. Indeed, these efforts forced Rockefeller to modify his strategies and ideologies in Latin America by wrapping his imperialist depredations in the rhetoric of "cultural relativism." University of Chicago social scientists funded by Rockefeller shifted from "genetic inferiority" racist theorizing to the more sophisticated liberal racist pretense of respecting the native peoples' indigenous cultures. (Gerald Colby and Charlotte Dennett, *Thy Will Be Done—The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil,* HarperCollins, 1995, chapters 5-6-7).

THE 1950S AND 1960S: MALCOLM X NAZI GEORGE LINCOLN ROCKWELL, H.L. HUNT, AND THE FBI

During the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1950s and early 1960s, those sections of the U.S. capitalist class who opposed the efforts by the Rockefeller imperialists to end legal segregation sought to forge an alliance with the Nation of Islam. Just as the Kennedy-King alliance symbolized Old Money's strategy of civil rights reformism, the H.L. Hunt-Nazi-NOI alliance symbolized weaker and defensive New Money's effort to combat the civil rights reforms.

Manning Marable, a black academic who writes a column that appears regularly in nationalist newspapers, posed the question: "What can explain the curious convergence of interests between the conservative black nationalism of Louis Farrakhan and the white supremacist fascist politics of Lyndon LaRouche? Part of the answer can be found from the history of the Nation of Islam, under the leadership of the late Elijah Muhammad. Conservative, patriarchal black nationalism has often reached out to the most racist anti-black political cults within white America." *(Norfolk Journal and Guide*, "No Compromise with Racism: Farrakhan, Chavis, and Lyndon LaRouche, November, 1995.) Lyndon LaRouche heads a fascist organization that has ties to New Money capitalists in the U.S., to fascists in Europe and South Africa, and to high level government officials in a number of Asian, African, and European countries. Since its formation in the late 1960s, the LaRouche organization has sought to disrupt, destroy, or take over many mass organizations. During the last several years, it has made an effort to attract black by pushing its fascist conspiracy theories about AIDS, drugs, and other issues.

Marable continued, "The NOI's relationship with the White Right was first revealed by Malcolm X, soon after his departure from the organization. At the height of the Civil Rights Movement across the South, many white racists and ultraconservatives came to the conclusion that the racially separatist views of Elijah Muhammad were clearly preferable

to the integrationism of Martin Luther King, Jr. The NOI's key go-between with the white supremacists was John X Ali, identified by authors Louis Lomax and Karl Evanzz as the FBI's top informant within the organization. Soon after John X. Ali had been named the NOI's national secretary in early 1960, Texas millionaire H.L. Hunt began to send funds to the NOI. According to Evanzz, John X. Ali suggested that the Nation establish a dialogue with the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party, which might lead to the purchase of land in the deep south. According to FBI records, on January 28, 1961, a meeting between Ku Klux Klan representatives and the Nation, including Malcolm X, was held in Atlanta.

Also in 1961 at a NOI rally in Washington, DC, American Nazi George Lincoln Rockwell sat in the front row with a few dozen storm troopers. When it came time for the collection, Rockwell cried out: "George Lincoln Rockwell gives $20." So much applause followed that Malcolm X remarked, "George Lincoln Rockwell, you got the biggest hand you ever got, didn't you?" In 1962, at the NOI's annual Savior's Day in Chicago, Rockwell was a featured speaker. He stated, "I believe Elijah Muhammad is the Adolph Hitler of the black man," and ended his speech by pumping his arm and shouting "Heil Hitler." *(Chicago Free Weekly Reader,* April, 11, 1986)

DOMESTIC ALLIES: NEW MONEY PROMOTES WHITE AND BLACK FASCISTS

As Marable observed, "The death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975 did not end the political relationship between Black nationalism and white fascism." After Muhammad's death a sharp struggle apparently broke out over whether NOI would ally mainly with New or Old Money capitalists. The result was a full split in the organization. Elijah Muhammad picked his son, Warith Deen Muhammad, as his successor. Deen immediately changed the name of the organization to the World Community of Al-Islam in the West (later the American Muslim Mission), opened the organization to people from all backgrounds and nationalities, sold off businesses, relaxed the dress code, and disbanded the Fruit of Islam. Two years later, Louis Farrakhan quit to form his own group along the lines of the earlier fascist Nation of Islam and resurrected the Fruit of Islam as his bodyguards.

During the early 1980s black business owners and bankers apparently sought to draw Farrakhan into the Old Money camp. Al Wellington, founder of one of the most prestigious black marketing-research firms, recognized Farrakhan's popularity and approached him in 1984 with a proposal to market a line of "Power" cosmetics and household products in collaboration with the large Chicago based black capi-

How to defeat policd brutality: Working-class unity joined with communist politics

talist company Johnson Products and the black Independence Bank of Chicago. Farrakhan accepted the deal, but when he didn't change his political tune, his business partners pulled out. Farrakhan and his family and friends apparently lined their pockets with a few million dollars, but the project mostly collapsed. Old Money's attempt to draw Farrakhan into its ranks didn't succeed. (*Chicago Free Weekly Reader*, April 11, 1986)

Meanwhile, the Nation of Islam's ties to other organizations financed by New Money expanded substantially during the 1980s. In 1985 Tom Metzger, Grand Dragon of the California KKK was personally invited to attend a NOI rally in Los Angeles and donated $100. Metzger afterwards spoke at length about the basis for the KKK-NOI alliance. He stated that "he and other white nationalists have shared intelligence data with the Black Muslim organization and have been doing so for some time." (*Washington Times*, Nov. 5, 1985, "Nation of Islam Forges Links to Gangs, Radicals.") The article also details the participation in this Fascist united front of black gangs such as El-Rukn, and American Indian Movement (AIM) leader Russell Means. Scratch any nationalists and you may find a fascist!)

A month later, in October of 1985, leaders of several white supremacist organizations met at a farm 50 miles northwest of Detroit, and during a "unity conference," they "announced their support for Mr. Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam." Present were leaders of various Nazi, KKK, Christian Patriot, Posse Comitatus, and militia groups from all regions of the U.S. Their fascist blueprint called for ceding a substantial chunk of the U.S. to a Nation of Islam territory, whose capital would be in Chicago, to be renamed "New Mecca." (Washington Times, Nov. 5, 1985. This article was the first of a four part series the newspaper, which is published by affiliates of the Rev. Moon's Unification Church, ran on the NOI.)

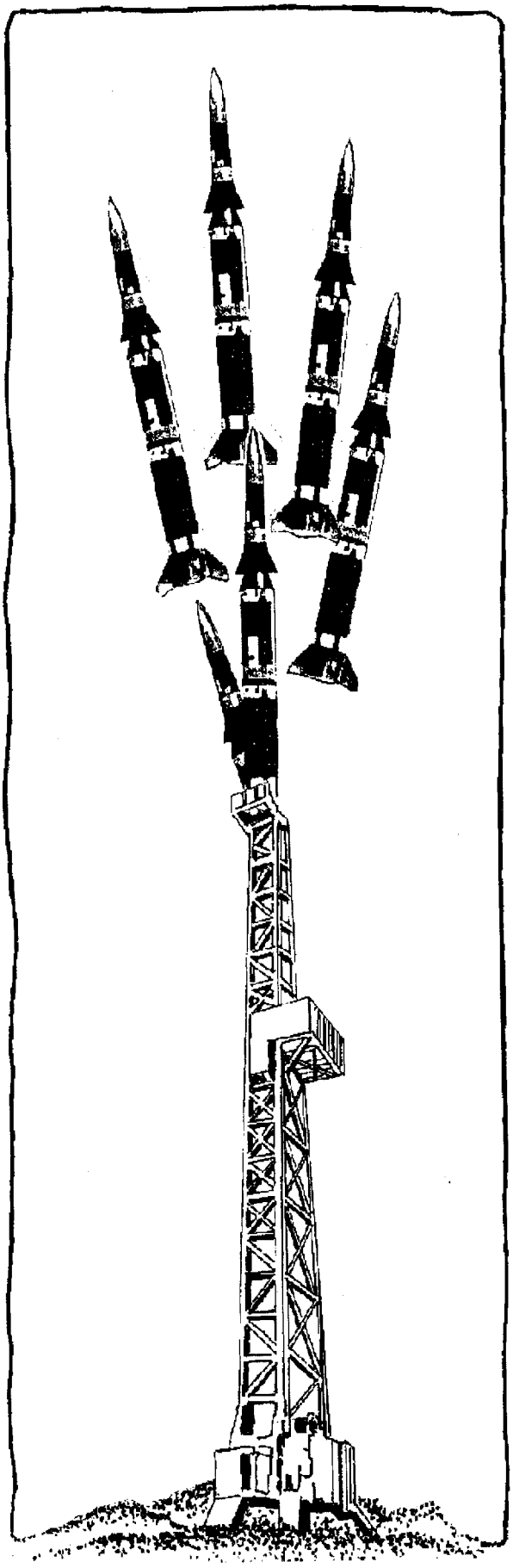
THE NATION OF ISLAM'S INTERNATIONAL ALLIES

Just as Elijah Muhammad had earlier welcomed alliances with imperialist rivals of the U.S. ruling class, Farrakhan has eagerly developed ties with nationalists in Africa and the Middle East who are in political and economic conflict with the main Rockefeller internationalist wing of U.S. imperialism. The best known example of these ties, of course, is Farrakhan's flirtation with Libyan leader Khadafy, who has made substantial donations to the NOI. Libyan oil is mainly under Italian/French control, and it is therefore in competition with both U.S. oil companies that have Persian Gulf investments and others in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa.

The highly publicized trip that Farrakhan took to several African countries just after the Million Man March included stops in Libya, Nigeria, and the Sudan. The arrangements for the trip were apparently made by the NOI's close allies, the Lyndon LaRouche organization, which has close contacts high up in the governments of many countries. In fact, recently a number of Muslim religious organizations have been highly upset to discover that they had been infiltrated by LaRouche forces seeking to exploit their opposition to U.S. imperialism and to the 1991 Gulf War. The constellation of U.S. New Money forces and various imperialists and nationalists throughout the world who all have their own reasons to oppose the Rockefeller Old Money forces attempts to operate under the long-standing capitalist motto, "The enemy of my enemy is (at least for now) my ally."

CONCLUSIONS

The Nation of Islam by its ideology of racism, nationalism, mysticism, religious fundamentalism, sexism and patriarchalism, cult of personality, reveals itself to be a fascist organization. Its ties to New Money and its alliances with both white U.S. and international fascists reveal where it stands among the sharpening conflicts among contending brands of fascism. Before and during World War II, contending capitalist forces sought to exploit every brand of nationalism and every religious division in order to weaken their enemies and strengthen their own forces. As capitalism's global crisis intensifies, as inter-imperialist rivalries as well as divisions within the U.S. ruling class sharpen, workers must learn to recognize every brand of nationalism, every brand of religious fundamentalism, every kind of fascist organization as deadly enemies of the working class. Workers must smash nationalism in all forms. Only revolutionary communist internationalism can lead to the end of capitalism, fascism, and imperialist wars.



FIGHT OVER OIL PROFITS WILL CAUSE MIDEAST BLOODBATH

As this issue goes to press, U.S. imperialists are preparing major military action to prop up their tottering Mideast oil empire. Oil is the lifeblood of capitalist production. Every imperialist needs to control it. The "New World Order" U.S. bosses bragged about after slaughtering hundreds of thousands of Iraqis in Bush's 1991 Desert Storm was in fact a crucial strategic defeat for them. It led to further erosion of Rockefeller & Co.'s Mideast empire and to increasing isolation of U.S. imperialism. Faced with stiffening competition from Iraqi and Iranian rulers for direct command of oil profits, the U.S. Eastern Establishment can no longer summon even a paper coalition. Their French, Russian, Chinese and other rivals are cutting their own deals with Iran and Iraq. Their Israeli vassals, under Netanyahu, are increasingly disobedient. Rockefeller's need to keep Iraqi oil off the market and Iraqi bosses' need to make maximum profits from selling it are the eye of the storm now. As 1997 ends, the Clinton/Rockefeller forces are looking for an excuse to launch large-scale bombing raids . These raids will eventually happen. Their main result, aside from butchering Iraqi workers, will be to increase the likelihood of a ground war to re-establish Rockefeller's hold on the oil. We can't predict exactly when this war will break out, but the trend is unmistakable and irreversible. The following articles, written between December 1996 and December 1997 for *Challenge-Desafío*, show how PLP has analyzed the events leading to Middle Eastern and world war as they have unfolded and describe our attempts to put forward our communist line on war. We can have no illusions about any of the imperialists, big or small, Rockefeller or Hussein. They are all murderers. The working class must use the opportunities provided by capitalist crisis and war to dump the whole lot of them and establish communism.

Oil is not just another commodity. It is the lifeblood of capitalism. Without it, modern transportation and industry are almost impossible. Other types of en-

ergy, like coal and nuclear, have limited uses and aren't as profitable as oil.

The rivalry to monopolize oil production and distribution has become particularly fierce in the current capitalist crisis of overproduction. The world's profit pie is shrinking, and yet more bosses than ever are vying to devour it. Within the next decade or two, for example, emerging capitalists in Asia will need vast amounts of oil to fuel their industries, which will in turn compete with established imperialists. The world's increasingly impoverished workers won't be able to buy back the glut of commodities they produce. The negotiated division of "influence spheres," which characterizes capitalist booms, has given way to ruthless competition.

The Middle East is not just another source of oil. Petroleum deposits lie scattered about the globe. But capitalists will fight to the death for the ocean of oil that sits under the Persian Gulf countries and stretches into the Caspian region. Nowhere else is oil more plentiful or easier to get at. Nowhere does it bring such a high rate of profit.

Whoever controls the flow of Mideast oil has in effect cornered the world's energy market and enjoys a huge competitive advantage. Capitalists fought over access to this oil in two world wars. Since World War II, U.S. imperialists have kept control of Mideast oil by using military force, either indirectly through allies like Israel and, before 1979, Iran, or directly, as in the Gulf War of 1991.

Today market dominance in oil is the number-one strategic concern of U.S. capitalism's ruling faction. It is their only trump card over Japanese and European rivals, because U.S. industry can't make goods that sell better than the competition's. Japan gets 80% of its crude from the Mideast, most of it from U.S. companies. And Exxon and Mobil remain the two biggest foreign companies operating in Japan.

But it's dog-eat-dog in the profit system. The world leader in oil has to maintain a virtual monopoly over the main source of supply or rivals will steal his turf. U.S. supremacy in the Mideast is collapsing on every front. Israel, the U.S.'s watchdog in the region, won't obey its old master. Civil unrest is tearing apart U.S.-backed monarchies where most of the oil is, especially Saudi Arabia. U.S. enemies Iraq and Iran are gaining strength. As a result, European, Japanese, and Russian imperialists are cornering increased shares of the world oil market.

The history of twentieth-century capitalism has been written in blood and oil.

U.S. bosses have only one strategic option: a massive, decisive military action to retake the oilfields of the Mideast and put them under direct U.S. management. This means a land war. Iraq's recent oil sales to French, Japanese, and Russian refiners taught Rockefeller, Inc., a bitter lesson. Genocidal U.S. air raids during Desert Storm and later missile assaults couldn't keep Exxon's rivals out of Iraq. Oil comes out of the ground. U.S. rulers will have to capture and occupy the oil fields with ground troops. The second Clinton administration is gearing up for this invasion.

What the capitalists do in their fight for oil profits will endanger the lives of hundreds of millions of workers. How the working class and our party respond can change history.

THE PARTY'S ROLE IN TIME OF WAR

How do the Progressive Labor Party and the working class function in time of war? In world war? In civil war? What will it take to end to such conflicts once and for all? The deepening crisis of the profit system demands that we address these questions now.

The history of twentieth-century capitalism has been written in blood and oil. Another chapter is in the works today as simmering conflicts over the Mideast begin to boil over into all-out war.

The main struggle there may appear to pit Arab nations and Palestinians against Israel. But appearances can be deceiving. The essence is a sharpening fight among major imperialist powers over control of oil and, with the oil, the world.

U.S., European, Russian, Asian, and Middle Eastern bosses are gearing up for a Middle Eastern military showdown, which is likely to set an isolated and weakened but still dangerous U.S. imperialism against most of its competitors. The forces around Clinton are strategizing for this eventuality. Their scenario may be upset by the eruption of armed

struggle in one of the Middle East's many flash points. For example, a war the U.S. bosses don't want could break out between Israel and Syria. Islamic fundamentalists could topple the Saudi regime. In either case, the U.S. would have to intervene, despite "the best-laid plans."

Regardless of contingencies, conflict among the major imperialists has made a major ground war for control over Middle Eastern oil inevitable. We can't predict how and where the next shots will be fired, but the handwriting is on the wall in indelible ink.

ROCKEFELLER CHOKE-HOLD WEAKENING

For much of this century, U.S. capitalists have had a choke-hold on Mideast oil. They dictated the conditions under which their rivals obtained capitalism's lifeblood. Oil was the key to their world supremacy.

But the Mideast is slipping through the U.S. rulers' oily fingers. In recent years, European, Japanese, Russian, and Chinese imperialists have been able to stake their own oil claims there. Iraq and Iran, declared enemies of the U.S., have grown stronger. The U.S. used to consider Israel and Saudi Arabia its most faithful Mideast allies. Now Israel's Netanyahu gang and Saudi fundamentalists openly flaunt their hostility to Washington.

U.S. bosses can no longer command the region politically, economically, or militarily. Intensifying competition is driving them to war, even though the deck is stacked against them. The result will be even deadlier than their Desert Genocide in the Persian Gulf War of 1991 because this time U.S. troops will have to fight on the ground to seize and hold the oilfields. Hit-and-run bombing raids won't do the trick, because oil can't be pumped from the air.

Within the U.S., Mideast oil is fueling a clash between two increasingly hostile camps of capitalist bosses: those with a primarily domestic focus and those bent on exploiting the world. This conflict shaped the 1994 and 1996 U.S. elections and fuels a raging battle for control of the Republican Party. It underlies the recent flap over racism at Texaco and upheavals in the aviation industry. The bosses' conflicting interests regarding foreign policy and the direction of U.S. capitalism make the possibility of civil war on the home front ever more real.

The not-so-distant future promises war, war, and more war. Competing groups of racist bosses are already trying to win workers and youth to kill and die for their profits. Our response as a class will determine the course of history. Will we follow one capitalist crew or another in their plans for mass slaughter? Or will we seize the opportunity to make revolution, smash them all, and build a communist society? This is the main issue of our time.

TWO BRANDS OF U.S. FASCISM, BOTH DEADLY

Owned largely by the Rockefeller family and other Old Money billionaires, companies like General Electric, IBM, General Motors, Citicorp, Chase, Exxon, and Mobil make up the more powerful faction of U.S. capital. They operate around the globe and require a government like Clinton's, ready to send GIs to kill and be killed anywhere in defense of their profits. Exxon and Mobil, for example, rely heavily on U.S. troops in the Mideast.

But smaller capitalists, especially those in the domestic oil and gas industry, have contrary needs. To them, the cost of keeping U.S. armed forces in the Mideast represents a $70-dollar-a-barrel government subsidy to Big Oil. Domestic oil producers hate paying taxes for a protection racket that lets Exxon's Persian Gulf crude undercut their own Texas product.

The Koch family, owners of the nation's largest private company, oil producing Koch Industries of Wichita, were the biggest donors to the Republican Party in the last campaign. While the Kochs' New Money couldn't unseat Clinton, it did help a number of isolationist open fascists win or retain congressional and state posts. The Cato Institute, a think tank founded and funded by the Kochs, promotes the Oil Patch's foreign policy of "constructive disengagement." In a nutshell, it calls for U.S. withdrawal from the Middle East.

Old Money bosses, on the other hand, are united on the need to invade Iraq and kick out Hussein and his European and Japanese oil partners. Clinton's new war cabinet, die-hard interventionists Albright, Cohen, Lake, and Berger, signals a massive attack on Iraq soon. But there is disagreement in the Rockefeller camp over how and when to take on Iran. The first Clinton administration repeatedly threatened "preemptive" air strikes against Iran for supporting terrorism and building nuclear reactors.

TACTICAL SQUABBLE OVER IRAN IS A PRELUDE TO WORLD WAR III

In late 1996, however, it became clear that Iran was forming a strategic alliance with Russia. U.S. rulers now understand that securing the Middle East means confronting the world's only other nuclear power capable of threatening the U.S.. Buying time to gear up for a full-scale offensive, various Eastern Estab-

lishment organizations, from the State Department to the New York Times to the Council on Foreign Relations, push for a "dialogue" with Teheran.

Negotiating with Iran is a tactical step towards world war. We must not mistake it for a token of peace. U.S. bosses hope to delay Iran's and Russia's unavoidable westward expansion. Ali Al-Sabah of Kuwait's ruling clan, close allies of the U.S., said, "We want to stay friends with Iran, not because we like them, but because we must" (Financial Times 11/12/96). The sheik knows that, with Russian help, Iran could seize his oil-rich domain in a matter of hours.

In the coming invasion of Iraq, the U.S. bosses will sacrifice U.S. troops as well as Iraqis in their drive for complete control of Mideast oil.

Rockefeller protege Henry Kissinger, taking the long-term view, urges a concerted effort leading to an all-out invasion of the Middle East: "We need to rebuild confidence in our purposes and capabilities in the Gulf. We must define a policy toward Iraq that relates our declared objective of overthrowing Saddam to our equally explicit commitment to the territorial integrity of the country. We must relate our policy of isolating Iran to our European allies' reluctance to follow such a course" (New York Post 10/9/96).

Translate Kissinger's babbling into plain English, and it's clear that the bosses he serves foresee hundreds of thousands of GIs squaring off against Iranian and possibly French, German, and Russian troops, after capturing Baghdad and Iraq's oilfields. Kissinger criticized Clinton's summer 1996 air raid on Iraq, calling it a "military response by a distant America whose public had not been sensitized to the issues at stake." In other words, millions of workers must be won to the idea of killing and dying for oil profits.

The Rockefeller wing is also trying to whip the military brass into fighting shape. The New York Times is playing up current flaps over chemical poisoning of U.S. troops in the Gulf War and sexual harassment in the Army. By showing up the Pentagon's disarray, the Times puts a damper on ineffective "pinprick" air raids (which still murder thousands of workers) and helps the major bosses shape up for the big land war.

The cutthroat nature of the profit system makes a ground assault a necessity for the owners of Exxon and the rest of Big Oil. Only through a near-monopoly over the production, shipping, refining, and distribution of Mideast oil can the majors compete with the independents in capitalism's boom-and-bust cycles.

OIL AND THE CRISIS OF OVERPRODUCTION

Increasing oil production has collided with stagnant economic growth to cause the present oil glut. Today, the company or cartel with the biggest stocks of oil and the means to deliver it can remain profitable by underpricing its rivals. Smaller capitalists lose market share because they lack networks of pipelines, storage tanks, refineries, and tankers. And, unlike, say, electronic equipment or other consumer items, purchases of oil do not rise with a drop in price. Oil consumers and industry buy only as much of the stuff as they can store and use.

But the big U.S. oil barons cannot master today's crisis of overproduction in oil because they no longer dominate the trade as they once did. The return of Iraqi crude to the market marks the beginning of the end of the Rockefeller era in the Mideast. French and Japanese firms head a long list of new buyers of Iraqi crude, along with Russian and Turkish buyers. Mobil managed to secure only a tiny contract. Significantly, Japanese buyers are now for the first time dealing directly with Iraq, bypassing U.S. marketers. China is negotiating huge oil exploration contracts with Iraq and will help restore Iraq's petroleum infrastructure, destroyed during the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf War.

U.S. ARAB CLIENTS AT THE EDGE OF THE LEDGE

For years the Mideast oil racket worked roughly like this: U.S.-backed Arab and Iranian monarchs wielding absolute power granted firms like Exxon drilling rights or sold them cheap crude. Importing and deporting superexploited Asian manual laborers as needed for the oil fields, these rulers created a white-collar labor aristocracy among their few actual citizens. But the recent bomb blast at a U.S. barracks in Saudi Arabia told the world that the bubble had burst.

In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman, Business Week (11/4/96) warned, "challenges to the well entrenched system of rule are mounting, inflamed in part by sky-high unemployment." Per capita Saudi income has plunged by two thirds. Waves of civil unrest prompted King Fahd's government to refuse Clinton the use of Saudi airbases for his strikes against Iraq. Petty capitalist factions opposed to the King Fahd government, as well as elements within the Saudi ruling clique, are promoting hard-line anti-U.S. pro-Iranian fundamentalism. This put the U.S.'s largest source of Mideast oil in jeopardy.

ISRAEL'S NETANYAHU— AN UNRELIABLE LACKEY

Since the start of the Cold War, Israeli bosses and their army have served as Washington's policeman on the western flank of the oil fields. However, Bibi Netanyahu's election as Israeli prime minister undermines U.S. Big Oil's influence there. Netanyahu has much closer ties to U.S. isolationists Koch & Co. than he does to the Exxon/Rockefeller imperialists. The Oil patch and Bibi have common interests. The Israeli capitalists who back Netanyahu want to turn the country into a high-tech center fueled by underpaid Russian immigrant labor. This scenario requires Israel to stop serving as a gunslinger for Rockefeller oil interests. Obviously, it dovetails with Koch & Co.'s plans to withdraw U.S. forces from the Middle East. Upon taking office, Bibi first spoke, not with Clinton, who had aggressively supported the other candidate, Shimon Peres, but with Republicans Jack Kemp and Trent Lott, who telephoned to congratulate him. Kemp has links to the Eastern Establishment but also a foot in the other camp. Lott is primarily a creature of the Oil Patch. Newt Gingrich's wife heads a U.S. group that invests in the "No Arabs Allowed" high-tech ventures Netanyahu promotes. In September, Israel told U.S. giant Enron to drop plans for a regasification plant which was to have processed two million tons of Qatari gas a year. Losing $5 billion in sales like that obliges U.S. multinationals to get rid of Netanyahu one way or another, and the effort is sure to bring even greater instability to a polarized Israel, which has already seen one recent major political assassination, the 1995 rubout of Rockefeller stooge Yitzak Rabin by a religious fanatic objectively allied with the Netanyahu gang.

CHINA'S BOSSES MOVE IN ON MIDEAST— THEIR NAVY WILL FOLLOW SOON

To make matters worse for U.S. imperialism, as China shifts into modern capitalism, its oil consumption will rise by 2010 from some 600,000 barrels a day today to 3 million barrels, nearly half Saudi Arabia's current production. East Asia now counts on the Mideast for 70% of its oil; that will jump to 95% in the first decade of the next century. To assure their supplies, Chinese bosses are implementing a two-fold strategy of armed confrontation with the U.S..

The influential Foreign Affairs magazine (David Rockefeller is its chairman emeritus) reports in its March 1996 issue, "The new energy realities contribute to China's aspirations to develop a blue-water navy capable of force projection in the South and East China seas, the Indian Ocean and beyond." Closer to the oil wells, "The heart of the dependence could increasingly be China's relations with Iraq and Iran--two countries accounting for nearly 20% of proven global oil reserves--which in the past have involved significant arms transfers."

Worried that Asia's unquenchable oil thirst "could fundamentally challenge the prevailing Western-dominated global order," Foreign Affairs urges Clinton to step up naval pressure as a prelude to war: "America's intention to maintain sufficient capability in [the South China Sea and the seaways west of the Strait of Malacca] to render commitments to free navigation credible must also be reaffirmed continually."

The Rockefeller wing fully understands that the "America-First" gospel preached by Patrick Buchanan and others allied with the Oil Patch faction severely hinders their war plans: "While neither U.S. intent nor capability is currently in question, many Asians fear the picture may begin to change after the year 2000, as China's blue-water navy becomes operational and as presumed isolationist sentiment begins to tear at American resolve."

ROCKEFELLERS DISCIPLINE TEXACO AND RETOOL ARMS INDUSTRY

It was just such isolationism that U.S. imperialist bosses tried to stifle within the ranks of Texaco, their third biggest oil company. The media's hypocritical outcry over racism at Texaco and the boycott led by Jesse Jackson (whom the Rockefellers named Man of the Year in 1978) really aimed at reversing moves Texaco had been making away from the Mideast.

Just before the scandal broke, Texaco's new chairman began cleaning house, firing a half-dozen top executives, including the chief financial officer. In search of a quick buck, the canned execs had made three big deals in 1996 alone that boosted the Oil Patch gang at the expense of Texaco's Eastern Establishment owners.

First, they agreed through Texaco's 50-50 partnership with Chevron in Caltex to sell Alaskan oil to Korea in quantities that might reduce its dependence on the Mideast from 70% to 50%. Then Caltex sold its refineries in Japan, representing 10% of the country's capacity, to Nippon Oil for $2 billion. Finally, they tried to merge Texaco's western U.S. operations with Shell's. Though foreign-owned, Shell buys heavily from Texas wildcatters.

A few weeks later Boeing swallowed up McDonnell-Douglass, in the most spectacular of the defense establishment's twenty-eight recent consolidations. This was much more than a case of Old Money consolidating capital at the expense of New Money. Boeing is owned by Rockefeller banks. McDonnell-Douglass had financial ties to isolationists in the Oil Patch and the textile industry. Desperate for cash flow, McDonnell-Douglass executives had planned to meet Chinese demands for technology transfers-- a policy the more far-sighted Boeing bosses resolutely oppose. Doing business with a major rival is one thing. Giving away the keys to the house is another. Rockefeller, Inc., could not afford to have forces that differed with their Mideast war strategy manufacturing the latest generation of U.S. combat aircraft.

Ironically, Boeing may eventually be forced to transfer technology to Chinese bosses anyway: "Intensified competition with Airbus might pressure Boeing to make greater concessions to the Chinese to ensure sales" (Robert E. Scott, Los Angeles Times, 12/26/96). Boeing's narrow interest as a company will thus collide with U.S. imperialism's broader class interests. That's the profit system's nature: "solve" one problem by creating another that only sharpens existing contradictions and leads to war.

"CONTAINMENT" FAILS, SO U.S. BOSSES PLAN WAR ON IRAN, THEN RUSSIA

Iran remains the most serious immediate adversary of Rockefeller, Inc. It menaces the oil monarchies with politics and arms. Iran's bosses hope to convert growing hatred of the royal families and the U.S. into an embrace of Islam and an ideological hold on the Arabian peninsula. Geography and Russian support give Iran a military advantage in the region that can be countered only by massive U.S. military action.

Washington's policy of "containing" Iran with economic sanctions has flopped. Economists at the World Bank's Iran desk told Reuters (11/1/96): "(The Iranians) have circled the wagons. They have achieved a certain degree of macroeconomic stability. Unilateral sanctions are rarely effective."

U.S. attempts to cut off Iran have merely led it to ally with other imperialists. When Clinton forced Conoco to abandon its deal for Iran's Sirri oilfield in 1995, Total of France moved in. The field turns out to have 50% greater reserves than expected. Iranian bosses raked in $600 million selling the drilling rights. Conoco was left high and dry.

Iran has cemented a strategic alliance with Russia, its northern neighbor. A series of pacts announced in Dec. 1996 involve joining the countries' oil, steel, and transportation industries. Russia has already begun rebuilding Iran's armed forces. China, a big future oil customer of Iran's, also provides weapons.

With its vast nuclear arsenal, Russia is the only power that can militarily control the Mideast-Caspian region. Despite appearances, it is fast becoming U.S. bosses' ultimate adversary there. Russia and Iran are blocking U.S. Big Oil's every attempt to tap into the vast landlocked oil deposits of the Caspian basin, which may match or double Kuwait's.

This strategic conflict will sharpen regardless of who holds power in the Kremlin. The only significant difference among the various factions of Russian politi-

cians concerns how long to wait and how much to flirt with Rockefeller capital before going to war with the U.S.

U.S. BIG OIL BEING NUDGED OUT OF THE CASPIAN AND DESERTED BY EUROPEAN BOSSES

In 1993, after an international consortium led by Amoco and Exxon had contracted to pump 510 million tons of oil from Azerbaijan, the nation's president was replaced by a former Soviet Politburo member, in a Russian-backed coup. The new chief cut the Russians in on the deal at 10%. Forced to rely on old Russian-owned pipelines, Chevron's $20 billion project in Kazakhstan chugs along at 30% of capacity, while Russian demands for a 25% slice of the profits hold up construction of a new line. Similar blackmail by Russia prevents Mobil from piping crude through Chechnya.

Big Oil, meanwhile, can do nothing but dictate a losing strategy to its stooge Clinton. "With a powerful and growing constituency including such oil heavyweights as Amoco, Mobil, Exxon, McDermott, Brown & Root, Bechtel, and Chevron, the Clinton Administration is increasingly being pushed to alter its pro-Russian policy and start backing the republics (Business Week, 7/17/95).

The pipeline battles are heating up. The proxies of U.S. and Russian oil bosses have been slaughtering each other for years in Chechnya. Now the shooting has started in Afghanistan. The U.S. simply cannot give the republics the support they would need to prevail in the long run over the armed might of Russia.

European capitalists, worried that Washington will not be able to guarantee their oil lifeline, are being drawn into the Russian-Iranian-Chinese axis. France has already crossed the line. Rockefeller, Inc., cannot afford to lose Japan and the rest of Asia as customers. They will fight to the last drop of our blood to keep them.

To secure oil supplies, oil refineries, oil shipping routes, and oil markets U.S. bosses waged a savage war against Japan in the Pacific between 1941 and 1945 and then dropped atomic bombs to keep the then-socialist Soviets from taking over. They used everything short of nuclear weapons in their 1990-91 oil war in the Gulf. Now more isolated and desperate than ever, U.S. rulers are headed into a war for petroleum profits that is sure to go global. This time, the violence will make Desert Genocide look tame.

CIVIL WAR LOOMS IN U.S.A

How in the face of Oil Patch opposition will Old Money forces mobilize millions of workers to seize oilfields half a world away? Brian Urquhart, advisor to five UN secretaries-general worries that, in the U.S., "You have a Congress in which there is a very strong element that is anti-internationalist, unilateralist, even isolationist" (New Yorker Magazine, 12/2/96). New money even has an army of sorts in the form of anti-government militias spawned by Koch & Co.

Profit wars, for oil or anything else, will end only when the profit system has been smashed.

The following episode from 1931 provides a clue. The issues were similar, although the stakes were much lower. U.S. Big Oil was then on the verge of winning, not losing, the lion's share of the world market. Already dependent on the Mideast, the oil majors needed to stop competition from independent New Money upstarts in East Texas in the midst of a huge glut. "In order to restrict production the major companies first prevailed upon the then Governor of Texas to proclaim martial law in the East Texas oil field. Officers of major companies were likewise officers of the National Guard in control over the oil field" (The Control of Oil, New York, 1976, p. 160). Under the Guardsmen's rifles and the pretext of quelling an insurrection, the majors built pipelines that drove some independents out of business.

The conditions are ripe for the same kind of conflict today, on a much larger scale. As they move closer to a Mideast showdown, the Rockefeller forces will unleash state power in this country--including the police and armed forces--to suppress their upstart opponents, who will fight back. It is becoming more and more conceivable that sharpening battles between Old Money and the Oil Patch, like the one over Alaska's untapped oil wealth, could escalate into armed conflicts. We in PLP have no crystal ball, but only a class analysis of the forces involved can clarify the ultimate purpose and allegiance of the various militias. They haven't fallen from the sky. New

Money bankrolls them. Their avowed enemy is the Rockefeller-dominated federal government.

Koch & Co. need state power for their own greedy purposes. Not only do they control the militias; they also support forces infiltrating the military to fight for their line. They seem to have had some measure of success in the Air Force, judging from the assassination of Clinton Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, whose pimping abroad for Rockefeller companies had particularly infuriated the Oil patch moguls. As Waco and the Oklahoma City Federal bombing show, this struggle is heating up. In all likelihood, it will not become full-blown until Rockefeller & Co. have launched their Middle Eastern ground war and begun to suffer serious casualties.

In any event, the ultimate showdown between Rockefeller, Inc. and the Oil Patch will see the Old Money forces prevail and intensify their imperialist war, but the internal struggle could become quite bloody. The result of both civil and iner-imperialist war depends on our Party and the working class. Collectively, we can determine the future.

TURN CIVIL AND IMPERIALIST WARS INTO REVOLUTIONARY WARS

Winning workers to support and fight in armed struggles against Big Oil is the primary strategic purpose of open fascist candidacies like Pat Buchanan's. He and the forces that back him plan on taking over the Republican Party to build a mass base for this outlook. If Buchanan fizzles, the Oil Patch will get someone else to run on their open fascist line. Rockefeller, Inc. are funding the Democratic Party, as well as the Republican elements they consider salvageable, the environmental movement, the civil rights movement, various nationalists like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton (who leaped into the Texaco boycott), and many unions, in order to enlist working class support for their reconquest of oil and world domination.

The Rockefellers and their yes-men parade as the lesser evil. In fact, they are the main danger, for several reasons. Because they are the more powerful of the bosses' factions, they control the state apparatus. Most significantly, they wrap their plans for fascism and war in various liberal, humanitarian disguises. We must learn to see through all these masks.

Our class has three choices. We can sit by and do nothing. Passivity will surely sooner later drive us headlong into the bosses' holocausts. We can allow ourselves to be fooled by our class enemies and agree to fight for Rockefeller or his Oil Patch rivals. As the fate of millions who fell for Hitlerite fascism in Germany proved during World War II, that choice will cause us to commit unspeakable crimes against our class brothers and sisters and lead us to a mass grave. Or else we can opt for the only solution that meets our class needs: the armed struggle for revolutionary communism. Profit wars, for oil or anything else, will end only when the profit system has been smashed.

The Progressive Labor Party has the outlook of organizing workers and soldiers to seize and hold state power. Only a revolutionary communist party can lead the working class to turn imperialist and civil war into its opposite. As fascism advances and the imperialists gear up for their wars, the outcome depends upon the leadership our Party provides and our resolve to win millions of workers and soldiers into our ranks. The opportunity to do so is fast maturing.

CHALLENGE UPDATE:

THE PACE TO WAR QUICKENS

CHALLENGE EDITORIAL, Nov. 12, 1997

AS BOSSES PLAN ANOTHER OIL WAR, WORKERS MUST PREPARE TO SMASH THEM WITH REVOLUTION

The next U.S. military intervention to protect Rockefeller's shaky Middle Eastern oil empire, no matter what happens this week, is now in the countdown stage.

On October 12th, Clinton ordered the aircraft carrier Nimitz into the Persian Gulf ahead of schedule. His excuse was a bombing skirmish that had taken place between the Iranian Air Force and some anti-Iran guerrillas holed up in Iraq. The truth is that U.S. bosses are desperate to prevent Iraqi oil from returning to the international market in significant quantities, and that they need a reason to continue enforcing economic sanctions against the Iraqi rulers.

Eventually, the U.S. will have to launch another major ground war.

The return of Iraqi oil will harm Rockefeller's interests in two ways. First, every billion barrels of Iraqi oil will drive down the price of Saudi crude by $1 per barrel, and the Saudis are the oil supplier which Exxon and others rely on most heavily in the Middle East. Second, the Iraqis are making deals with all of U.S. imperialism's main competitors: the French, the Japanese, the Russians and the Chinese. The ink has already dried on some of these agreements, which will further weaken Rockefeller, Inc.'s ability to dictate the conditions under which these rivals obtain oil and the prices they pay for it. This would be a crucial, unacceptable defeat for U.S. imperialism. It's a defeat that U.S. rulers are preparing at all costs to avoid. They have already suffered a stinging setback with the failure of their "dual containment" policy against Iran and Iraq.

ALL POLITICIANS BEHIND ROCKEFELLER/CLINTON OIL WAR PLANS

That's the reason for the Nimitz and all the saber rattling now going on in Washington. All the leading politicians have fallen in line. The Democrat Gephardt, who has some differences with Clinton over Fast Track trade deals, knows on which side his bread is oiled. So do Trent Lott and Newt Gingrich, who may represent bosses not totally allied with Rockefeller but who also have enough obligations to Wall Street to recognize the direction the wind is blowing. All these politicians have given Clinton a blank check for military action against Baghdad.

However, it may not be so easy to pull off. In 1991, when Bush launched his Desert Slaughter for Oil, U.S. imperialism was able to twist arms to put together a fake military coalition and browbeat votes in the UN. Not this time. When the Clinton Gang thundered about Saddam Hussein's refusal to co-operate with UN chemical weapons inspectors, Russia, China, France, and the U.S.'s supposed Mideast pal, Egypt, all abstained from the vote. Saddam Hussein recognized U.S. imperialism's isolation and started to play a game of chicken with Clinton, virtually daring him to attack by barring U.S. members from the UN weapons inspection teams.

The immediate choice for U.S. rulers is to back down or launch a unilateral attack on Iraq that will surely isolate them even more than they are already and unite a broader coalition against them. Eventually, the U.S. will have to launch another major ground war, because the relationship of forces leaves them no other choice.

As the U.S. rulers drive toward a war for oil intensified, their support for racists at home continues. This Dec. 1997 demonstration in Beloit, WI smashed a Ku Klux Klan rally.

CHOKEHOLD CONTROL OF OIL: KEY TO BOSSES' MAXIMUM PROFITS

As we have pointed out many times in these pages, the law of maximum profits requires a chokehold over energy sources. The world may be awash in oil, but right now the key source of oil is the Middle East. If Rockefeller & Co lose their ability to rule the Persian Gulf oil supplies, they can kiss their dreams of world domination good-bye. U.S. rulers know this. They also know that behind the immediate threat to them in the Middle East lurks a much larger threat: China and other rising Asian capitalist powers. Kuwait's oil minister told the *New York Times* on Oct. 30th: "Our growth is all coming from the East. China has a great potential both as a consuming market and a place to refine oil."

The *Times* expert columnist, Thomas Friedman, has finally figured what *Challenge* has been writing for two years. The interest taken by U.S. Asian rivals in Middle Eastern oil "...means that someday soon the Nimitz may have company. The S.S. DengXiaoping out of Shanghai, perhaps, or maybe the S.S. Mahatma Ghandi out of Calcutta...America's interest in the Persian Gulf will remain considerable, but its ability to freely maneuver in this region will become considerably less" (Oct. 30).

The day before, the Indian English-language newspaper, *The Hindu,* reported: "Indian and German warships will hold joint maneuvers early [in November] as part of the growing military ties between New Delhi and Bonn."

THE BOSSES WILL GO TO WAR: WORKERS MUST END IT WITH REVOLUTION

So U.S. imperialism is taking it on the chin from all sides. However, we would make a serious mistake to think that its weakness and isolation will prevent it from launching a significant military probe against Iraq now and Desert Storm II in the near future. Clinton/Rockefeller are "damned if they do and damned if they don't."

Workers must correctly evaluate the meaning of U.S. imperialism's strategic weakness. Despite this weakness, the bosses can still cause a tremendous amount of mayhem and they will do so. We shouldn't kid ourselves on this score. But because of it, great opportunities are opening up for our class and our

Party. Bosses' war has always been the proving ground for revolutionary communist movements. Another oil war is inevitable. Its eventual spread is also inevitable, as is the ultimate involvement of all rival imperialists in a Third World War. But the havoc of profit wars also points the way towards revolution and the seizure of political power by the Party of the working class. This is the future for which we should organize ourselves, our shop-mates, classmates, friends, and neighbors today inside our unions, schools, army units and mass organizations.

CHALLENGE EDITORIAL, DECEMBER 3, 1997

IMPERIALIST MANEUVERS WON'T STOP NEXT OIL WAR

U.S. imperialism is on the verge of launching its next oil war. The process leading to this war is irreversible, regardless of what Clinton's armada does or doesn't do over the coming weeks in the Persian Gulf.

All the bull thrown by Clinton and Albright about Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction" is a disgusting, hypocritical cover-up for one overwhelming fact of life. As the saying goes, "things ain't what they used to be" for the Rockefeller wing of the U.S. ruling class. Exxon & Co. can no longer rule over Middle Eastern oil with dictatorial authority. U.S. Big Oil's Western European Russian, and Chinese competitors are running rings around it to make deals with U.S. bosses' Iraqi and Iranian enemies. As far as "mass destruction" is concerned, U.S. imperialism is the world champion. U.S. air bombardment slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Iraqi working class civilians during the Gulf War of 1991, and U.S.-imposed sanctions continue to kill thousands more every month. When the Nimitz and George Washington unleash the newest round of terror, Clinton will rapidly overtake Bush as a mass murderer.

A STRING OF FIASCOES FOR CLINTON & CO.

To judge by appearances, U.S. imperialism's growing political weakness might seem a reason to call off the dogs of war. And it is true that Clinton & Co. have suffered a number of strategic fiascoes over recent weeks. Here are the most significant:

- The feeble "coalition" Bush put together as a fig leaf for U.S. genocide in Iraq six years ago no longer exists even in name. French and Russian bosses are in open rebellion against U.S. policies. On November 15, the Russian Parliament voted overwhelmingly to end the sanctions and to oppose the use of force in Iraq. Most Arab bosses, including close U.S. pals the Saudis and Kuwaitis, oppose Clinton's saber-rattling because they correctly fear that will increase their own instability.

- The crown jewel of U.S. rulers' "new order" in the Middle East was supposed to be a burgeoning business relationship between various leading Arab companies and U.S. and Israeli capitalists. A big conference was slated to take place in Doha, Qatar, the week of November 17th to cement this alliance of greed. Guess what? It's not going to happen. Every major Arab country pulled out in protest of U.S. Middle Eastern policy. Even the Israelis downgraded their participation to avoid further humiliation. The really significant economic conference in the region will take place in December—in Teheran, Iran, with the U.S. out of the picture.

- The tactical split over Clinton/Rockefeller's pet "Fast Track" legislation ran afoul of a serious fight within the main wing of these gangsters. The AFL-CIO brass and the politicians like Gephardt whose profits and careers are tied to workers' dues, couldn't give the plan a green light in its present form. They will eventually make a deal, but in the meantime, the Fast Track debacle is another serious international setback for U.S. imperialism. The moment Clinton tabled it, the Mercosur trading bloc in South America announced plans to accept investment from the same European rivals who are giving Rockefeller fits in the Middle East.

- The New Money billionaires of the domestic Oil Patch have also been a thorn in the Eastern Establishment's side as the U.S. drive toward Middle Eastern war has sped up. The forces allied with the Oil Patch in the House of Representatives voted down a budget allocation that would have let Clinton pay off the U.S.' $1 billion debt to the UN—a major embarrassment in view of Clinton's

need to lie about the UN as a fig leaf for U.S. imperialist aggression in the Gulf.

All of the above are sure signs that U.S. bosses' international isolation and internal disunity are rapidly sharpening. However, we should not interpret this decline to mean that their weakness will stop them from going to war. On the contrary! It makes war more likely than ever. Over the next few days or weeks, maneuvering in Moscow, Paris, New York, Washington, and Baghdad may produce some short-lived tactical compromises. But diplomacy can't abolish the essential inter-imperialist conflicts. Rockefeller needs to dominate the oil. U.S. rivals need to break free from this domination. The rulers of Iraq and Iran need to emerge as the dominant capitalist forces in the Middle East, beating out the pro-U.S. Saudis and defeating the U.S.' Israeli stooges. Not only will Iranian and Iraqi rulers continue to pose a serious threat to U.S. imperialist interests for the foreseeable future. Iran and Iraq, which already fought a devastating war during the 1980s, will also remain key strategic rivals for control of maximum oil and gas profits. Nothing here is a recipe for "peace in our time." U.S. imperialism's strategic weakness will lead it into acts of desperation and unparalleled cruelty. Nothing Clinton & Co. do in the coming period should surprise us.

Ironically, the holy rollers in Teheran have temporarily become U.S. bosses' only objective allies in the Middle East. The Ayatollahs must be licking their chops as they see U.S. aircraft carriers getting ready to bomb Baghdad and/or Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard. A weakened Iraq would help Iranian bosses' ambition to become top dog in the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, the strategic strengthening of Iranian capitalism would mean another serious setback for the U.S.—only this time, it would be self-inflicted. So when U.S. rulers start the war, in addition to the hundreds of thousands or workers they'll surely murder, they'll also inevitably shoot themselves in the foot.

So we must have no illusions about the period in which we live, and we mustn't allow ourselves to be fooled by the ups and downs of daily events. Forget the birds and bees. The real "facts of life" are the inevitability of oil wars and widening imperialist profit slaughters.

But our job as workers and communists isn't just to evaluate present conditions and estimate the future. Our job is to make the revolution that will abolish the profit system and the butcheries it needs.

Signs that U.S. bosses' isolation and internal disunity are rapidly sharpening will not stop them from going to war.

Clinton's Fast Track flop shows, among other things, that the big bosses worry all the time about losing political control over the working class. They are right! The pages of recent issues of Challenge are filled with stories about workers, soldiers, students, and professionals responding positively to our Party's ideas about imperialist war and the need for revolution to smash it. These initial reactions can become the germ of a vast mass movement against the bosses' wars and plans for fascism. Such a movement can provide fertile ground for winning workers and others to communism and the PLP. U.S. imperialism's basic weakness and the atrocities it is preparing to commit should embolden us to build our Party.

WHO'S THE BIGGER BUTCHER? SADDAM OR CLINTON?

Saddam Hussein may be a murderer, but next to Clinton & Co., he's little more than a street punk. Regardless of whether Clinton unleashes his Luftwaffe on Iraq this time, U.S. imperialism's six-year old sanctions have already taken a genocidal toll on the Iraqi working class.

- Between 1989, before Bush's Desert Slaughter, and 1994, rates of polio, post new-born tetanus, typhoid fever, cholera, and malaria doubled (or worse).
- By 1995, child mortality had doubled from its pre-war rate. It had multiplied by 500% for children under the age of five.
- Between August 1990 and December 1995, 567,000 Iraqi children died from direct consequences of U.S. imperialist bombings and sanctions.

- In 1996, an average of 4,500 Iraqi children under five died every month. For 1997, that number has increased to an average of 6,500 a month. So, between 1990 and 1997, nearly 700,000 children died before reaching their fifth birthday—just to make sure that Exxon didn't have to worry about competing with Iraqi oil. (*The Lancet*, 12/5/95; *The Irish Times*, 11/10/97)

This is the awful truth behind Clinton's sickening statement on Nov. 17 that the purpose of the U.S. military buildup in the Gulf is to "save the children of the world." Clinton's lie brings back memories of the Vietnam war, when a U.S. officer justified a massacre he had ordered by saying: "In order to save the village, we had to destroy it."

ECONOMIC CRISIS IN ASIA: ONE STEP CLOSER TO THE BRINK OF WORLD WAR

UPDATE FROM CHALLENGE EDITORIAL, Dec. 17, 1997

SOUTH KOREA, ONE OF THE MANY CAPITALIST DOMINOES

The general crisis of the international profit system sharpened drastically during the last week of November. The clearest sign was the collapse of the South Korean economy, the eleventh largest in the world.

Basically, what happened is this: Over the last couple of decades, South Korean bosses decided to compete for a share of global markets. They borrowed billions from Japanese imperialists, who were only too glad to lend money for high rates of return. But as Karl Marx wrote over 130 years ago, capitalism is anarchy. South Korean industry was merely adding to the overproduction of commodities already on the market. For instance, Hyundai and Daewoo made plans to crack the top ten auto makers' list by 2000. The only problem was that they were producing cars they couldn't sell, because the international auto market was already overflowing by 35%.

In the wake of last month's crisis that turned Asia's smaller "tigers" into financial pussycats, South Korea's banks suddenly couldn't service their debts to the Japanese rulers. The old "domino" theory started coming true with a vengeance, only this time it applied to capitalism. Last week, the fourth largest Japanese brokerage house went belly-up, along with a regional bank. In order to avoid panic, the Japanese government had let these bosses count paper stock market gains as part of their real profits. The scheme worked, until the stock markets started nose-diving.

If South Korea can't pay its debts to Japan, then Japan's economy risks a melt down. Such a disaster for Japanese bosses would be as great as the collapse of the Mexican economy threatened to become for U.S. imperialists a few years ago. Japan is U.S. bosses' chief foreign competitor, but its demise would boomerang on Rockefeller & Co., for a number of reasons. Japanese banks hold $230 billion of U.S. Treasury bonds and have an agreement that forces the U.S. Treasury to redeem this money if Japanese rulers call it in. The result could be a catastrophic liquidity crisis for the U.S. ruling class. In other words, the Eastern Establishment here has just as much interest as the Tokyo establishment in putting a Band-Aid on the South Korean cancer.

So on November 30th, the rulers of Japan, the U.S., and Europe announced the biggest bailout in history—$57 billion—to salvage the South Korean bosses' debt payments. Billions more will be needed. As we go to press, some details remain to be worked out, mainly concerning the scale of the economic attack that major imperialists can force the South Korean bosses to make on the working class. But the bailout will occur in one form or another. As Mexican workers have learned, and the South Korean working class will bear the brunt of such "assistance," in the form of mass layoffs and drastically lower wages.

But that's only the beginning. The turn for the worse in this crisis will also significantly sharpen every one of today's already intense inter-imperialist rivalries. Here's one simple example, both Japanese and Korean bosses will be forced to lower the value of their currencies, just as Mexican bosses did. This move will slash workers' buying power in Korea and Japan and will also keep Korean and Japanese merchandise competitive on the world's markets. In turn, U.S.-produced goods will become more expensive abroad. More cheap Asian goods will flood the U.S. market, adding to the currently huge U.S. trade deficit, increasing unemployment here, and further sharpening conflict between U.S. imperialists and all their main competitors. No wonder Clinton's Secretary of the Treasury, Wall Streeter Robert Rubin, told the Japanese they had to open their markets to U.S. products.

Japanese imperialists have no interest in doing Rubin's bidding. As their exports increase, the overall fight for world market share will grow fiercer. U.S. rulers, one faction of whom are already stymied by Clinton/Rockefeller's October defeat on "Fast Track" trade bill, will become increasingly desperate to compete on a global scale.

(Editor's Note: In the weeks following the South Korean bailout, this competition intensified with a vengeance. On December 15, Saudi Arabia's state-run oil company drastically reduced the number of Japanese oil traders and refiners to whom it would grant letters of credit. With help from its pals in the Saudi ruling class, the Rockefeller interests were trying to take advantage of Japanese imperialists' current financial weakness to squeeze them on the energy front. The U.S. imperialists may also try to force open their Asian competitors' markets by buying a major Korean and/or Japanese bank. Such a move, if it happens, may appear like a short-term U.S. victory. In the not-so long run, however, it will inevitably intensify rivalry on all fronts. If the Saudi-Rockefeller connection blockades Japanese oil, the Japanese bosses will look even more anxiously than they already have to Iranian and Iraqi alternatives. If U.S. exporters manage to bulldoze some more of their merchandise onto the Asian markets, the Japanese and Koreans aren't going to thank them for it. And if U.S. banks replace the Japanese by buying up some Korean industries at fire sale prices, the bosses in Tokyo aren't going to announce a love-in to celebrate. The situation is becoming more volatile every day, and it isn't headed for peace).

Yesterday, Mexico. Last month, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. Today, South Korea and Japan. Tomorrow, perhaps Russia or China, to say nothing of the U.S. The crisis of overproduction has become so vast that a financial collapse lies within the realm of possibility anywhere and, although we aren't going to make exact predictions, almost at any time. One thing's certain: the world's workers should expect another round of savage attacks on our living standards, in the form of layoffs, wage cuts, and mass fascist terror.

Historically, the world's bosses have solved their crises only by going to war. War redivides the world's markets, eliminates a few hundred million mouths to feed, and destroys the factories that lead to overproduction. This is the profit system's best medicine for the diseases it creates. A hundred small wars all over the globe and the current U.S. threats to launch another slaughter in Iraq for Middle Eastern oil should leave us with no illusions about the future the rulers have in mind.

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The key variables in this situation in are the working class and the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party. All the imperialists' wheeling and dealing assumes that workers will remain quiet or, if we do fight, that our struggles will stay within the limits of reformism. The New York Times (12/1) showed how clearly the specter of communism continues to haunt the international capitalist class. A front-page article entitled "Buffeted Asian Economies Are Raising Fears of Unrest" contemplated the imperialist nightmare of another revolutionary upsurge in China should China's now-capitalist economy fall victim to the general crisis: " 'The real question is China,' said Michael Oksenberg, an Asia expert at Stanford University... 'I do not think of the Chinese working class as (passive), and I think that's what makes the regime nervous.' "

This "expert" might as well have been speaking about workers in the U.S. or anywhere else, for that matter. We in the PLP should take the bosses' fears very seriously. They reveal our Party's potential to grow in every country where it has members. The bosses can neither wriggle nor fight their way out of their system's deadly contradictions. Only communism can get rid of these parasites and the horrors they inflict upon us. As the crisis deepens and new wars loom, the opportunities for fighting for communism will increase every day.

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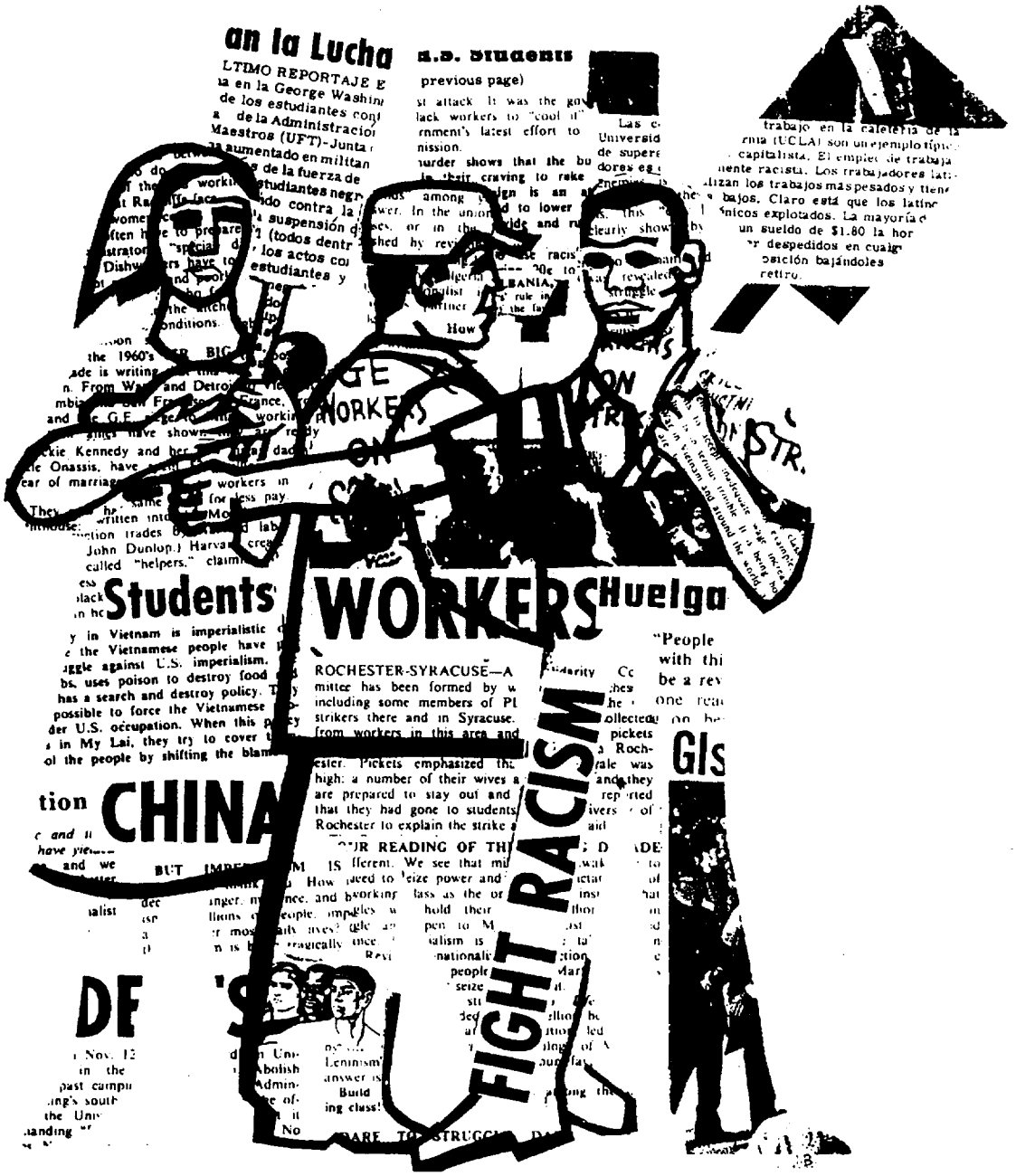

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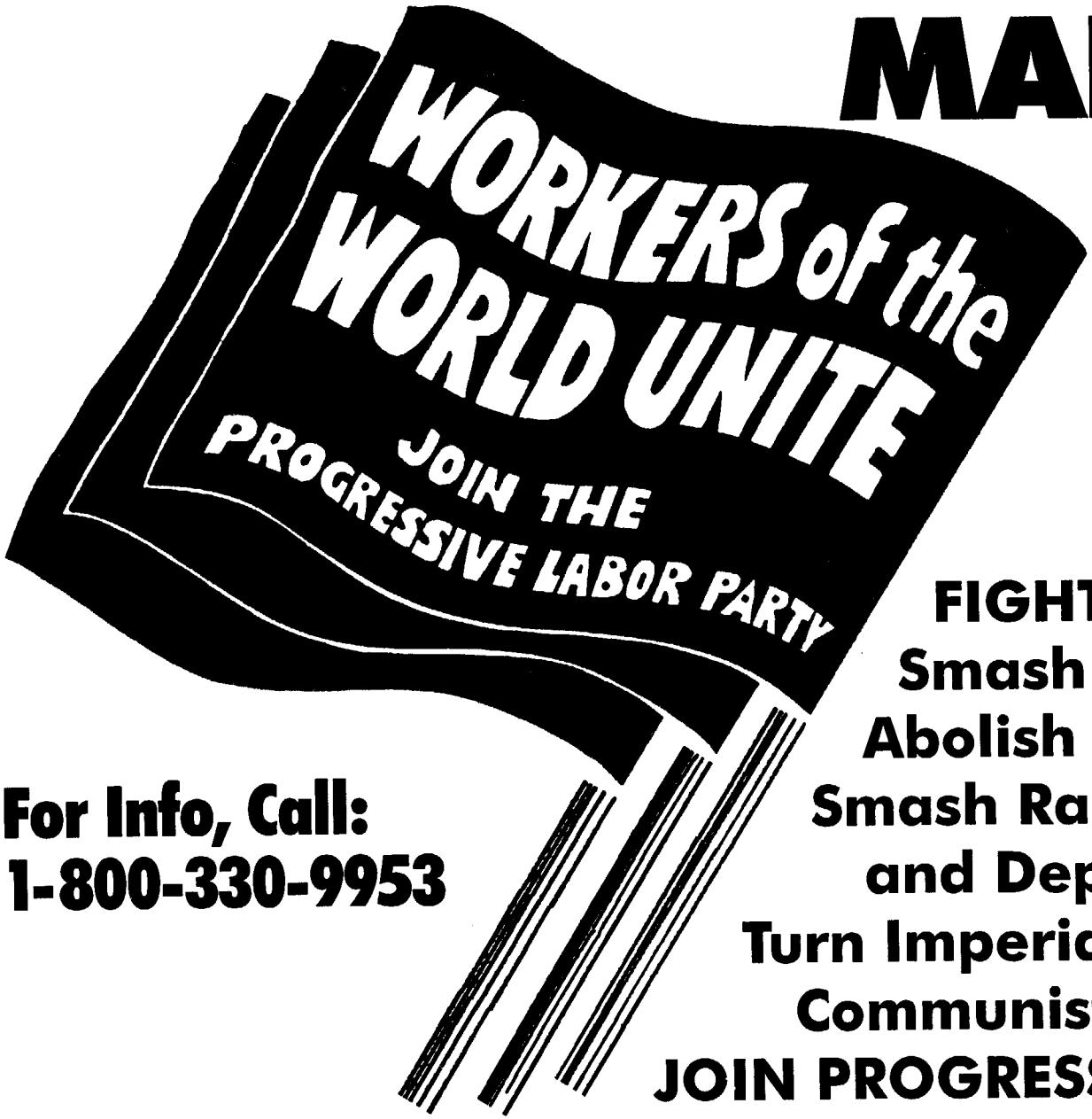

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