

REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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Despite a mammoth propaganda effort by the US ruling class to convince everyone that the worst is over, that we're "about to turn the corner," it is strikingly clear that the economic and political crisis of U.S. imperialism is deepening day by day. The U.S. ruling clique is resorting increasingly to harsh economic policies in an effort to reverse the downward trend, but to no avail. All the major economic indicators, if interpreted objectively, point out that stagnation, inflation, and high unemployment are still very much the order of the day, and that even if there are a few short-range gains--made primarily at the expense of the US working class--the long-range picture for the bourgeoisie remains very bleak. And, of course, the political crisis for the bourgeoisie worsens, too, as the masses of American working people and other sectors begin to organize and resist the ruling class' effort to place the burden of the economic crisis on their backs. The more the ruling class resorts to repressive measures (e.g., NEP, the Taft-Hartley Law, etc.) to try and smash this growing resistance, the stronger that resistance becomes.

Nor is this economic and political crisis restricted to the US. What affects one imperialist ruling clique affects the others as well. This was true 40 years ago, when the US depression led to a depression throughout most of Europe, and it is certainly true today. Such "highly regarded" bourgeois sources as US News & World Report point out that many imperialist and capitalist nations (e.g., Germany, Japan, and Italy) either already are in or soon will be in serious recessions. And recent efforts by the US imperialists to pull themselves out of their own mess by devaluing the dollar, etc., only worsen the situation for competitive imperialist groups such as the Japanese and Germans. We also must take note of the sorry situation prevailing in the Soviet Union. Thanks to the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union by the Russian social-imperialists, the economy is in serious trouble and the great Russian working masses are undergoing severe hardship and misery. But there as everywhere, resistance to imperialism and its hated policies is growing by leaps and bounds. As Chairman Mao brilliantly sums up the present worldwide situation: "The enemy rots with every passing day; while for us things are getting better daily." Revolution, led by the national liberation struggles of Third World peoples, is the major trend in the world today.

Here in the U.S. it is of utmost importance for all honest revolutionary and communist forces to recognize the depth, severity, and irreversible nature of the present economic and political crisis, and to redouble their efforts to make contact with and help politically organize the American people, especially the working masses, who are beginning to fight back valiantly against the imperialist enemy. This is especially true of our own organization which, holding high the banner of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, is attempting to help create a mighty United Front led by the proletariat. Truly, it is no exaggeration to say that we must seize the time and work tirelessly to build our organization into a powerful national political force fighting in behalf of and side by side with the American people.

There appears to be strong agreement among the entire membership that in order to develop our organization into such a fighting force on a national scale, there is great need for an effectively functioning, day-to-day national leadership. At present, no such national leadership really exists. The national leadership bodies we do have meet very infrequently. The result is that our organization more closely resembles a federation of semi-autonomous regions loosely bound together by a common political line and strategy and by occasional exchanges of ideas and experience, than the kind of tightly

knit, cohesive fighting force that is required. In the absence of central planning, much of our mass work takes on a provincial and restricted character. One hand often does not know what the other hand is doing; we are not able to link up mass work between the various regions as well as we must, nor are we able to carry out successful national campaigns around key political issues in which all regions participate. A national leadership group, composed of some of our best developed and most experienced comrades who can meet together day in and day out, must be created to help move the entire organization's mass work and political unity to a higher level.

Thus, a subcommittee of the National Central Committee, on the basis of discussion and consultation with others, and after trying to sum up the sentiment of the organization's members, has created such a national leadership body, to be known as the National Secretariat. This decision was made only after the subcommittee was certain that there was strong sentiment among the membership for establishing such a body, and only on the basis that the decision could be reversed if, through discussion in the various regions, we discovered that there is considerable opposition to it which wasn't apparent earlier. The subcommittee decided to cancel a scheduled NCC meeting at which the question of a National Secretariat would have been taken up. This was done partially because of the tremendous financial and security problems involved, but principally because an NCC meeting, devoted basically to setting up a national leadership body which everyone agrees is essential, seems unnecessary--especially when you take the financial and security problems into account. Instead, the subcommittee made the decision to set up the National Secretariat and is asking all regional leadership bodies and the entire membership to discuss it. Suggestions on how the National Secretariat can best carry out its responsibilities, as well as criticisms of how the national leadership has functioned up until now, are strongly requested.

As for the National Secretariat's tasks, it has already begun to do several things. For the immediate period, there are two principal tasks: (1) launching and coordinating a nationwide \$30,000 fund-raising drive; (2) getting out Red Papers 4, 5, 6. The importance of the fund-raising drive cannot be stressed enough. The \$30,000 goal represents a fairly careful estimate of what the Secretariat will require for its first year of work. Without the money, there cannot be an effective national leadership. Major expenses include money for the Secretariat members to live on (it is strongly hoped that the Secretariat members can be fully supported so they can devote all their time to what has to be done), travel expenses, three and perhaps four Red Papers (if sold properly, Red Papers should pay for themselves, but there is a considerable time lag), and starting a national newspaper. A separate report on the fund-raising drive, due to begin around mid-January and end around mid-April, will be out soon.

Concerning Red Papers, the present perspective is to get out RP 4 (the major documents, plus an introduction, coming out of last year's struggle and split) and RP 5 (either on the national question, including articles on practice, or on our mass work around our united front strategy, including a major theoretical article) within the next 3-4 months, and for RP 6 (the national question or the united front work, whichever is not in RP 5) to come out approximately 3-4 months after that. Plans are already underway on all three and there will be further reports on their progress. There also will be further information soon on the national newspaper, which is presently just a general idea (i.e., a small newspaper with a modest circulation, devoted primarily to summing up the organization's mass work in a popular style and analysis by the organization of the important political and theoretical questions confronting the revolutionary movement.) In addition, the Secretariat will soon devise a system of work reports which will serve the dual purpose of helping the organization to sum up our work in a scientific way and of providing the basis for mass work articles for the national newspaper. Finally, the Secretariat is investigating the possibility of the organization starting a national campaign, either around a particular industry or perhaps around a specific area of work (e.g., UWOC)

We hope this short report gives everyone a clear idea of why the National Secretariat has been set up, of why it was set up by a subcommittee of the NCC rather than by the NCC itself, and of what some of the Secretariat's initial tasks include. This report, and other information which members of the NCC subcommittee can provide, should be carefully discussed and evaluated. We are confident that the creation of a National Secretariat will help the organization to better carry out its revolutionary tasks and its responsibilities to the American and world's working people.