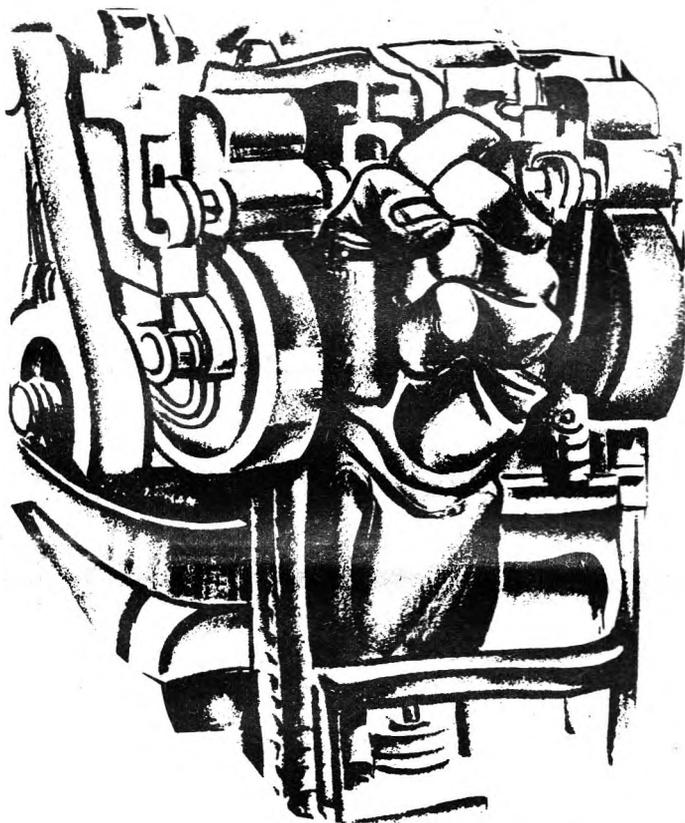


P.W.O.C. conference focuses on trade union tasks



Why has the new communist movement tended to remain isolated from the growing rank and file rebellion? Why have most spontaneous rank and file groupings limited themselves to a single issue? How do we combat the tailism of the Communist Party and what is wrong with the policies of the dogmatist organizations such as the October League? What should be our main trade union demands in the coming period? How do we accomplish the all-important task of defeating racism and developing class unity? How does our trade union work relate to party-building?

These were some of the most important questions addressed during a trade union conference sponsored by the PWOC in mid-November. Invited to the conference were those individuals and organizations whose closeness to the PWOC has been developed through repeated contacts or joint work. The goal was to establish a united focus for our trade union work and to identify areas where differences of line exist.

The most important topic addressed throughout the conference was how to pursue the struggle against racism and how this struggle relates to united front activity, how it relates to our party-building tasks, and how it affects every other aspect of our trade union work. While there was unity on the importance of tackling every division within the class, particularly sexism and anti-communism, the centrality of winning white workers to the struggle against racism was emphasized. There can be no class struggle trade unionism without a consciously united working class, and this unity depends on an aggressive anti-racist policy.

The conference began with a PWOC presentation on the state of the workers' movement today. Included was a discussion of the relationship of the rank and file movement to the trade union leadership, the strengths and weaknesses of that movement, and how the dogmatism of the anti-revisionist communist trend pre-

vents the fusion of communist theory with the rank and file movement. The presentation concluded with an in-depth analysis of the meaning of united front strategy to the trade unions today, showing how the policies of the OL are a roadblock to the development of the rank and file movement.

The presentation was followed by a panel which elaborated on the main thrusts of class struggle trade unionism: union democracy, militant trade unionism, the struggle for class unity, and the development of independent political action.

The relationship of our trade union work to the critical task of building a revolutionary communist party was addressed in the evening. We focused on the propaganda and recruitment tasks of communists, underlining the importance of making our theory address the pressing needs of the working class. Our ability to build a communist trend in the trade unions and on that basis to found a communist party capable of leading the class in fact and not just in words depends on our ability to make our theory concrete.

We ended the conference by addressing the day-to-day tasks of the movement: caucus building and organizing the unorganized. Workshops discussed how to deal with red-baiting, guidelines for participation in union elections and contract struggles, how to form a new caucus, and so on.

The conference represented a small but important step towards building a united national communist current in the workers' movement. The PWOC plans to host more such events which would involve the many other communist trade union organizers across the country who could benefit from such joint work and who could add valuable insight into our discussions. Copies of the two major presentations are available from *the Organizer* for \$1.00 and interest in future conferences should also be addressed to *the Organizer*.