14 Charles Lang New York, NY 10014

March 14, 1978

#### TO NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ORGANIZERS

Dear Comrades,

On March 3 members of the Revolutionary Communication aided by members of one of the Maoist factions of the Student Association violently attacked and attempted to break up a meeting at the University of Houston in solidarity with the miners' strike.

The facts about this attack are in an article in the March 17 Militant and in the encrosed fact sheet prepared by the University of Houston Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike. Also enclosed are copies of two leaflets put out by the RCP, one was circulated before the attack, the other following the attack.

The attempted RCP sabotage of a collection in Los Angeles for the miners reported in the March 10 Militant as well as reports from other cities shows that the attack in Houston, while the most serious to date, is not an isolated incident.

One of the factors behind the RCP's campaign of harassment and violence is its frustration over the fact that the rank-and-file upsurge in the miners' strike bypassed their sectarian "rank and file" committees and frustration with our success in helping to organize relatively broad solidarity meetings. An additional element may be the recent split in the RCP and its youth affiliate. (See letter by Betsy Farley from the YSA National Office sent out March 6.)

The purpose of this letter is to describe the plans the Houston committee has outlined to respond to this attack and what we propose to be done nationally.

The Houston committee is continuing its solidarity activity and plans to hold another public meeting around March 19.

At the same time, it is organizing a major campaign to publicize the RCP attack, explain its dangers to the labor movement, and win broad support in condemning it. So far the publicity has included a March 4 news conference that received good coverage and two front-page articles in the Daily Cougar, the U. of H. student newspaper. The axis of the committee's campaign is to obtain a broad list of signers

on a statement (see enclosed) which can then be released to newspapers, distributed widely, etc. Comrades in the unions, especially those where some of the RCPers are members, are aggressively explaining the issue to workers on the job.

The committee is organizing a special fund campaign to help pay the medical expenses of those injured.

Leaflets in the Farsi language are also being prepared by Iranian activists condemning the attack and explaining the issues.

In addition to obtaining signers for their statement locally, the Houston committee is attempting to get endorsements nationally from union officials, student leaders, and radical organizations. Signers for the statement are also being solicited from Maoist organizations and newspapers like the <u>Guardian</u> as well as various Iranian organizations.

Branches are encouraged to help obtain such signers on the statement and to publicize the RCP attacks. Where there have been local incidents with RCPers or Iranian Maoists this effort should be especially important. Names of all signers and copies of all articles should be sent to the Houston committee and to the Militant.

This campaign also offers an opportunity for the party to systematically learn about and begin to follow what is happening among the Maoists, including the Communist Party-Marxist-Leninist (formerly the October League). This is particularly important now in light of the turmoil created by the RCP split. Pamphlets, newspapers, leaflets, and even reports of conversations with Maoists should be sent to the National Office.

The <u>Militant</u> is preparing an analytical article for the March 31 issue explaining what is wrong with the RCP's line in the UMWA and the miners' strike. This will be followed with other articles on the split, etc.

Comradely,

Doug Jenness

For the Political Committee

Doug Jenness (F)

[passed out by UH Ad Hoc Committee
 to Support the Miners Strike]

MARCH 3, 1978

PRO GRAM:

Regina Dotson, President of University Feminists.

Matt Miller, United Mine Workers of America International Staff.

Mike Burdiss, United Mine Workers of America International Staff.

Jeff Beneke, UH Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike.

Introduction to "Harlan County, U.S.A.," by Mike Burdiss.

"Harlan County, U.S.A."

Singing of "Solidarity Forever."

The UH Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike welcomes you to tonight's rally. More than 160,000 members of the UMWA have been on strike for nearly three months. These workers labor under the most dangerous, life-threatening conditions of any industrial workers. The mine operators want to try to destroy or seriously weaken the UMWA in order to worsen conditions and wages in the mines so they can reap huge profits.

Many groups like the UH Ad Hoc Committee have sprung up around the country to help build solidarity with the miners. That's because a victory for the miners would be a victory in the fight for social justice in many arenas. And support from student, labor, and other groups can be an important aid in the miners' fight.

The government and media have purposely distorted the miners' story. We planned tonight's meeting to give people in the Houston area an opportunity to hear a first-hand report from the UMWA, and to raise funds to help support striking miners and pensioners. Please give generously.

UH Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike\*: Dr. Donald Quataert, Dr. George T. Morgan, Dr. Alan Stone, Dr. Harrell Rodgers, Vic Quintanilla (Speaker of SA Senate), Audie Higareda (Concilio), Jill Mathews (Student Coalition Against Racism), Jimmy Bryan (Coalition Against UH Investments in South Africa), Issa Khalaf, Rob Roper (Hector Marroquin Defense Committee), Paul Rowe (Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee), Glen Jubran (Organization of Arab Students), Susan Mahailik (University Feminists), Rebecca Nunez (Mujeres Unidas), Jeff Elliott (Young Socialist Alliance), Vaughan Westheimer (TexPIRG), Pablo Rodriguez (Director, Ethnic Affairs), Regina Dotson (President, University Feminists).

\*Organizations listed for identification purposes only.

### Solidarity Forever

When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run, There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun; Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one, For the union makes us strong.

CHORUS: Solidarity Forever, (three times)
For the union makes us strong.

It is we who ploughed the prairies, built the cities where they trade, Dug the mines and built the workshops, endless miles of railroad laid; Now we stand outcast and starving 'mid the wonders we have made, But the union makes us strong. (CHORUS)

- 1. On March 3 about fifty thugs organized by the Revolutionary Communist Party(RCP) and its youth affiliate, the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade(RCYB), physically assaulted and unsuccessfully attempted to break up a miners' solidarity meeting sponsored by the University of Houston Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike. Members of the Iranian Student Association U.S. (ISA-US) also participated in the attack (ISA-US is one of many factions of the ISA and is the Houston affiliate of a national faction called, "For the Reconstruction of a Single Organization of the Student Movement").
- 2. In a leaflet titled, "U.C. Confrontation Exposes Supporters of Miller's Latest Sellout," distributed three days after the attack, the RCP tries to paint a picture of the solidarity meeting as a gathering to sell the UMWA Bargaining Council contract proposal that was later voted down by the miners. This is a slander. The solidarity meeting was the first miners support activity held in Houston. It was part of a tour by Mike Burdiss, Deputy Director of the UMWA Legislative Committee, and Matt Miller of the UMWA international staff, to help win support for the striking miners and raise money for the UMWA Relief Fund for strikers and pensioners whose benefits have been cut off since February 1. Miller and Burdiss did not use the meeting as a platform to drum up support for the contract proposal. Their remarks were taped and are available for anyone who wants to confirm this.
- 3. In an article in the March 8 UH Cougar, RCP leader Kate Lombardi claims that "Our intention was to confront the union officials with questions and challenges to their support of the latest miners' contract." Later in the article she claims that RCP supporters were physically barred from the meeting and told they couldn't come in. Both these claims are lies. The RCP clearly intended from the beginning to assault the UMWA representatives and prevent the meeting from occuring.

At no time did any of the disrupters attempt to peacefully enter the room to listen to the speakers or pass out literature to explain their views on the strike. They were never told by meeting monitors that they couldn't attend the meeting.

Here are the facts. About ten minutes before the solidarity meeting was scheduled to begin, twelve RCP members carrying banners with the inscription of the "National United Workers' Organization" together with approximately forty ISA-US supporters, held a rally with loud chanting outside the entrance to the meeting. They blocked the door so that people who wanted to attend the meeting had to push through a knot of screaming RCP supporters to enter. RCP leader Joe Sullivan gave a speech urging the thugs to "get" Paul Fortney (Fortney is the Assistant Publicity Director of the UMWA and was scheduled to speak. He was unable to come to Houston, so Burdiss and Miller spoke in his place.).

Monitors recruited by the miners' support committee were outside the door to help usher in latecomers who squeezed through the crowd of RCP supporters. When monitors saw RCYB leader Hiram Berry take a knife out of his pocket, they began to reenter the meeting room. An RCP leader whose last name is Pietsch led chants of "We want Fortney, we want Fortney." After a few monitors reentered the room, Sullivan yelled "Now," and led the other RCP supporters in an attack on the remaining monitors and an attempt to bust into the room.

Wooden poles supporting the RCP banners, as well as flagpoles were used by the RCP-led goons as weapons. They also used metal furniture from an adjoining lounge in their assault.

The monitors prevented the attackers from breaking into the room, so the RCP supporters tried to drag individual monitors away from the doorway for a beating. Well-known local union activists were special targets.

\*John Sarge, a shop steward for United Steelworkers Local 1742 at Hughes Tool, Co., was pummeled by a dozen thugs. He suffered bad bruises and required four stitches in the back of his head.

\*Tom Leonard, a union militant for more than thirty years, who was recently fired from Hydril as a result of his union activity, received a blow in the mouth and lost four teeth. Dental work will cost hundreds of dollars.

\*Diane Sarge, a member of United Steelworkers Local 1742 and Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Houston in 1977, was beaten in the face.

\*Pat O'Reilly, a railroad worker, member of Fireman and Oiler's, was worked over by a group of thugs.

Two other monitors, Phil Hardy and Cynthia Slade, required emergency medical treatment. One of Hardy's ribs was separated from connecting cartilage, a painful injury that will take weeks to heal. His face was also badly bruised. Slade was kicked in the head several times by ISA-US supporters and suffered blurred vision and headaches for days after the assault.

The night manager of the University Center, Nirut Singharula, saw the assault and called the campus police. As they arrived and the monitors regrouped, the attackers fled. Campus police arrested five of the RCP supporters as they ran from the scene.

At one point during the melee, Hiram Berry brandished a knife and threatened the life of Dr. George T. Morgan, a UH faculty member attending the meeting.

4. There is additional evidence that the RCP-led assault was premeditated and part of a national RCP campaign to disrupt support for the miners' strike. The day before the meeting, the RCYB distributed a provocative leaflet urging students to picket the miners support meeting to "Oppose the Sellout -- Jam the Hacks!" and "...Beat Back the Labor Traitors."

On February 21, twelve people from the so-called Miners Right to Strike Committee, which is led by the RCP, disrupted a collection organized on behalf of the Stearns strikers who are fighting for UMWA bargaining rights. The collection was organized by United Auto Workers Local 216 at the General Motors plant in Southgate, near Los Angeles.

On March 7, in Houston, Joe Sullivan representing the Miners Right to Strike Committee, held a news conference announcing that this committee would be collecting funds at plant gates. Sullivan implied that these funds would be distributed as relief to striking miners. However, these funds are easywarked for the RCP-led caucus in the miners' union.

ISA-US members have also engaged in violent attacks against other Iranian students who disagree with them. The most recent assault was on January 23 when Houston ISA-US members attacked four members of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran outside a political meeting at the University of Houston. One of the CAIFI members was badly beaten. More than forty faculty members and leaders of campus organizations signed a statement condemning this assault.

- 5. The RCYB and RCP have further tried to discredit the solidarity meeting through red-baiting. They falsely claim in the March 8 Cougar article and in the leaflet circulated after the attack that the solidarity meeting was sponsored solely by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, or that the UH Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike is a "front" for the Young Socialist Alliance. In fact, the YSA is but one of a number of groups comprising the committee. The solidarity meeting was sponsored by eighteen campus activists, including four faculty members and leaders of University Feminists, Mujeres Unidas, Concilio, Organization of Arab Students, TexPIRG, YSA, Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, Student Coalition Against Racism, Coalition Against UH Investments in South Africa, Hector Marroquin Defense Committee, as well as the Director of Ethnic Affairs and Speaker of the Student Association Senate.
- 6. Opposition to the RCP-led assault is growing. Forty-five eyewitnesses to the assault released a statment to the media on March 4 condemning the attack. Burdiss and Miller, the two UMWA staff members, also released a statement to the media condemning the attack. A "Statement Against Violence" now being circulated by the UH committee has already been signed by leaders of the Black Student Union, Concilio, and other University of Houston activists and is now circulating nationally for more signers. The committee is also raising funds to help pay for the medical expenses of the monitors who were injured. Contributions can be sent to Dr. George T. Morgan, Jr., History Department, University of Houston, Houston, Tx. 77004.

COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE MINEWORKERS STRIKE BOX #141 UNIVERSITY CENTER UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004 [passed out by RCYB in Houston to build their rally]

## SUPPORTTHE COAL MINERS

## OPPOSE THE SELLOUT - JAM THE HACKS!

The miners' strike has apparently become a social issue at U. of H. A leaflet has recently been put out around campus by something called "U.of H. Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Miners' Strike", which promotes a program they are holding on Friday. The keynote speaker at their program, Paul Fortney, is billed as "Ass't. Mational Publicity Director of the U.M.M.A.". If this "Ad Hoc Committee" were actually supporting the just demands of the miners, we would say right on; the miners need all the help they can get. The facts, however tell a different story, and this is why we feel it absolutely mecessary to expose the "Ad Hoc Comm." and those behind it.

To get an idea of who really supports the miners and who is just trying to pimp

off their struggle, lets look at the events of the past few weeks.

Last week, the bargaining council of the U.1.M.A. and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association reached a tentative settlement in the 3 month coal strike. Arnold Miller claimed this contract was "better than the union's minimum position", while Jimmy Carter gave the miners an ultimatem to accept the contract, threatening "drastic and unacceptable action, otherwise. The tentatice agreement was touted all over the press as the end to the strike. Just 2 days later, though, the Mouston Post headline reported that a large section of the rank and file miners had vowed to reject the agreement. What had actually happened?

ARMOLD MILLER: DOES HE REPRESENT THE MIMERS ?

Behind this turnaround is this: Arnold Miller and his traitorous leadership were able to push a sellout contract through the bargaining council. This dog has continuously attempted to sell out the miners and give in to the companies in order to protect his own position as union president. Far from really representing the miners, Miller has at every stage of the game used his position to sabotage the strike - now proposing a completely unacceptable contract, then threatening "disciplinary" action against the militancy that has allowed the miners to hold firm in their demands, and always keeping his \$100,000 a year salary in mind. The bargaining council, which is made up of District Presidents, and thus forced to be a little bit closer (tho' just as willing to turn their backs on their membership) to the rank and file, overwhelmingly rejected Miller's last companywritten contract. This time, tho', in conjunction with the threate of gov't. intervention from Carter and Labor Secretary Marshall, Miller was able to make enough behind-the-scenes deals to push it through by a 2/3 vote.

#### LATEST COUTRACT IS AN ATTACK ON THE MINERS

This latest settlement offer is just one last ploy by the companies and their henchmen to break the inity of the miners. Since the miners have been on strike so long, 'liler and the company figure they can force the miners to accept the contract on the basis of their financial situations. The miners tho' have a different idea. Last Sunday, just after the announcement of the contract terms, 2000 rank and file miners, mobilized under the leadership of the Miners Right to Strike Committee, converged on the headquarters of 'lillers UMMA leadership and demanded an end to the sellout attempts. !lumerous interviews in the press show the rank and file overwhelmingly oppossed to the contract-they have seen through the scheme. So indignant are the miners at the suppossed 'leadership' of Millers'gang, that he will not even go into the coal fields, for fear of his life!

The terms of the present contract are essentially the same as those rejected? weeks ago. Even tho' the press tried to play it up as if the miners had gotten what they wanted, here are the facts:

PENSIONS: The miners demand that the pensions of older workers retired befor 1974 be equalized with their own. This is not met in the present proposal.

NAGES: The miners demand a real wage equivalent to what they received 6 years ago, and a cost of living rider. Millers' sellout gives an average i™ rease of 28¢ compared with an overall inflation rate of 72¢ over the last 6 years.

"EDICAL: Benefits received by the miners were 100% coverage up until August of last year. The miners demand that they be restored and be non-negotiable in accordance with the dangerous and unhealthy working conditions inherent in mining. The contract includes an \$800 deductible and runs out at the end of the contract.

RIGHT TO STRIKE: The contract proposal allows the companys to fire or fine anyone organizing a wild-cat or anyone who's a 'leader' of a wildcat. (essentially anyone who honors a wildcat picket-line)

The right to strike is non-negotiable to the miners for several reasons. For one the wildcat strike (strike at one or a few mines, rather than nation wide) is the only way miners have to enforce safety conditions in specific mines- this is crucial in that mining is one of the most hazardous occupations, with 7 times the rate of

disabling injuries that occur in the steel industry. Most important havever, is that the right to strike is the only weapon the miners have, and without it they have no way of seeing that the terms of the present contract are enforced. In fact, the present walk-out was called only after the owners had cut off pensions and health benefits to retirees! The owners will respect no contract unless it is backed up by the workers from a position of strength; otherwise it is a worthless scrap of paper.

These are a few of the reasons this contract is unacceptable to the rank and file. The coal strike involves more than just a dispute between the miners and the B.C.O.A. It is a dispute which calls into question the whole system of wage slavery called capitalism, and involves a confrontation between 2 classes - the working class and the capitalist owner class. This is why politicians like Jimmy Carter and Ray Marshall have staked a considerable amount of their political credibility on ending the strike, Carter, for example, attempts to blaff the miners with threats of invoking the Taft-Hartley Act, a definite gamble on his part.:if the miners hold firm and ignore his threat, Carter will either be forced to try and supress the strike by violence or left looking weak. As their chief politician, Canter must\*represent the interests of the capitalists, and he will do anything, from cheap patriotic appeals to military occupation to bolsterthe position of the owners; because a victory for the miners will be an inspiration for working people in all industries to fight for a decent living and a better life.

#### WHO IS THE "AD HOC COMMITTEE"

We see then, that there are only 2 sides to the miners strike - that of the rank and file, and that of the owners, gov't., and sell-out leadership. Who's side are the "Ad Hoc Committee" and their speaker, Paul Fortney, on? Mr. Fortney is one of Miller's hand picked union hacks - he owes his job to the man who, while claiming to represent the miners, drives a 1978 9 passenger cadilas and packs a pistol to protect himself from the rank and file of his own union. Fortney is one of the master minds of Hillers recent publicity campaign to push the contract over the radio and press. He is completely sold to the interests of the bosses.

What side, but the bosses, could the Committee, which invited him to speak, be

on? A cursory glance at the Organization supporting the Committee reveals what it really is - a front for the Trotskite group, Young Socialist Alliance.

#### Y.S.A. PRETENDS TO SUPPORT THE MIMERS, REALLY SUPPORTS THE BOSSES

Since their inception in the 20's, when they tried to derail the world's first workers state, the Soviet Union (socialist until 1965). Frotskyites have used the cover of being "in the interest of the working people", to attack the workers movement. In 1974, when Miller sold out the miners with a contract who's lousy terms laid the basis for the present strike, Socialist Morkers Party, Y.S.A.'s parent group, supported Miller 100%. When asked what he thought, was the main problem in the coal fields, Jeff Elliot, Y.S.A. campus leader, replied the lack of unity of the miners". That sounds alright by itself, but Y.S.A. means by "unity" is not the unity of the rank and file, but unity with turncoats like Hiller and Fortney. Through bitter experiencethe miners know that this kind of "unity" leads straight down the road to defeat.

The Miners Right to Strike Committee, a rank and file organization, denounces Arnold Millers latest contract scheme for the sell out that it is , not only of the coal miners , but of the entire working class. The miners have fought too long add too hard to be stabbed in the back by two-bit opportunists. We in the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade join with the M.R.T.S.C. in their exposure of the coal companies as the real cause behind the country's coal crisis, and call for all working people to stand solidly with the miners in their fight. He ask everyone who genuinely supports the interests of the miners to join us, along with the National United Morkers Organization, in picketing the Y.S.A. program to expose the treachorous role of the labor traitors Miller and his friends the Trotskyites.

JOIN THE PICKET, FRIDAY NIGHT, 7:30, AT THE U.C.

EXPOSE YSA'S REACTIONARY ROLE, BEAT BACK THE LABOR TRAITORS. Victory lo The Miners! Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade

(529-1284)

# U.C. Controntation Exposes Supporters Of Miller's Latest Sellout

Friday night's 10:00 news featured an interview here at U of II with two United Mine Workers of America officials. When questioned on the 2-1 margin of the miners' rejection of the latest contract, these officials said that if the contract were rejected nationwide, then they favored the federal government's seizure of the mines "in favor of the miners". At the same time, a federal spokesman went on record saying that, in the event of seizure, conditions for the miners will be "worse than the contract rejected." Federal intervention in the closed coal mines favors noone but the owners of these mines and the government, which is coming under increasing pressure from all sides as a result of the 3 month coal strike.

Saturday night's news contained an interview with a Mr. Sarge, a labor "leader" for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) here in Houston. The media's interview with Sarge came about as a result of the "U of H Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Miners"'s (a front for the SWP) call for a public meeting Friday night at the U of H University Center and a fight which broke out before the meeting occurred. The media presented the fight as a conflict between supporters of the contract (the Ad Hoc Committee, the UMW officials) and a group that opposed the contract.

#### SWP SUPPORTS SELLOUT HACKS

The "Ad Hoc Committee" had announced all last week that they were bringing the movie "Harlan County, USA" and Paul Fortney, Assistant Director of Public Relations for the UNW to U of H on March 3rd. Fortney is one of the masterminds of UNW Pres. Arnold Miller's recent publicity campaign to push this sellout contract over the radio and press. As it turned out, the Committee had neither the film nor Fortney. The film was simply a lure to get people to their meeting and, like Arnold Miller, who won't go into the coalfields for fear of his life, Fortney cannot appear in public for fear of confrontation with people who realize what he's all about.

The National United Workers Organization (NUWO) and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) felt it necessary to picket this meeting and later to go in with the intention of exposing the UNW officials and the Ad Hoc Committee for being the labor-traitors that they are. At 7:30, when NUWO, RCYB and other supporters of the miners went down to the Pacific Room, we were met by 10 SWP goons, who told us that we couldn't enter and who physically blocked the door. It was when we tried to enter this "open" meeting that the fight broke out. It was during the course of this fight that the SWP and their offspring the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) began to show what side they really stand on by immediatly dispatching one of their members, last seen running up the ramp of the underground UC screaming "Get the cops!"

These are the same people that constantly spew about "helping the working class" and make some vague references to "revolution." But, as was seen Friday, SWP and YSA, when faced with a hot situation, suddenly lose their revolutionary resolve and go crying for help to those they claim to oppose.

SWP and YSA have always paid a lot of lip service to "democratic rights" (an example of which was their recent initiation of a petition circulated last month which decried "violence on campus"). But we see how "democratically" they responded when they barred people from attending their forum. And their concern with non-violence is only a hypocritcal exposure, since they supported hacks advocating re-opening mines at the point of a gun, and ran to the cops to arrest people who were putting forward the rank and file miners opposition to the sellout contract and sellout union traitors.

#### CAMPUS SECURITY-VICIOUS DOGS

Another group, being called the upholders of "peace and security" yet didn't hesitate to act like a pack of vicious dogs was the campus police. Without any investigation into the situation, and going solely on the accusations of the SWP/YSA, the police began attacking and arresting NUWO and RCYB members, long after the fight as they were leaving the building. The police were violent and abusive and especially one hot shot, McDonald thought he was so tough that he slammed a student up against a brick wall and beat up on him. While holding the five arrested in the campus security building for hours, these cops constantly made racist slurs and threatening remarks, acteing just like their big brothers in the H.P.D.

These cops routinely harass and terrorize people as they openly admitted during the recent Joe Torres murder trial. We can't allow these gun totting "campus security" to act like the Gestapo at UofH. To what extent can this university claim to be a market place of ideas when its police beat up and arrest peoplebased solely on the say so of one side?

What happened last Friday night is not an isolated incident, but analogous to what's happening in the coal fields themselves. There is a battle raging where the miners, the vast majority of workers in that area, against the coal companies, "human rights" Carter and the government, and the sellout union leaders. The miners situation is a living example of how the owning class and their agents try to crush the miners because they are sranding up and fighting back, SUPPORT THE MINRES- SUPPORT OUR DEMANDS.RCYB 529-1284

OPPOSE TAFT-HARTLEY AND CARTER'S BACK TO WORK ATTACKS CONDEMN YSAME SIDING WITH THE SELLOUT FIRE R. McDONALD FROM THE UH SECURITY FORCE

#### STATEMENT AGAINST VIOLENCE

We have learned of a serious attack on democratic rights that must be repudiated.

On Friday, March 3, a group of about fifty people organized by the Revolutionary Communist Party, National United Workers Organization, and the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, with the participation of many members of the Iranian Student Association-U.S., physically attacked a miners' solidarity meeting at the University of Houston in an unsuccessful attempt to break it up. (ISA-U.S. is one of many ISA factions and is the Houston affiliate of a national faction called, "For the Reconstruction of a Single Organization of the Student Movement.")

The meeting was organized to gain support for the more than 160,000 striking United Mine Workers of America members and to raise funds for the UMWA Relief Fund. It was sponsored by the University of Houston Ad Hoc Committee to Support the Mineworkers Strike, comprised of eighteen individual sponsors including faculty members and leaders of campus organizations. This was the first public gathering in Houston to support the miners' strike.

Two UMWA international staff members, Mike Burdiss and Matt Miller, were present at the meeting to explain the issues involved in the strike and solicit strike support.

The attackers did not try to peacefully enter the room to participate in the meeting or distribute literature to explain their views on the strike. Instead, they assaulted meeting monitors with heavy sticks, furniture, and fists. Six monitors were seriously injured and required emergency hospital treatment. One monitor lost four teeth and requires hundreds of dollars of dental work.

We condemn the use of violent aggression to settle disputes in the movement. We support the right of any organization to hold meetings without fear of being attacked.

We hope that if the facts of this incident are widely publicized, similar incidents can be prevented in the future.

Initial signers of this statement include: Dr. George T. Morgan UH, Prof. Gerald Goodwin UH, Matt Miller-UMWA national staff, Mike Burdiss-UMWA national staff, Vanessa Johnson-Black Student Union, Becky Nuñez-Concilio, Ali Moffari-ISA Democratic, Tom Kirkland-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, Sara Johnston-SWP, Glen Jubran-Organization of Arab Students, Jeff Elliott-Young Socialist Alliance, Regina Dotson-University Feminists

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<sup>\*</sup> organizations listed for identification purposes only.