

NWROC's 'Action' vs. Workers' Revolution

by Eric Nacar

The National Women's Rights Organizing Coalition, led by the Revolutionary Workers League, prides itself on its action-oriented militancy. The LRP has joined with NWROC in abortion clinic defense actions (see *PR* 42). NWROC/RWL, however, is not a working-class revolutionary organization but the extreme left-wing of the radical middle-class movement. That makes it a roadblock to building a real communist party and the movement that can defeat fascism.

Their role surfaced during the anti-fascist mobilization near New Hope, Pennsylvania, on November 6. The Nazi "Nationalist Party" and some Klansmen had planned an anti-gay march through New Hope, a resort town with large gay patronage. Public outcry and plans for counterdemonstrations forced the government to confine the 60 or so fascists to an isolated rally miles from town — protected by 700 state troopers. Some 300 opponents, including an LRP contingent, showed up to confront the fascists, but the cops kept us away. We thus spent most of our time picketing and chanting.

NWROC/RWL, with the largest single contingent, at times dominated the counter-rally. Their favorite chant was, "Stop the Nazis, Stop the Klan: Only Militant Action Can!"

This slogan is completely false. The LRP comrades at the demonstration chanted instead, "Stop the Nazis, Stop the Klan: *Workers' Revolution* Can!" — the correct approach to stopping fascism. Obviously, militant action is necessary: pacifism and electoralism are no threat to the fascist goons. But capitalism is a decaying system that breeds fascism; even if we stop the small fascist forces today through direct action, capitalism itself will promote the growth of larger fascist forces in the future. Only the overthrow of capitalism by the workers' socialist revolution can end the fascist threat once and for all.

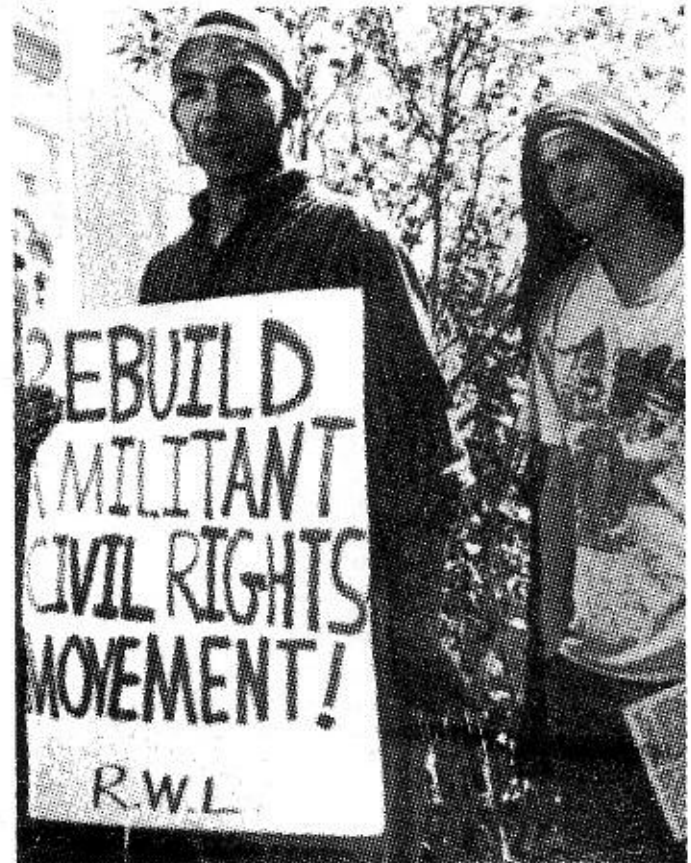
Without a revolutionary message, repeated "militant action" that doesn't confront the capitalist system will just wear out the working class. By seeming to keep society in constant disorder with no outcome, this strategy plays into the hands of the fascists. They can appeal to the desires of some middle-class and working-class people for order. If the working class doesn't pose a solid revolutionary alternative to fascism, eventually it will be seen as part of the problem. The *real* solution is the workers' order: communist revolution.

When we argued with RWL supporters that only communist revolution could stop fascism, they replied, "Of course, we know that!" Then why not say so, instead of spreading dangerous and self-defeating illusions? The reason is the *middle-class sectoralism* of the RWL. They orient to radicalizing, often middle-class students. Indeed, many such people can become excellent revolutionaries. The problem is *how* to orient to these layers: the RWL chooses to organizing them around illusions.

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY VS. REFORMIST FRONT

The RWL's argument for its approach is the same tired old opportunism that every centrist puts forward. Good fighters mostly aren't revolutionaries yet, so revolutionaries have to work with them around demands they agree with — non-revolutionary demands — and postpone pushing communist ideas to the forefront. For genuine Trotskyists, in contrast, there is no conflict between full participation in genuine united fronts, including small actions like the New Hope mobilization, and openly raising communist politics.

The RWL view is exactly wrong. It is true both that winning people to communism usually takes a long collaboration, and that communists fight for immediate victories. But we always and everywhere say and fight to demonstrate that lasting victories are no longer possible under imperialist capitalism. The vanguard of the working class needs to use



When militants try forward motion, pseudo-red RWL pushes reverse gear.

every struggle, no matter how partial, and every advance, no matter how small, to convince our fellow workers and youth of the need for socialist revolution. We act jointly in the struggle with all who want to fight: but our main purpose at all times is to win the best elements to the *revolutionary party*, without which the working class cannot train itself to seize power and end capitalist oppression.

The RWL, in contrast, devotes most of its efforts to building NWROC and putting forward a reformist program. Such an approach leads the RWL into the same dishonest political conduct as everyone else who has tried it.

Endless mass militancy is impossible, especially now, when far left forces are tiny. In desperation, NWROC/RWL lies to puff itself up. A brochure for its December conference blatantly claims that "NWROC busted up 'Gay Bash '93,' a KKK/Nazi attempt to celebrate violence against lesbians and gay men in New Hope, Pennsylvania."

This didn't happen and everybody who was there knows it. No organization can tell such a whopper without proving that it is more interested in self-aggrandizement than "saying what is" to the working class. NWROC/RWL cannot be trusted to lead workers anywhere, least of all to revolution. ●