

# WORKERS' POWER

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## UNIONS CALL WASHINGTON RALLY

The Industrial Union Department (IUD) of the AFL-CIO is calling a major jobs rally in Washington, D.C. Saturday, April 26. It may be the biggest demonstration in the nation's capital since the civil rights March on Washington in 1963.

Fifty-eight unions with a total of six million members are affiliated with the Industrial Union Department. All of these unions reportedly voted for the rally.

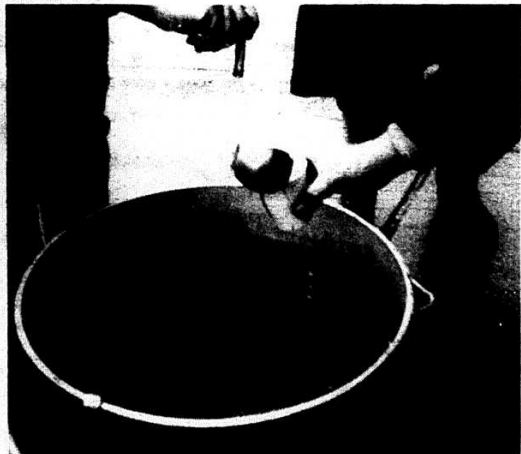
But George Meany has refused to endorse it. He recently told reporters he was opposed to demonstrations in Washington because "It's a very affluent city and it affects the demonstrators adversely . . . we are not going to man the barricades yet."

Some of the union leaders participating in the demonstration are

concerned about such things as well. The rally site at Kennedy Stadium was chosen because of fear that a march would be much harder to control.

So while union leaders are beginning to take some slow, hesitant action on the question of jobs, they've still got one eye looking cautiously back over their shoulders at the rank and file. They are very much afraid of kicking off a movement they won't be able to control.

But the rally in Washington represents an important step in the right direction. It provides an opportunity to give national focus to the fight for jobs. Every rank and file militant should begin immediately building for it. Both working and unemployed trade unionists should be urged to go to Washington. □



Sampling the soup from kettle provided by United National Caucus (UAW) to dramatize end of SUB for many....

## American Imperialism Defeated In Indochina



Ammunition dump at Phnom Penh airport in flames after a rocket attack by the national liberation forces in Cambodia. The U.S. is pouring in ammunition via a massive airlift to keep the puppet regime alive a few months longer.

The last few weeks have brought major defeats for American imperialism in Southeast Asia. For coverage of the war and analysis of why the South Vietnamese and Cambodian regimes are collapsing, see page 4.

## Auto Militants Plan April 3 Actions

The Chrysler SUB fund will be exhausted by the first week in April.

There is no way that the UAW leadership can hide this fact. The checks won't be in the mail. Last year's smugness has turned to fatalism.

While Woodcock and Fraser wait for the "friends of labor" in Congress to pass the legislation which is supposed to bring us out of recession, over 11,000 GM workers have exhausted their benefits.

The GM SUB fund will be busted by mid-May. The Chrysler fund has got about a week left. The Ford fund could make it till June.

### APRIL DEMOS

Laid off UAW members can't afford Fraser's fatalism. They are

### "Proud . . . And Rightly So"

**"We are proud and rightly so of the job protection we have negotiated in our major contracts. SUB provides an important cushion for many workers."**

—Leonard Woodcock, UAW President, 1974

**"There isn't any viable alternative really. Workers will not get SUB and they'll have to survive on unemployment compensation which is totally inadequate."**

—Doug Fraser, Chairman UAW Chrysler Dept., 1975

finding a "viable alternative" that Fraser never dreamed of. It's called struggle.

During the first week in April rank and file auto workers organized in the United National Caucus will be holding a series of demon-

strations in Flint, Northern New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Detroit.

The theme of these demonstrations will be: 1) Jobs for All through a short work week at full pay and a mass program of public works. 2) Guarantee the SUB. The

fund must be strengthened from the corporations' assets.

These are not just demands. They are necessities, and the whole UAW must be mobilized for this fight.

As *Hard Times*, the UNC unemployed newsletter put it, "The UNC is calling on the UAW leadership to support this program. We demand that our leaders organize to mobilize the entire membership of the UAW, working people in other unions, the unorganized, welfare recipients, etc. to fight back."

"Our leadership has so far been reluctant to act. But unless we do mobilize, the needs of the corporations will always come first."

In Detroit, the demonstration will begin at Solidarity House, UAW International headquarters.

The UAW leadership will be called on the join the demonstration as it moves on to Jefferson Assembly.

### KEEP JEFFERSON OPEN!

This plant is threatened with permanent closing. The demonstration will meet the Jefferson workforce as they leave the plant at the end of the shift, and hold a rally.

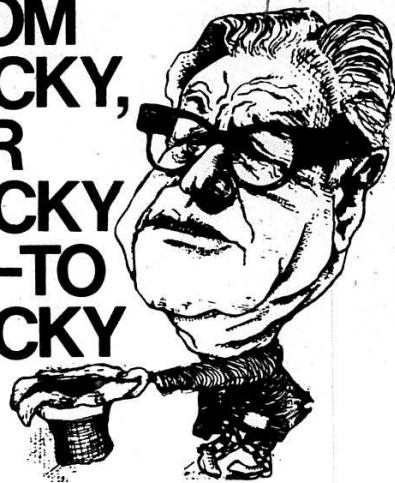
These demonstrations are a first for the rank and file movement in the UAW. Never before has a series of coordinated demonstrations been held.

They will not be massive, but each will be a beginning. Fraser may not see it yet, but the UAW rank and file is building a "viable alternative." □

Moe Orlanski



FROM  
ROCKY,  
FOR  
ROCKY  
-TO  
ROCKY



# Supermarkets Fix Prices At Secret Meetings

In the mid 60's, meetings of representatives of the nations' largest supermarket chains were held across the country. The meetings, called "meat clinics," were sponsored by the National Association of Food Chains (the NAFC).

Their purpose was to fix meat prices. And because that practice is supposedly illegal—although rarely prosecuted—the meetings were secret.

Each participating chain and its representatives were promised anonymity. Participants were identified only by a colored badge which represented an unspecified store.

If he spoke during a meeting, a participant would be referred to as a member of, for instance, "the red-striped badge group."

The system was developed, according to an NAFC spokesman, "for the purpose of encouraging people to speak out and not hold back."

Which they did.

"It is about time we stopped passing along the savings in distribution costs to the customer. I think we ought to keep some of it for ourselves," said one color-coded supermarket man.

"The group seemed in general agreement with this thought," noted the minutes of the meeting.

## SET PRICES

The meetings resolved to "set prices they pay for beef at a low level and the prices they charge customers... at a high level."

Stores involved in the meetings included A&P, Kroger, and Safeway.

The decision to keep prices high represents the successful end of a campaign begun long ago to win a monopoly on food sales for the chains. Because of volume buying and centralization, chain stores were able to provide food at cheaper prices than small individually owned grocery stores.

Although the small neighborhood store was generally more convenient and personable than far-away self-service supermarkets, they could not compete with the cheaper prices of the chain stores.

By the 60's the supermarket totally dominated the American retail food buying. The chains were then able to consolidate and determine prices in a now relatively non-competitive market. The "meat clinics" were part of that process.



The result is that, today, chain store prices are no longer cheaper—but there is no alternative. The chain stores have successfully

"stopped passing along savings in distribution to the customer."

Another benefit of the free-enterprise system—we are told. □

Nelson Rockefeller likes to build things and he likes to make money. When he became Governor of New York State in 1959 he figured out a way to do these two things together.

He began dozens of minor and major construction projects: highways, bridges, universities, dormitories; he even attempted almost to rebuild Albany, the state capital, against the wishes of most of the residents.

All this building and rebuilding was financed by floating bonds passed by referendum by an unsuspecting public and backed by the "full faith and credit" of NY State.

These bonds were then bought up by the rich and powerful—Rocky and his friends—and slowly repaid at interest. That is called "having your cake and eating it, too."

At the same time, the sales of these bonds were administered by banks who were paid commissions for handling the sales. Many of the bonds were administered by the Chase Manhattan Bank (the Rockefeller bank) and other banks substantially controlled by Rockefeller.

That's called "having your cake and eating it too, and getting some more cake on the side."

By the mid 60's the bill for all that cake, plus interest, had gotten astronomical and referendum for new bond issues were defeated, by a public that had become less unsuspecting.

## NEW SCHEME

In 1968, Rocky came up with a new scheme to satisfy his likes—he launched the UDC (Urban Development Corporation).

The UDC is a giant state construction corporation, that builds and rebuilds whatever it wants.

UDC was authorized, by the state legislature, to raise up to \$2 billion by selling "moral obligation" bonds.

"Moral obligation" bonds do not have to be voted on, as do "full faith and credit." They therefore allow states to raise money for projects that the voters would vote down—given the opportunity.

"Moral obligation" bonds were thought up by John Mitchell and are now used widely by 30 states.

Today, the UDC is collapsing. It has undertaken 189 projects, completing only 79 and of those only four did not lose money.

In February, \$130 million in notes came due. UDC couldn't pay. And UDC's fiscal position was so precarious that new bonds—to cover the debt—could not be sold.

Since these bonds are not backed by the "full faith and credit" but by only the "moral obligation" of the State of New York—a highly dubious concept—it is not clear that they actually have to be paid, legally.

However, since they were put up for sale by the same interests that then bought them—you can be sure they will be paid.

## OBLIGATION?

The "moral obligation" behind them, in fact, is capitalist morality—which says that capitalists must be paid—even if the State of New York goes bust.

Shortly, another \$1.5 billion will be due on other "moral obligation" bonds floated by Rockefeller for other projects. That is the short term debt. The total long term debt, so far—including interest—comes to over \$6 billion.

New York's whole financial house of cards threatens to collapse.

At this point the debt is so great that for the State to continue functioning it must be able to continue borrowing from the banks. And the banks (remember the banks in New York are substantially controlled by the Rockefellers) will not lend unless the "moral obligation" bonds are a

paid. Current Governor Democrat Hugh Carey, has come up with a new agency to bail out the UDC and New York State. This new agency will act as a conduit for state subsidies of UDC of from \$20 to \$80 million, per year, for 40 years.

Which means that the taxes of working people—you and me—will continue to pay the interest and principal on bonds floated by Rockefeller, bought up by him and his friends and administered by his banks.

Very neatly done, Rocky. It is this skill that made him Vice President. □

## Capitalism: "The Only System"

# IT'S OFFICIAL...

It's official. CAPITALISM IS THE ONLY SYSTEM. That is, if you live in North Carolina.

Recently, the North Carolina Senate passed a bill instructing high school teachers to teach the virtues of the capitalist system, only, in all classes.

Speaking in defense of the bill, Ed Dowd, president of the Central Piedmont Industries (CPI), a businessmen's alliance, said:

"Free enterprise has made this country what it is, economically speaking... I think we should teach our children that this is THE system, rather than teaching it is an alternative and then allowing young minds to determine between it and other types of systems."

Senator William Mauney explained why.

"We need to educate our young people so they won't want to

nationalize our businesses."

One hundred and twenty years ago Southern states had another law on the books. These laws said that the virtues of the capitalist system could NOT be taught. They said that SLAVERY IS THE ONLY SYSTEM.

But laws excluding the possibility of capitalism did not prevent it from replacing slavery. And laws denying the possibility of socialism will not save capitalism either. □

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# Companies Demand Pay Cuts - Workers Must Fight Back

by Jack Trautman

As the current depression deepens and persists, so does the toll it takes.

Already real wages—what you can buy for your dollar—have dropped dramatically.

By 1974 real wages had fallen to the level they had been in 1964. In a few years time the capitalist system had managed to wipe out the hard fought gains of a decade. Now they are asking for an outright wage cut.

"The question was do we take people from Vernor's and put them among the unemployed at Christmas?" said the company's Vice-President. The choice offered was a four-day work week with a 20% cut in pay.

That is, the workers could choose to maintain their wage levels and screw their fellow workers. They chose to act in solidarity and keep all the workers on. The union leaders didn't utter a peep of opposition—rather, they encouraged the pay cut.

For its part the company gets a cut in costs plus the increased vigor of people who are working only four days rather than five. They are less tired and thus can create more output per hour. A unit chairman for the Washington Star-News whose employees also voted for a

four-day week and a 20% pay cut stated gleefully: "The stunningly large vote in favor of the four-day week is proof that our members are confident they can accomplish in four days what others had five to do." The implication for profits are clear.

By using the depression, the city got concessions which ordinarily would have met with serious opposition.

The astute labor leaders have been preventing bosses from cutting out workers guts by handing over bits and pieces of stomachs, windpipes, small and large intestines and various other paraphernalia.

## GROWING TREND

What started as an isolated incident here and there is turning into a small movement as the bosses see they can get away with it.

Pilots at Pan-American took an 11% pay cut, 1,000 employees of Great Lakes Express, a large trucking company, took a 20% pay cut—the Teamsters Union stayed mum.

Construction workers along the Ohio-Pennsylvania border took a \$1.50 an hour cut.

Probably the largest set of cuts were among New York City employees. The mayor threatened

massive layoffs. In response the unions offered to give up large amounts of their fringe benefits instead.

## WORKERS' SOLUTION

They do this instead of fighting for what the situation obviously cries out for: A shorter work week at full pay.

Companies that can't afford this should be nationalized without compensation under workers' control. That is the workers' solution to layoffs.

Instead, the union bureaucracy bury their heads in the sand or come up with alternative ways to screw the workers. When they

notice proposals such as ours they laugh at them as being "unrealistic." How realistic are their ideas?

Workers on the Rock Island Railroad Line took a pay cut of 10% with the collusion of their union. It was to be a "loan" to be repaid when the railroad saw better times.

But the railroad went bankrupt. The jobs are gone and the "loaned" money went down the drain with the company.

## MEANY LOBBIES

George Meany has, in fact, nominally come out for a shorter work week. He is lobbying in Congress to begin overtime pay at 35 hours. That is a start.

But it won't be won by lobbying behind corridor doors in Washington.

Huge demonstrations, strikes, and factory occupations are needed to win this at a time when companies are trying to get wage cuts.

The labor bureaucrats are incapable of organizing such efforts. They talk but the won't act.

The bureaucrats' real ace is the hope that the depression will soon pass and things will return to "normal." What they don't realize—but workers must—is that capitalist crisis is here to stay. It will either produce more and more misery for workers, or workers will get rid of capitalism.

## THE ISSUE IS SAFETY

# Wildcats Hit Ohio Mines

by Cal Williams

Wildcat strikes have again crippled coal production in the Ohio Valley. The most recent dispute, which involves job assignments and safety, has virtually stopped mining in the North American Coal Company's (NACCO) Central Division.

The strike began in the first week in March, when NACCO attempted to remove helpers from roof bolters and continuous mining machines at its Powhatan Point mines.

Nearly all the Powhatan miners immediately walked out. Since then roving pickets have spread the strike up and down the river in both Ohio and West Virginia.

On Friday, March 21, a UMWA District 6 spokesman said that there were at least 15 mines closed by pickets in District 6 and that more than 6,000 miners were out.

In addition to the NACCO mines, pickets had turned back miners at Consol's (Consolidation Coal) Shoemaker, Ireland and McElroy mines in West Virginia, as well as at mines operated by the Southern Coal Company in Meigs County, Ohio.

The issue of the Powhatan wildcat is one of job classification and safety. The contract calls for full-time helpers to assist continuous operating machines and roof bolters.

By assigning the helper to other jobs, the miners believed the company was trying to make the helper another general laborer. This policy would undermine an important step toward mine safety.

The Powhatan miners insisted that the helper remain at the machine "at all times it is in operation."

Once the wildcats began, both

the company and the UMWA district officials moved to have the issue taken to binding arbitration. In the meantime, John Guzek, the President of District 6, instructed the miners to return to work.

## ROVING PICKETS

The rank and file, however, were not convinced. In fact it is since arbitration began that the roving pickets have been most active.

And while most miners agree with Guzek that they can expect a favorable decision, few go along with his insistence that the union abide if the decision goes with the company.

The rank and file's demand for safe mines has not diminished in the time since the national strike, and most feel the issue of helpers is too important to drop.

The Powhatan wildcat is just one of many local disputes which have jolted the "peace" that followed November's national strike. In February, another wildcat all but closed down NACCO in Eastern Ohio, when a dispute over discharges at Valley Camp Short Creek mine No. 1 also led to a strike and then roving pickets.

These strikes are another indication that the coal operators can expect nothing but trouble from the nation's rank and file miners. While many were deeply disillusioned with Arnold Miller and the contract he negotiated, this has done nothing to dampen their militancy.

If anything, dissatisfaction with the union's leadership may well have strengthened the miners' determination to carry on the fight, for now at the local level. □



Miners struck for safety last November...but now many are out again for the same reason

## STEEL

# Dues Protest Grows

by Vince McDougal

CLEVELAND—Over 600 local unions of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) have sent resolutions to the International calling for a rollback in dues.

The resolutions are part of a campaign to call a special USWA convention to deal with the issue. Under the union's constitution, if 25% of all locals send in resolutions to the International, a special convention must be called. This means about 1400 locals must act.

Most of the 600 locals have also passed resolutions calling for a rollback of the top officers' salaries. When dues were increased last fall, USWA officers got raises ranging from 40% for district directors (to \$35,000) to 25% for USWA President I.W. Abel (to \$75,000).

Abel doesn't think much of the campaign for a special convention. On March 7, he met with several local presidents and told them the union needs to go "first class." Therefore, he said, he is against any lowering of dues.

Abel told the local presidents only 110 locals had sent in resolutions. He said he would do nothing to help them, and would

call a special convention only if they could get the necessary resolutions on their own.

## SADLOWSKI

The campaign for the dues repeal was initiated by Ed Sadlowski, newly elected director of the union's district 31 (Chicago-Gary). Sadlowski was elected against the wishes of the Abel machine, and is a possible candidate for USWA President in 1977. The drive to lower the dues is part of Sadlowski's effort to build a campaign organization.

Contrary to what Abel says, Sadlowski's office reports that over 600 locals have passed resolutions calling for lowering of dues. This indicates that there is a massive amount of opposition to the top leadership within the USWA.

Militants throughout the union should support the campaign to roll back the dues. If the membership can turn the International around on this issue, it will be a big step in defeating the idea that members are powerless.

## OPPORTUNISTS

But there are certain dangers inherent in this campaign. It will

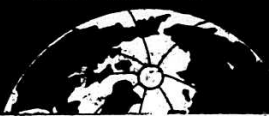
attract all sorts of opportunists and union politicians who want to jump on a popular bandwagon. This is no doubt what Ed Sadlowski has in mind—he thinks it may be a quick way to build his position in the union without taking on any of the tough issues in the USWA.

While the dues question is a highly popular one, there are far more important issues to deal with. The economy is collapsing and layoffs are beginning to hit the steel mills. Steel workers are still saddled with the no-strike deal. And black and minority steel workers are still in a second class position despite all the ballyhoo around the Consent Decree.

If left to the office-seekers, a campaign to roll back dues could be a means through which action on these more important questions is choked off. Ed Sadlowski is quite capable of running a campaign for USWA President which deals primarily with the small questions like dues rather than the critical ones like the no-strike deal.

What is needed is a campaign to fundamentally change the union—a campaign which takes on the no-strike deal, the Consent Decree, and unemployment as well as the questions of dues and officers' salaries. □

# WORLD IN CRISIS



## VIETNAM, CAMBODIA...

# U.S. Dominoes Fall In Southeast Asia

In 1968, 500,000 American troops were stationed in Vietnam, attempting to crush about half as many National Liberation Front and North Vietnamese troops.

They were trying to prop up a puppet regime in Saigon, a regime so isolated that without massive US intervention it would have collapsed in 1964.

Many of the most brutal battles involving American troops were fought in the provinces of the Central Highlands. Of the nearly 50,000 American troops who died in the war, many fell in the battles

An almost identical process is occurring in Cambodia. There, the degree of collapse is even greater, and the battle has reached the approaches of the capital.

Still, this incredible war is not over. Washington still stands behind its front men in Saigon and Phnom Penh. Gerald Ford has even demanded hundreds of millions more to keep these puppets in power.

### MORE U.S. AID?

Even more incredible, there is still a good chance that this "aid"

to continuing the war is so overwhelming in this country.

### "HUMANITARIAN"

Much of Washington's aid to prop up the Saigon and Phnom Penh regimes goes under the heading of "humanitarian" aid for the starving and dying.

Most of it never reaches them—and it isn't intended to. It goes to the generals to be sold on the black market, while the refugees starve to death and the soldiers die of infections.



Cambodian national liberation forces are inflicting a massive defeat on U.S. imperialism

for cities like Hue and Pleiku, and the hundreds of unnamed hills which they stormed with hundreds of losses—only to abandon weeks or months later.

They died, along with hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese, because a rotting imperialist system would stop at nothing to keep itself in power.

### ABANDONED

Seven years later, the same regime in Saigon has abandoned the Central Highlands provinces completely—forever. They will never be recovered.

Saigon had no choice but to give up this crucial region. In all probability, the signal to do so came from Washington. In a matter of months, or sooner, Saigon's Army would have simply dissolved into nothing.

US imperialism has suffered a crushing setback in Vietnam. Its 500,000 troops and billions in weapons and ammunition poured into South Vietnam could not cover up, or prevent, the decay of this regime and the collapse of its control over the country.

to continue the hopeless slaughter may be voted. Democratic Senate leader Mike Mansfield has proposed that the US topple Cambodia's Lon Nol and replace him with a less repulsive front man.

The hint is that if this is done, the Democrats will appropriate at least the \$82 million "compromise" military aid—and probably more than that for the next fiscal year.

Important House and Senate Committees are already approving the \$82 million for this year.

The politics of these maneuvers are simple. The US government has given up any hope of victory in Vietnam and Cambodia. It knows their final collapse is inevitable.

But Gerald Ford, Henry Kissinger and Mansfield all are anxious to prove that US imperialism still stands by its friends and puppets.

The thousands of dead, the tens of thousands of civilian refugees who will be created as the war continues are simply the cannon fodder to prove that Washington's commitment to capitalist oppression is still sound.

If in the end Congress refuses the aid, it will be because opposi-

tion to continuing the war is so overwhelming in this country.

As these governments go down, they are dragging hundreds of thousands of new victims down with them.

The massive victories being won by North Vietnam, PRG and Khmer Rouge forces in Vietnam and Cambodia are proof that the anti-war movement in this country was correct when it said that the people of those nations supported the liberation forces.

By fighting for total unconditional US withdrawal, it was fighting for the real interests of the American people as well as the Vietnamese.

There can never be an end to this war until the US and its kept politicians and generals are driven out completely. The victories being won by the PRG, Khmer Rouge and North Vietnam are victories of national liberation against imperialism.

They will not bring socialism—far from it.

But their victory will mean a huge defeat for US imperialism and the end of the slaughter the US has carried out. That also means a victory for American working people—and it is long overdue. □

# Portugal:

# More Upheaval Ahead

Workers of Portugal want revolution, and they are willing to fight for it.

From January 1 to the second week in February, there were more strikes and factory occupations in Portugal than during the last four months of 1974 put together. In one week alone there were over 250 officially recorded strikes.

In December, the bosses' press was writing that "the initial burst of strikes, sit-ins and workers' occupations has largely evaporated." Today, the bosses themselves are threatened with destruction.

Slogans raised by workers from one factory, Eurofil, were typical: "Nationalization yes, layoffs no." "Down with capitalist exploitation." "One solution—control over production." "Those who created the crisis must pay for it." "Nationalization yes, negotiations no."

### LAYOFFS

Many of the strikes and plant occupations are over mass layoffs. Aside from the few huge monopolies and multinational corporations at the top, most businesses in Portugal are tiny companies and shops which survive by paying their workers nearly starvation wages.

No longer able to stay in business, many of these concerns are trying to throw their workers out on the streets. Workers are taking them over, often continuing production themselves. They are also throwing out factory managers and employers for fascist sympathies and mismanagement.

The M.P. Roldao glass factory was seized by the workers February 2 after a three-week strike. They elected a seven-member commission that took over management of the enterprise.

In the Portugalia dye works, management offered workers "participation" instead of their minimum wage demand.

With Spinola's right wing trying to re-take power through a military coup, Portuguese workers understand that the only way out of this revolutionary crisis is social revolution—or fascism.

When the government nationalized the banks and insurance companies following March 12, thousands of workers mobilized under CP banners to support the move. The bank workers, under firm CP leadership and control, participated in the takeover.

A representative of a workers' council at Plessey pledged, "We are determined to hold onto our new world."

In the Southern rural area, the Alentejo, farmworkers have been taking over the land of the large estates. Like many factories, the Alentejo has become a stronghold of the Portuguese Communist Party.

When the government nationalized the banks and insurance companies following March 12, thousands of workers mobilized under CP banners to support the move. The bank workers, under firm CP leadership and control, participated in the takeover.

### WHOSE REVOLUTION?

Portugal's social revolution is beginning.

The question now is, whose revolution will it turn out to be? Will the Portuguese workers, who are mobilizing and fighting for this revolution, be the class which winds up in power?

Will there be a socialist revolution in which Portuguese workers take power through their own workers' councils, take control of the society and reorganize it for themselves?

A revolution of this kind, a workers' revolution, is indeed possible. There is still time to organize and struggle for it. But there is another very strong possibility—that the heroic revolutionary workers of Portugal will be used as the mass base for the Communist Party coming to power.

The coming months will be a period of turmoil. There is still the threat of a successful right wing coup, as happened in Chile just over a year ago.

### LIKE CHILE?

However, there are crucial differences between Portugal and Chile. In Portugal, a wing of the armed forces is actually in alliance with the Communist Party.

It will not intervene to save the rule of capital, as in Chile—rather it is committed, along with the CP, to strip away the property, and profits and the power of the Portuguese capitalists.

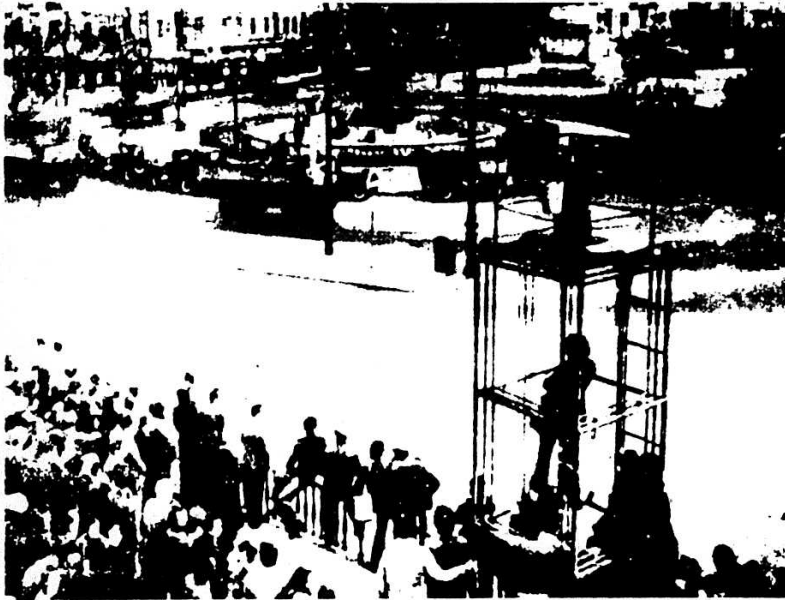
This process is already beginning. In Chile, while some foreign corporations were taken over, the property of the native Chilean capitalists was not touched while



Alvaro Cunhal, general secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party

# From Coup To Revolution

## AFTER MAR. 12: BOSSES ON THE RUN



Portuguese troops seal off Lisbon's Rossio Square against left-wing demonstrators

the government of Salvador Allende was in power.

In Portugal today, it is the domestic banks and monopolies that are being seized by the government.

Today, in fact, there is a very strong chance of the CP aiming for power. If it succeeds, there would be a social transformation in Portugal—but it would be far from a victory for the workers. It would mean the creation of a bureaucratic class society like Eastern Europe.

### REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

There is no reason, however, why either fascist counterrevolution or the Communist Party bureaucracy must win the struggle in Portugal.

A revolutionary party willing to fight for the formation of workers' councils, for armed insurrection by these workers' councils, for workers' democracy and the socialist transformation of society could dislodge the Communist Party's hold over the working class and derail its drive for power.

A socialist revolution would also mean that the capitalists' power and property would be taken away

—but by the mass organizations of workers' democracy.

And it would be the workers, not a new ruling class, that would get the benefits.

The critical problem is that a revolutionary party is needed to lead this—and there is very little time left to build one.

### POWER DIVIDED

Who holds power in Portugal today? The question is very complicated, because there is no single class that is in control.

The capitalists still have most of the means of production. Though their grip is slipping, they still have the ability to organize depression and a civil war.

The CP and its military allies are taking over the state apparatus, the army and police. Their aim is to nationalize the economy from above, without workers' control—as they have just done in the banks and insurance companies—and with the workers' organizations in the factories kept far away from the real power.

However, Portuguese workers are beginning to develop their own kind of power. In the factory occupations, in the workers' com-

missions which bring together elected delegates from many different plants, workers are taking control over their immediate lives.

They are getting a glimpse of how they can take things over and run them for themselves.

If this workers' control in the factories is to be maintained, it must become a struggle for workers' power over the state. If the working class fails to destroy the existing state machinery, that machinery will crush it.

One example of where this has already occurred is in the chemical workers' union, where the CP-MFA government nullified a left-wing victory against CP candidates and seized the union headquarters by force.

### REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

There is a revolutionary left in Portugal—much stronger, in fact, than existed in Chile. Nine left-wing groups were each able to get 5000 signatures of members needed to get on the ballot (two of these have now been banned).

The strength of these groups is in the working class. Their size, put together, indicates the existence of a tremendous revolutionary current.

Revolutionary groups have won elections running against the CP in unions. They have built a base in the workers' councils, and through them mobilized tens of thousands of workers in demonstrations against CP orders.

Against a revolutionary party with a clear program, the fight for socialist revolution, could grow very rapidly.

However, the revolutionary groups up to now have remained fragmented and politically unclear. While opposing the CP they have not put forward a clear alternative to the CP's bureaucratic strategy.

If the goal of workers' revolution is to be achieved, a unified revolutionary party to spread the factory seizures, to build workers' councils and lead the fight for power must be built. And it must be built very quickly.

On March 12th, right-wing Generals launched an unsuccessful coup against the existing government. Their attempt marks a turning point. The situation in Portugal is now becoming one of revolutionary crisis.

The military government dominated by the Armed Forces Movement has clamped tight control on political and economic life.

The country's banks and insurance companies have been taken over. This will probably be the first step toward sweeping nationalizations throughout the economy.

### GENERALS FLEE

Politicians and generals who were involved in or would have supported the right-wing takeover have fled or been arrested.

Those arrested include members of Portugal's most powerful families, the Champalimauds, de Melos, and others. They are the Rockefellerers, Mellons and Morgans of Portugal.

It is not surprising that the super-rich are being rounded up. The unsuccessful coup was aimed at restoring them to power. Had it succeeded, there would have begun a brutal drive to smash the Portuguese workers' movement and murder its leaders.

The big-business Christian Democratic Party has been banned from the scheduled April election. The other right wing parties are under guard and in disarray.

It is not only the right wing and the capitalists, however, who are being suppressed by the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) government and its allies in the Communist Party. Several organizations of the revolutionary left are also banned.

### WHOSE SIDE?

The attempted coup proved, once and for all, exactly where the forces of big business in Portugal stand.

Just one year ago, it was the big monopolies in Portugal which helped underwrite the April coup against the old fascist regime. Their champion was General Antonio de Spínola.

The capitalists backed Spínola in order to head off the mass upheaval they knew was coming. It didn't work.

Spínola was the capitalists' candidate to unite Portugal and guide it toward a well-ordered, stable "democratic system." But when the capitalists' class interests were called into question by sections of the new government, they threw all the fine democratic phrases and ideas out the window.

This same Antonio de Spínola was the man who tried to organize the right-wing attempt of March 12. Following its defeat, he fled to Spain and then Brazil. There, he is now re-united with his old friend Marcello Caetano, the fascist dictator he replaced last April.

The capitalists whose interests Spínola championed are not yet smashed. But they know they are in very serious danger.

Right now, they still have most of their factories—and their international connections with the giant multinational corporations, with European capital, with Washington and the CIA.

The forces of big business will still make a showing in the elections. But their real strategy will be to use the time and the power they have left to fight for foreign intervention, counterrevolution and a return to fascism. In the weeks immediately pre-

ceding March 12, the element within the MFA friendly to the CI appeared to be losing support. The so-called "moderate" right wing officers friendly to Spínola or President Costa Gomes were preparing their own takeover, from within the MFA. But the attempted coup sharply reversed this.

### THE ROAD AHEAD

The radical officers have now established a military "Supreme Council of the Revolution." It has pledged to continue itself permanently and to exercise veto power over the results of the elections.

The Armed Forces Movement now speaks in very radical terms of "putting the economy completely at the service of the people." Premier Vasco de Gonalves proclaimed the nationalization of the banks and insurance companies following March 12 as "the most revolutionary measure ever carried out in Portugal."

Yet despite its enormous strength, the position of the military regime remains precarious. Its power is not yet secure, and it faces dangerous threats from several directions.

### THE NEXT ROUND?

March 12 has drawn a line of blood between the government and the big capitalists. With their backs to the wall, the monopolies will wage a bitter war for survival.

This will include plunging Portugal into economic chaos. Big business will stop investment. Portugal will be thrown into depression.

An even more immediate threat to the MFA regime is that they are still only a minority within the Army itself. Though right wing forces there are temporarily routed, the battle to control the Army will grow more intense.

However, a massive political shift is now taking place. Tens or even hundreds of thousands of people are now streaming into the Communist Party of Portugal. It is now the only political force in the country with power and initiative.

The masses now joining the CP are not, by any means, all workers. It is almost certain that they include masses of people from the urban lower-middle class, including civil servants and technicians.

These people see the CP as their future. Portuguese capitalism has ruined the country. Its colonial wars in Africa drained the country, ruined all businesses except the largest monopolies, made the lower middle classes cannon fodder for the Army, and created a stagnant society in which there was no future for them anywhere.

### MFA BASE

These were the social layers who made up the base for the radicals in the Armed Forces Movement. Those inside the Army were the first to become radicalized.

These people are not necessarily tied to capitalism, which they see in Portugal offers them no hope—and the Communist Party offers them a future with some power and privileges, especially for those in the state machinery.

Portugal today is exploding. The right is being smashed, workers are seizing factories, and a massive economic slump is looming. As a result of the deepening economic crisis, the Communist Party is growing by leaps and bounds.

What happens in the next few months, or possibly even weeks, will be decisive.



# labor notes

by Jim Woodward

STRIKE FOR JUSTICE



Dock workers on the west coast have voted down their new contract. They objected to inadequate funding of a pay-guarantee plan, insufficient personnel on certain jobs, and the elimination of a cost-of-living provision. The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (the ILWU) will resume negotiations next month. The contract does not expire until June 30.

While rank and file longshoremen were voting down their new contract, ILWU President Harry Bridges was playing scab. "Hang in there, the first three months are the worst," Bridges told striking ILWU office workers as he crossed their picket lines. The office workers are supported by ILWU pensioners, who have joined their picket lines. "Harry made it a point to go through our lines and every local office yesterday," one striker reported.

Two years ago a federal judge made headlines by declaring Detroit Edison guilty of racial discrimination and ordering the company to pay black workers \$4 million in damages. But an appeals court—which corrects the "errors" of lower courts—has changed most of that. The appeals court said Detroit Edison was indeed guilty of discrimination, but it wasn't intentional or malicious so the company will have to pay only a fraction of the \$4 million. Some people might wonder, however, how a company managed to have a workforce only 8% black in city that's 50% black if it wasn't intentional.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers union has called for a cut in the work week to 35 hours with no loss of pay. The union's general executive board said, "Legislation to reduce the work week to 35 hours without a reduction in pay is an essential part of any realistic attack on the unemployment problem."

A meeting of the Maryland—District of Columbia AFL-CIO unanimously passed a resolution March 3rd asking the national AFL-CIO to "create a mass demonstration in Washington" to fight the effects of the economic crisis.

Auto workers in Germany are facing the same problems US workers face: layoffs and plant closings. In Neckarsulm, a town of 22,000, Volkswagen plans to close an assembly plant. Fifteen thousand persons joined a protest demonstration in the town March 3rd.

Since February 1, the Air Lines Pilots Association has refused to permit most hazardous cargo on passenger flights. The pilots acted after passengers on some flights had been contaminated by leaking radioactive material, and after the airlines and the government refused to do anything. Now the Civil Aeronautics Board, a government agency, is putting pressure on the airlines to break the pilots' hazardous-goods ban.

The Communications Workers (CWA) international executive board has a new policy on overtime: "The CWA demands, contracts notwithstanding, that there shall be no further overtime scheduled except for emergencies. Emergencies to be defined as fire, flood, disaster or other acts of God." Although the exceptions are too broad, the policy is a good first step in fighting layoffs. Now the problem is to get the CWA leadership to do something about its own policy.

The unemployed committee of Buick UAW Local 599 in Flint, Michigan has passed a resolution calling on UAW President Leonard Woodcock to set the date for a mass demonstration of the unemployed in Washington. The local said enough advance notice should be given to involve community groups. It called on the union to make provision for the unemployed to stay in Washington as long as is necessary to get a hearing.

At GM UAW Local 595 in Linden, New Jersey the local officials have been trying to deprive laid off workers of their membership in the union. The 1973 contract made provision for dues check-off on SUB payments. But the local leaders made no effort to get laid off workers to sign check-off authorization cards. Nor did they inform members on SUB of any other means of remaining current in union dues. Now they are trying to disenfranchise laid off members for non-payment. Members of the Linden Auto Workers caucus have been fighting this policy with apparent success.

The United Fund in Detroit is running a Union Counseling Course, a series of classes for union members dealing with various community services. The speaker at the first class was Willie Stovall of the UAW Community Services Department. He spoke on community services committees which function as unemployed committees in some UAW locals. Stovall noted that the economic crisis is creating severe hardship and warned that in many locals militants were taking over the community services committees.

Keeping the scabs happy department. Where there's a buck to be made, some capitalist will be going after it. An outfit called the Wackenhut Co. is taking advantage of one such opportunity. Wackenhut has set up Emergency Support Services, which might more appropriately be called Scab Support Service. The company earns its daily bread by contracting with various companies to supply food, bedding, and entertainment for strikebreakers. ESS has available portable kitchens, dormitories, laundries and bathrooms, ready for any emergency.

What's happening where you work? Send items for this column to Labor Editor, Workers' Power, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Michigan 48203. Or phone 313-869-3137.

# Secondary Boycott Stops Layoffs At Hiram Walker

NEW YORK—Workers at Hiram Walker distributors here are presently out of work, but not necessarily out of luck. The company closed down its distribution operation the week of March 10, throwing over 100 members of Teamsters Local 816 on the streets. But a secondary boycott of Hiram Walker products by other members of Local 816 may have crippled those plans.

Hiram Walker wants to liquidate its distribution operation in New York and give its products to two jobbers in the area, Star Liquor Dealers and Peerless Importers. Both are organized by Local 816.

In the past, Local 816 had a rare provision in its contract with New York's liquor wholesalers: industry

In response to these scab deliveries Local 816 workers at Star and Peerless walked out on strike in sympathy with the Hiram Walker workers. Usually, such sympathy

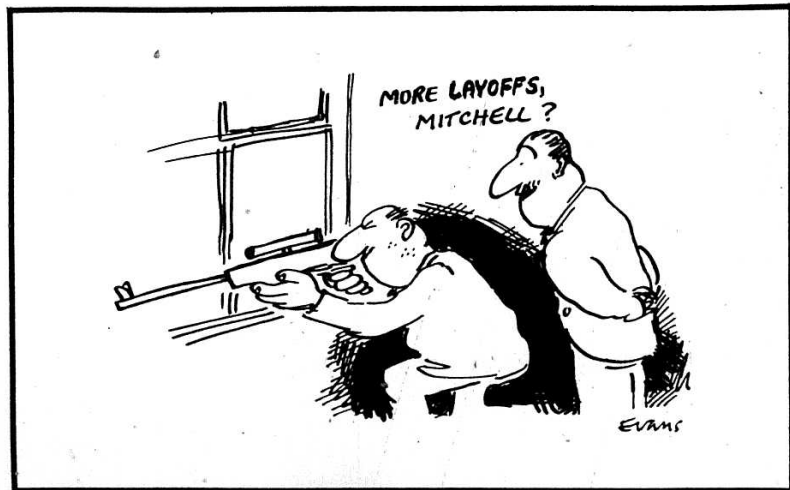
Local 816 had been negotiating for severance pay and for Hiram Walker workers to be hired at the bottom of the Star and Peerless seniority lists. But during these negotiations the two jobbers started delivering Hiram Walker products.

wide seniority. Some years ago, in a regrettable instance of division in the ranks, the practice of letting a laid off liquor worker keep his seniority elsewhere in the industry was voted out.

actions are discouraged by union leaders as illegal "secondary boycotts."

Local 816 has shown that regardless of unfair labor laws, Teamsters on different jobs can support one another effectively. Star and Peerless have stopped trying to distribute Hiram Walker products and the workers for these two companies have gone back to work.

Local 816 members are watching to make sure that some other outfit does not start delivering the scab products. With deliveries of Hiram Walker products at a standstill, the former employees of Hiram Walker distributors await a just settlement of their grievances. □



# 1200 Strike At American Standard

LOUISVILLE—On January 29, 1,200 workers at the American Standard Plant in Louisville were forced on strike.

Throughout last fall and winter workers there were laid off periodically. Then the contract expired on January 23. The Standard Allied Trades Council (SATC), representing the 13 unions in the plant, asked for a day-to-day extension of the contract until a new one could be agreed upon.

But just two days before the end of the month Standard refused to extend the contract any further. The company must pay health benefits for a full month if a person works any day during that month.

The SATC is demanding better cost of living protection, stronger health and safety committees, and a decent wage increase.

## ROTTEN DEAL

The company's offer was to take away gains won as long as 30 years ago. In a time when workers are struggling with economic hardship, the company thought it had leverage to force a rotten deal.

Standard workers told Workers' Power that the company is not really hurt by the strike—they don't need production now due to overstocked supplies. Strikes are cheaper than layoffs.

But, "We either work under a

good, safe contract, or we don't work!" said one Standard striker.

In spite of the company's attempt to divide the craft against the production workers, the strikers are determined to win. They are putting up a courageous and militant fight in a difficult period.

[Donations for strike support is

being coordinated by Local 214 International Molders and Allied Workers Union of the SATC. Contributions can be sent to Molders Union, 1002 East Kentucky St., Louisville, Kentucky, 40203.]

J. Evans

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Considering toilet breaks... any conversations held between employees while they are in the cubicles or the rest room proper will be considered an unauthorized break. If you have something to say to another person who happens to enter the rest room while you are there, you may speak to them outside the door when you are finished. I would suggest that you use the toilets singly, it might make the rules easier to remember. Any disregard for this rule will meet with an immediate warning."

—Patricia O'Neil, Housekeeping Supervisor at William W. Backus Hospital, Norwich, Conn., where Local 1199, Hospital Union, is conducting an organizing drive.

# Transit Walks Out

PHILADELPHIA—"You can't beat the system, the SEPTA system!" goes the latest jingle from SEPTA, Philadelphia's transit authority. But painted on a water tower overlooking one of SEPTA's depots is a reply from one of the company's more daring workers—"WE CAN BEAT THE SYSTEM."

More than 5,000 transportation workers are currently trying to prove that, as their strike against SEPTA nears its second week.

The strike by operators, mechanics, and cashiers represented by the Transportation Workers Union (TWU) has totally paralyzed Philadelphia's network of busses, trolleys and subways.

Endorsed by a spirited mass membership meeting, the walkout began March 15 after the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) allowed their contract with the TWU to expire without making a serious offer.

The major issue in the strike is money. SEPTA drivers currently make less than their counterparts in other cities such as Baltimore

and Washington, and they are determined to catch up.

"We've suffered along under Nixon's wage guidelines," said one worker interviewed by Workers' Power, "and now we have to make up for it." Philadelphia TWU members, who currently average \$5.28 an hour, are seeking a \$1.50 raise over two years plus a full cost-of-living escalator.

The current leadership of TWU Local 234 was recently elected on a reform program. But the new leadership is reluctant to fully mobilize the rank and file. This could lead to eventual defeat.

On the other hand, the present mood among rank and filers is to win a decent contract at any cost. A rank and file group within the union, called Driving Force, has tried to push the union to organize marches, demonstrations, and stronger picket lines.

At this point, however, this recently formed group has support only in a few depots and will probably not have enough impact on the union's policies to affect the outcome of the strike. □



## Which Side Are You On?

by Kim Moody

# Unions In Court

In the last two articles in this series we have argued that the government and the courts belong to those who own industry, commerce and the banks—the capitalist class. The laws and the courts exist to protect private business property and they are backed up by the police and the government.

When unions have tried to win things for their members by taking the bosses to court, they have seldom gained much. History shows that it is mass, militant action by organized workers that wins gains.

But the problem of the courts doesn't end with the union's relationship to the company. More and more, as the union leaders refuse to fight the companies, as they try to do the bosses' dirty work, the ranks of organized labor find they must fight their union leaders as well as the company.

Union leaders resist rank and file pressure by building up bureaucratic machines. In times of desperation they use goon squads against the workers. Often union officials in power rig elections to hold on to that power.

The best militants, those most willing to fight, try to do something about this. They may try to pressure the leaders or even organize an opposition caucus. But in most cases, at the beginning, they face the frustration of being weak in numbers and resources compared to the bureaucrats.

Impatient with their weakness, and often the momentary unwillingness of other workers to back them up, many militants go to court. Most often this is over a rigged election.

### PROTECTING UNION DEMOCRACY?

Active militants are aware that there are certain laws on the books that seem to protect union democracy. In particular there is a body of law that forces the unions to report their internal finances to the government, requires the unions to maintain certain standards in their financial affairs, and "guarantee" honest elections. In other words, these laws give the government a measure of regulation over the internal affairs of the unions.

**Stop here and ask yourself: why would a government run by and for the bosses want control over the internal affairs of the unions? Would it be to protect the rights of militant union members so they could make their unions more militant? No way!**

These laws were not the result of rank and file pressure or of union action. They were passed in the late 1950's by a coalition of northern conservatives and southern Dixiecrats—that is, the most anti-labor elements around. Big business wanted these laws because they felt that some unions were too powerful. This was the time, remember, when the government was out to get Jimmy Hoffa because it wanted to break the Teamsters union.

Rank and file workers during the 1950's and 60's were never able to use these laws to get union democracy. The courts and the Department of Labor made sure that cases put forth by militant workers dragged on for years.

The Democrats, under Kennedy and Johnson, were not willing to have the courts or the Department of Labor embarrass the labor leaders on whom the Democratic Party depends for much mass support. The Republicans were only interested in using these laws to break any and all unions and would not bother supporting real militants.

### "FAST" ACTION

In more recent years, it has proven possible for some rank and file organizations to get relatively "fast" action over rigged union elections. Instead of five or ten years, court actions have taken only one, two or three years—in case you think that is fast enough. But the reason for this is not to be found in the fondness of the Republicans or Democrats for rank and file militancy.

In the late 1960's strikes became more and more serious. Many of these were wildcat or illegal strikes. Large rank and file movements, like the Teamsters United Rank and File (TURF) and the Miners for Democracy (MFD) arose on a crest of militant wildcat strikes. The employers and the government were presented with a picture of potentially uncontrollable militancy.

From the point of view of the bosses, it was better to tie these fights up in court suits and legal proceedings than to face a mass strike movement. It was even better to let a few corrupt labor leaders, like Hoffa or Tony Boyle of the United Mine Workers, get the axe than have the ranks begin questioning the American (that is, capitalist) system of "justice."

So, after years of mass strike waves, including a political mass strike in West Virginia, the government stepped in to supervise an election in the miners' union.

The court suit, which took three years, was won not so much on the merits of the case. It had more to do with the fact that constant local and regional strikes by the miners had caused a big drop in worker productivity which threatened to hurt profits. In other words, court action appeared to work only because of previous and continuous mass direct action. Court suits don't scare the employers or their government; mass militant strikes do.

When the court suits are used because of the weakness of a movement, as in the 1960's, they seldom work. When there is a mass movement, legal action is not usually needed at all. The only thing court action ever seems to have done is to get a little publicity and, in some cases, buy a little time for a weak rank and file movement.

### PLAYING WITH FIRE

But even where the militants reason that they are trying to buy time, they are playing with fire.

First of all there is the danger that the government will use a perfectly well meaning law suit to weaken the union. That is, rank and filers, who have even less control over the government than over the union, may be made pawns in some government plan to prevent the unions from resisting the effects of the present crisis. After all, it is no secret that both the liberals and conservatives are out to "restrain" the unions and make the workers pay for the economic mess they have put us in.

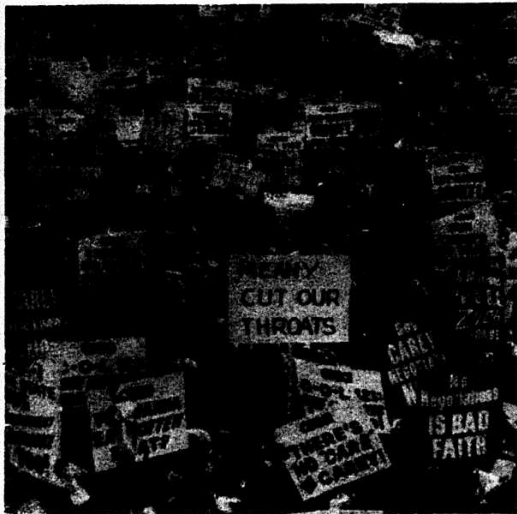
The greatest danger, however, is to the rank and file movement itself. It is the danger of that movement, particularly while it is still small and weak, becoming dependent on the government to solve its problems.



That is law suits often become a substitute for the seemingly harder task of organizing other workers to throw out the bureaucrats and put a new, militant, democratic policy into effect. And, often it is harder to organize a strong movement than to hire a lawyer. But, the fact is that hiring a lawyer won't really do the trick—not unless there is a strong independent rank and file movement that can make the union work for the workers.

The courts, the laws, the Department of Labor, and such are the tools of the bosses—their means of controlling society and the working class in particular. The most effective tools the ranks of labor possess are organization, mass actions, strikes, and the power that comes from the collective action of those who really produce the wealth of this society.

These, the same tools we use to fight the bosses, can be used to defeat today's reactionary labor leaders and put the labor movement on a new, class struggle basis. □



# New York State Workers March

NEW YORK—From 22—35,000 workers jammed the New York State Capitol on March 18 for the largest demonstration ever held there.

It was also the largest protest yet against the effects of the current economic crisis. The demonstration was called by the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) to protest the refusal of the state to bargain with the union.

The Association represents 277,000 civil service workers in New York State. Theodore Wenzl, CSEA President, told the crowd the state had refused to bargain on the wage re-opener guaranteed in their contract. Instead, the state insisted on discussing a wage freeze and layoffs.

To combat this, Wenzl told the crowd, "We're going to test the Taylor Law (prohibiting public workers' strikes) to the limit."

The workers responded enthusiastically. During the four-hour demonstration, they picketed the state capitol with hundreds of placards, chanted slogans and sang songs.

This kind of militant talk is very unusual for the CSEA leadership. Under Republican governors, the CSEA was close to being a company union. With Rocky's help, the CSEA gained strength at the expense of the rival union—AFSCME.

In return, the CSEA told its

members that negotiations had to be secret, and that the negotiators should not be committed to any of the members' demands.

The union officially favored no candidate in last year's governor's election; in reality this meant tacit support to the Republican candidate Malcolm Wilson. At the March 18 rally many of its placards referred to the "good old days" of Rockefeller.

On the other hand, the AFSCME leaders actively supported Carey. Carey now seems to be favoring Victor Gottbaum, the major AFSCME leaders, over Wenzl—the opposite of the "cozy relation" Wenzl had with the Rockefeller and Wilson administrations.

The militancy and talk about "testing the Taylor law" is really an attempt by the CSEA officials to maneuver and regain their past positions.

Some workers are preparing for a strike, however. Two rank and file caucuses attended the demonstration with a banner calling for a strike vote and the election of strike committees in every work center.

These groups are the Caucus for an Active Union and the Committee for a Democratic Union, whose members work in the Bureau of Disability Administration and Audit and Quality Control in New York City. □

G. Williamson

# Growing Old In A

We had an apartment in the city, me and Loretta liked living there. Well it's been years since the kids have grown; a life of their own, Left us alone.

John and Linda live in Omaha, and Joe is somewhere on the road. We lost Davey in the Korean War, and I still don't know what for. Don't matter anymore.

You know that old trees just grow stronger, and old rivers grow wilder every day; Old people just grow lonesome, waiting for someone to say Hello in there, hello.

Me and Loretta we don't talk much

any more; she sits and stares through the backdoor screen. And all the news just repeats itself, like some forgotten dream That we've both seen.

Some day I'll go and call up Rudy, we worked together at the factory. What can I say if he asks what's new? "Nothing, what's new with you?" Nothing much to do.

You know that old trees just grow stronger, and old rivers grow wilder every day; Old people just grow lonesome, waiting for someone to say Hello in there, hello.

John Prine

Growing old in America has never been something to look forward to, though for some it can literally be a fate worse than death.

Ms. Elsie DeFratus of St. Petersburg, Florida was nearly 80 years old and had survived for a long, long time on a meagre widow's pension. With the current inflation, Ms. DeFratus had to make do with less and less.

Finally, one recent morning, she simply stopped. She weighed 76 pounds and an autopsy revealed she had no food in her stomach. "Malnutrition," the coroner said.

"Surrender," sighed an elderly friend. "She just stopped believing tomorrow would be better."

Ms. DeFratus' realization that the promise of tomorrow simply does not exist is becoming more and more apparent for the elderly. As another oldest put it, "Old age is one hell of a long sentence with no time off for good behavior."

## CUEL HOAX

In our society, where technological achievements are enormous, medical science proclaims tremendous advances, and wealth abounds for some, the aged are the victims of a cruel hoax.

We are told that hard work will be rewarded in the end, and statistics trumpet that people are living longer to enjoy those fruits of their labor.

But the truth is totally different. The lengthening average age does not mean that people are living longer, but simply that more people are living to their 60's and 70's.

And the deferred rewards promised for work are simply not there.

In 1972, half of all old people living alone or with non-relatives

had an income under \$1,000 a year, while more than half of all aged couples received less than \$3,000 a year.

The old constitute 11% of the population, but more than 23% of the poor. And these figures are suspect because so many old people have simply become invisible.

Those elderly who aren't segregated off into nursing homes or "retirement communities" often live in transient hotels, condemned buildings, or even in the streets.

## DESPERATE MEASURES

In Cleveland, recently, there was a news story about one 72 year old woman who kept getting herself arrested for prostitution so she would have somewhere to stay.

In New York City, after a rooming house fire about a year ago, one resident commented, "Old folks came scuttling out like cockroaches, out from under everything."

"The welfare people were really upset. They never even knew those folks were down there. They had to add a lot of new names to their lists."

Why do things like this happen?

It is not simply that programs supposedly designed to help the elderly have been used to make money for unscrupulous individuals, or that promised payoffs after years of labor have proven nonexistent.

The cruellest hoax perpetrated on the old is that for their whole lives they were never valued as human beings by this capitalist society, but only as producers.

As long as people are healthy and perform a productive role (having a job), they get the necessities of life, to keep them

healthy and productive. Once they retire they are no longer valued because they can no longer make profits for someone else.

For most of us, our work life is something we endure because we have to live. It is a bondage, a wearisome drudgery. Sure, we have friends at work and often the routine of working becomes part of a pattern in our lives that we miss when we have to stop working.

## FAMILY

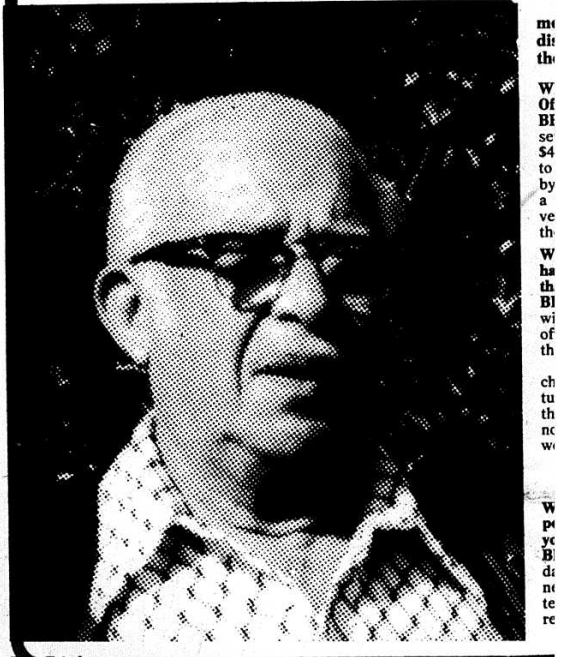
But mostly we work for the money, and our personal rewards are reserved for family life. We work to earn a living, but we do our living with our family. The family becomes the heart of an otherwise heartless world.

But old age confronts people with some bitter insights into the family. All too often, older people realize that their children's family is no longer their family. The family unit that supports people through their working lives often serves to exclude them when they grow older.

Older people often become emotional and financial burdens on their children who are tied up with the problems of work and child raising.

The modern family is poorly equipped to handle special needs of old people. Although the popular

**"If everything in this make a profit, we would you have to depend on**



press often blames "selfish" young families for the plight of the aged, there is little most can do about it.

Capitalism has created an urban society which is quite unsuited for families of three generations. When young people begin a family, they move to their own homes. Many move to other cities seeking work.

Many things that used to be done in the home are done by society now. And even though our society does them entirely inadequately, they cannot be done at home any more.

For example, chronic or recurring health problems can no longer be properly attended to at home.

Once, the family was almost self-sufficient—weaving their own cloth, growing their own food. Capitalism has freed people from much of this endless and inefficient labor through mass production.

## PROFITS

This tendency has increased—more and more of people's needs are taken care of outside the home. But because it is done by a capitalist system, every product and service must bring in a profit to a private firm. And they are only interested in the product or service if it is profitable.

The less, or unprofitable areas are neglected, and old people's needs fall into this category. Even if their physical needs happen to be met in a nursing home, or solitary apartment, they have no useful role to others that brings dignity.

Just because someone is retired it shouldn't mean that they can have no further useful function in

life. In the past, old people played an important role in raising grandchildren and maintaining the home.

But modern society makes it almost impossible to be useful unless you're being exploited by an employer, just as it has been made nearly impossible to get personal gratification from work.

They are called Golden Agers and Senior Citizens, and they are left with little to show for all their years of work as wage earners or homemakers. In the years when life's hopes should be mostly fulfilled, they are dashed.

Is it any wonder that the elderly so often degenerate physically and mentally? Much of what is called senility is simply defensive reactions to the bleak reality of growing old in America.

## SOLUTIONS

The family can't take care of the aged—capitalist society won't. To capitalism the worker is only labor to be thrown out when used up.

A socialist society will be different. In socialist society, work will be part of life, not separate from it. Workers will control production and run it to fulfill human need.

In socialist society you won't trade your ability to work simply for wages from a company as you do under capitalism. A person's work will be his/her contribution to society, and in return, he/she will get back everything that society has to offer.

In socialist society, the worker's whole life will be valuable to society, not just his or her 8 hours, 40-some years. And people will grow old with the dignity and security they deserve.





# America

... system wasn't run just to  
... uldn't have an old age where  
... on someone else just to be able  
... to exist.''

Ben Friedman is a retired postal worker and a member of the International Socialists. Here he discusses with Workers' Power the problems of the aged under capitalism.

**WP:** You're retired from the Post Office?

**BF:** I retired from the Post Office seven years ago with a pension of \$400 a month. Since that time, due to cost of living increases allocated by Congress it has gone up to \$625 a month. That would seem to be very good and probably is among the best of the pension systems.

**WP:** Do you think that your union had anything to do with getting that good a pension?

**BF:** The union had everything to do with it. In 1920, when the post office pension began, everyone got the same pension—\$1,200 a year.

Since then the pension plan has changed for the better. Unfortunately, we're a great exception to the actual rule of pensions. Were it not for our union, our pension would be a lot smaller.

### NO PENSION

**WP:** Do you know other older people who aren't doing as well as you are?

**BF:** I was speaking only the other day to some people living in my neighborhood. One fellow was telling me he was scheduled to be retired two years hence.

He was told two or three months

ago that his job had been eliminated. When he wanted to know about a pension, they told him, "What do you mean a pension, you're not eligible for a pension—you're not sixty five years old."

So they gave him \$400 severance pay. What that man is actually living on today is \$185 a month on his social security. That's for someone who was making from \$175 to \$185 a week for the last year.

My brother-in-law, who's a buyer for a children's wear outfit, can't retire because there is no retirement system. He would have to live on his savings plus social security.

He's got to gamble his savings against how long he and his wife live.

**WP:** How do these people feel about the way they're being treated?

**BF:** This person that I spoke to who lost his job, I would say that he probably started out about 40 degrees right of Goldwater.

This person is beginning to talk so bitterly that I wonder if it would take much effort for him to become a radical. I don't know.

Strangely enough, and here is the painful part, he doesn't think of

these facts that are happening to him and put it together as part of capitalism.

### JUST HIM?

He just thinks that his particular boss has taken advantage of him and of his kind. He doesn't realize that Congress has discovered that possibly 70 to 80% of the private pension plans in the United States are in the same position as the one that he's under.

That's the actual facts of what are happening in our country today. He doesn't recognize the fact.

However, I know that there are people who are starting to recognize and are starting to curse this government and this system.

**WP:** How does the rising inflation affect retired people?

**BF:** Let's be honest about it. A person can't afford to die because I just found out what funeral expenses amount to when my wife died.

A person can't afford to get sick. In the 16 days my wife was in the hospital it cost \$206 a day just for room and board. Fortunately I didn't have to pay it.

People can't afford to live with the cost of living so I wonder what other thing there is left to do. Best thing is just to disappear.

### DISCRIMINATION

**WP:** Do you think older people are discriminated against?

**BF:** I tried to get a Master Charge card recently and only because I'm old, only because I'm on pension, even though my pension is a good one, they didn't want to give it to me.

I know for a personal fact people that have been unable to get mortgages, unable to get apartments, their signature is no good on a lease; only because they're old.

Now wouldn't you call that discrimination?

**WP:** Why do you think old people are in this situation?

**BF:** I think it is this capitalist system we've got. If everything in this system wasn't run just to make a profit, we wouldn't have an old age where you have to depend on someone else just to be able to exist.

### DIGNITY

The trouble with the society is that old people don't have any dignity left. When people have to go begging it takes all the dignity away. And when you lose dignity what is left?

Instead people should be able to spend the last few years in enjoyment of life. I say when a system is as rotten as this one, and is causing all this wrong to take place, it really has to be chang-

# Ripping Off The Old - The Benefits Fraud

The poverty of the elderly has been in part created by the deceptive nature of the major social programs designed to help them financially. Social Security, to which working people contribute all their lives, in some effort to "guarantee" themselves some income in their old age, has never provided sufficient amounts for people to live on. It, in fact, almost guarantees the poverty of the elderly.

Now it is becoming apparent that even this inadequate security is headed for financial collapse. The truth is that the money a person pays into social security has nothing to do with the money they get. Social Security payments come out of the taxes of those currently at work.

In 1950 there were twelve working taxpayers for every retired social security recipient. By 1960 that ratio was down to 4 to 1. It is now down to 2.5 to 1.

By the time those now entering the workforce are ready to claim social security there will be fewer than two workers to support each retiree. Also, the tables upon which social security payments are calculated assume an economy where wages rise by 3% and inflation by 3% each year.

It is not an impossible thought that by the end of this century the social security system could go bust.

### PRIVATE PENSIONS

Private pension plans have become popular precisely because social security has already proved inadequate. But in many ways the remedy is as bad as the problem.

Pensions became popular in the '50s and have continued to cover an ever-increasing percentage of the workforce because they are cheaper for the companies than wage increases and the unions have something to show their members as paper gains.

But often, whatever advances are trumpeted from the bargaining table, are lost in the fine print.

By providing large increases in "benefit packages" which include both wages, fringe, and pensions, the unions can sound like they got a good deal, and it isn't until many years later that people find out that the bag of goodies is pretty much empty.

The companies also like the pension fund idea because it gives them a large part of money to use

for investment purposes, money which did not belong to them, but whose investment profits they could use.

### PENSION FAILINGS

Before the Pension Reform Law was signed last Labor Day, there was absolutely no regulation of pension funds. Many workers lost pensions due to companies closing, merging, or moving.

Workers lost pensions if they lost time from their jobs, changed jobs, or could no longer work due to illness.

The new law corrects some of the more flagrant failings of private pension funds—like requiring some form of financial accounting, providing insurance coverage for workers whose plans fail, and guaranteeing vesting rights for employees in certain situations. But the law is still inadequate for the purpose of providing a steady, livable income for the elderly.

Moreover, the law doesn't even try to deal with a major problem facing pension funds today—the financial losses due to poor investments and a declining economy.

### MEDICARE

The third major effort to aid the aged, Medicare, was heralded in the mid-1960s as the answer to the medical care problems of the elderly. But like social security and private pension funds, it too has proven inadequate.

Medicare pays financial sums to health care institutions for the treatment and care of the aged who have long term treatment needs.

Billions of dollars were made available to hospitals, nursing homes, and medical clinics to treat the elderly, but very little of that money ever reached the people it was intended for.

The nursing home boom of the late 1960s resulted in a few improvements in care for the aged, but made lots of money for its investors.

The investigations of the nursing home operations of Bernard Bergman now going on in New York and Miami are indicative of the kinds of scandal and fraud which have been perpetrated.

Money given in large sums to these health care institutions has simply been diverted to the private profit of the already wealthy, while those in need are left to suffer in die-



# WE THINK

## WHAT WHITEWASHING THE CIA

A wave of recent revelations about various crimes and dirty deeds carried out by the CIA has alarmed the public. And, as every time a scandal is revealed in one part of the government, another part sets up a committee to investigate it.

Thus we find Democratic Senator Frank Church as the chairman of the Senate Committee which will be investigating the CIA. When asked whether the reported CIA practice of assassinating foreign heads of state could ever be justified, Church replied:

"No, in the absence of war, no Government agency can be given license to murder. The President is not a glorified Godfather."

Church was also asked about the attitude the CIA itself has taken toward his investigation. His answer: "Mr. Colby (CIA director) has also said that he recognizes the need for the investigation. The only way that such difficulties can be corrected is through a thorough investigation... The sooner we get that done, the better it will be for the CIA and the FBI."

The result of these investigations will be brave speeches about how overthrowing governments and spying on US citizens in this country by the CIA must be ended. There may even be a few shakeups to prove how tough and decisive the Congressional investigators are. There will be volumes of rhetoric about "cleaning up" the CIA, bringing its activities "under control" and restricting them to "their proper purpose of intelligence-gathering to protect US security."

Just what is the proper purpose of the CIA? What is the difference between its successes and its excesses?

If the role of the CIA as an international

Murder, Inc. and domestic snooping agency is to be ended, then its essential function must be challenged head-on. The so-called "legitimate" role of the CIA—gathering intelligence for US "national security"—is imperialist by its very nature. It is aimed at preserving US domination over most of the world. It leads directly to the undermining of unfriendly governments, anti-imperialist movements and the murder of their leaders. It leads directly to spying on people in this country who oppose this system's imperialist policies.

We will be told that the CIA's role in the overthrow and murder of Salvador Allende in Chile never happened—or if it did, it won't be allowed to happen again. The CIA's role in propping up certain other governments—for example, keeping Franco's fascist regime in power in Spain—won't be mentioned, let alone questioned. Nor will there be any great outcry over CIA agents infiltrating unions in Britain, Italy and Latin America. While a public wrangle goes on over what the CIA did in Chile a year ago, questions like what its agents are doing in Portugal today will be quietly white-washed.

Recently CIA agents are popping up everywhere. They've been found rifling bags of mail in the US Post Office, reading correspondence sent to US citizens from Russia. They turn up at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean trying to haul up a sunken Russian nuclear submarine. Over \$400 million was spent on this operation, and only a half dozen congressmen know where the money went.

This example, by itself, proves that the idea of Congressional "control" over this espionage



octopus is impossible. Just as impossible as the idea that the CIA can engage in "clean" spying abroad without generating the use of police state tactics on people in this country.

The political establishment in this country represents the system of capitalist rule. It will protect, cover up and do anything necessary to preserve the CIA.

That's what Church means when he points out that the director of the CIA "recognizes the need for the investigation." Colby wants CIA activities white-washed by a government committee so that it can carry on with business as usual.

The only way to end the atrocities committed by this imperialist spy agency is to abolish it, and publicly expose all its activities. We can be quite sure that no such proposal will be forthcoming from liberal Frank Church or his Committee. □

# Dear Workers Power, The art

## UAW SCABBING

The article by Sarah Duncan on McDonnell-Douglas (Workers' Power 116) should have explicitly stated that the UAW actually scabbed, at least in Long Beach. The IAM in Long Beach has now run out of strike pay while UAW members are collecting unemployment after they got laid off because of the effects of the IAM strike. This is bound to create incredible bitterness within one plant!

The item on the Boron strike in Labor Notes should have pointed out that the strike failed not only for the reasons cited there, but because of the failure of the ILWU International to organize and carry out massive support. This has had an impact on internal ILWU affairs, including bureaucrats openly criticizing each other for this defeat. This was an excellent issue.

T.G.  
Santa Monica, CA

## YUGOSLAVIA

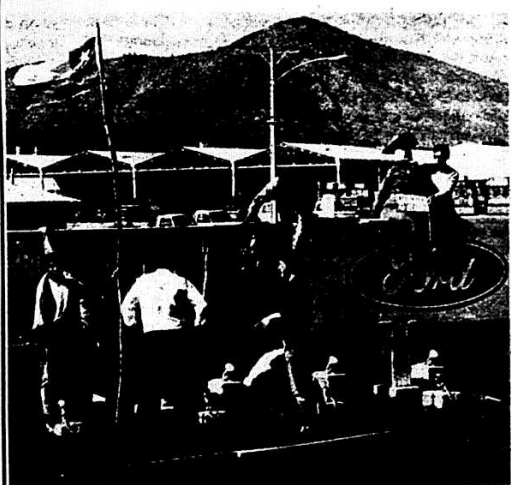
The recent article concerning repression in Yugoslavia (#115) left the unfortunate impression that Svetozar Stojanovic chose to leave Yugoslavia in order to avoid the attacks on himself and eight other dissidents.

In fact, however, he left Yugoslavia for only one semester and he saw his main activities as focusing international attention on the repression.

After the semester was complete he returned to Yugoslavia (in January of this year) where he is presently fighting the attempts to purge him from the university.

D.S.  
St. Louis

## FREE CHILE! GET CIA OUT OF AFL-CIO, AND ALL OTHER UNIONS!



Chilean workers in front of Ford plant.

One of the difficulties in raising the issue of CIA control over the foreign and domestic programs of the AFL-CIO, and all that entails, is the preoccupation so many trade unionists have with the deteriorating economy.

Yet, we can expect little in the way of genuine trade unionism when the apparatus of the labor movement is in the hands of covert forces.

Perhaps more could be done in this direction if more people realized that there is no way of separating the effect of the imperialism practiced abroad with the job situation at home.

El Mercurio (11/8/74) and Chile News (12/23/74) have reported that Ford, Chrysler, GM and six other transnational corporations have just responded to the junta's invitation for bids for a massive reorganization and expansion of Chile's auto industry.

This is a direct result of the CIA-directed coup. As most people know, this was a massive effort directed from the US that involved an international credit squeeze, AFL-CIO American Institute for Free Labor Development intrusion

into the Chilean labor scene, and a massive rearming of the Chilean military with all the new equipment and techniques developed by the Pentagon.

The junta is now able to promise these global auto firms a quiescent labor force that will be directed by the labor front techniques of the newly approved junta-sponsored organization that pretends to represent Chilean workers—led by two AIFLD graduates.

None of this would be possible if any major effort were made by the unions to remove the guarantees these firms receive from the US government when operating abroad.

Lou Victor

## EDUCATION: TOOL TO CHANGE SOCIETY

People measure education only in the span of what they know or are supposed to know, or the skills which they can put to their own advantage. In my view, a man or woman's education must also be measured in terms or degrees of the solidness of his or her judgement of people and objects, and in the power to understand and appreciate the needs of their fellow men/women and to be of service to humanity.

It is the duty of educated men and women to be so sensitive to adverse (unfavorable) conditions

around them, that they make it their main objective to improve those unfavorable circumstances for the betterment and good of all (the people).

My people, it does not require an excellent brain to destroy humanity, the world or life. Indeed any fool can proceed to do that. But it takes devotion and brains to create conditions for human happiness and to make this life in Amerikka worth living.

Universities and colleges in Amerikka are designed to mis-educate the people—to put it more

frankly, the entire Amerikkan Educational Bourgeois system is geared to train and brainwash the people in Imperialist Amerikka into supporting and unconsciously or consciously aiding this system of oppression and repression and exploitation.

Without a progressive or revolutionary education we are definitely not going anywhere in this world of change. □

Farug  
State Prison  
Tallahassee, Florida

## Workers' Power Wants To Hear From You

What you like about the paper - and what you don't. What you think of the political ideas we present, and your comments on problems facing working people.

But please be brief.

# CLUW Leaders Balk On Action

## Labor Union Women Meet

by Beth Cady and Karen Kaye

**DETROIT**—On March 15 the National Steering Committee of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) met here.

The most significant action taken at the meeting was the decision to actively support the AFL-CIO's upcoming demonstration against unemployment. The demonstration will be held in Washington DC on April 26. CLUW will be there to dramatize the tragic effects of unemployment upon women, who are suffering a disproportionate share of layoffs.

**DISAPPOINTING**

Despite this positive step, observers said the meeting accomplished disappointingly little.

Delegates voted that each chapter should have an educational forum on affirmative action.

The body took up questions of the location of its next National Coordinating Committee meeting (Houston) and the spring Convention (Chicago), but made no plans for the issues these meetings will take up.

The 18 delegates (of 27) attending, and the 20-some observers learned that CLUW's membership is now 3,100. This compares to 3,200 women who attended the founding Convention a year ago.

Despite this apparent stagnation, other signs show that more and more women are being attracted to CLUW. The bi-monthly national newsletter required an extra printing due to the great demand.

But CLUW's growth is slowed by the unnecessarily complicated procedure for chartering a chapter. CLUW's national leaders are union officials who want to keep the same type of tight control over CLUW that the union bureaucracies have over their own unions.

**NO COMMENT**

When Atlanta CLUW chapter members brought up the incident

The many rules the CLUW leaders have established for functioning chapters also slow CLUW activity. Women who attended the meeting expressed disappointment that it did not take up issues like building CLUW through activity, strategies for fighting unemployment among women and how to build women's participation in the AFL-CIO's April march.

**ATLANTA**

In many cases CLUW's leaders are trying to hold back activity instead. The situation of the Atlanta chapter, for instance, was discussed at the meeting following CLUW President Olga Madar's report.

For March 8 Atlanta CLUW joined an International Women's Day Coalition which included many diverse groups, some of which were Maoist.

In an attempt to offset that demonstration the Atlanta Labor Council, along with the UAW and AFSCME, called their own rally. Atlanta CLUW asked to participate in their rally, but were rebuffed by Atlanta Labor Council officers.

Atlanta CLUW's rally attracted 200 people who marched to the UAW-AFSCME rally. Olga Madar was the keynote speaker at that rally.

In her speech she attacked the Atlanta chapter for its action programs and for having Maoist members. She stated that their charter would be revoked and that a new chapter would be set up under the direction of the national officers of CLUW.

**MADAR STRIKES AGAIN**

Finally, Workers' Power has learned that Olga Madar again is trying to stop CLUW activity, this time in Cleveland. The Cleveland chapter has been picketing in support of a union militant and CLUW member who was unjustly fired from General Electric.

But CLUW's leaders have managed to pass a rule that CLUW can picket a company only with the consent of the union involved.

This clearly presents difficulties since all too often unions are unwilling to fight for rank and file militants.

Madar has instructed the Cleveland chapter to cease its picketing. And, by implication, the fired woman's situation is "tough luck" as far as Madar is concerned.

Despite all these drawbacks, women are still coming to CLUW, eager to join. It remains the only organization for working women to fight for their rights.

But as in a union, the rank and file will have to stand up to the bureaucrats who run it, if CLUW is to fulfill its potential for winning progress for working women.

at the Detroit meeting they were ruled out of order. It was clear that Madar and her friends did not want to discuss the incident.

When it was finally put on the agenda most of the steering committee members gave Madar a vote of confidence.

Still, they did not dare to revoke the Atlanta charter. They knew that would signal the beginning of a battle they were not prepared to fight.

Revocation of the charter would have to be referred to the NCC where a real battle would take place since there are a number of rank and filers on the NCC.

**CLUW demonstration against layoffs in Louisville, Ky.**



Photo by J. Evans

## Women's Marches Held

**International Women's Day, March 8, was celebrated in cities across the country with marches and rallies sponsored by CLUW and other working women's organizations.**

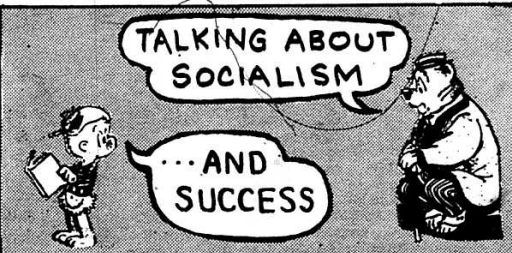
- In Cleveland, 120 people gathered at the ILGWU Hall. Unemployment was the topic of speeches at the CLUW sponsored rally.
- In Chicago, CLUW sponsored the day's activities. 75 people demonstrated at the Federal Building to publicize their demands for jobs for all and equality for women.
- Over 300 women in Seattle

attended a spirited demonstration for full equality for women and support of women's labor struggles.

- 75 union women gathered in Louisville, Ky., to march from the State Unemployment Office to the Riverfront Plaza for a program of speeches. Demands printed on CLUW banners were echoed by the speakers: jobs for all; shorter work week at full pay; ban overtime during layoffs; roll back prices; and other demands to meet the economic crisis.
- Detroit women attended a conference at Wayne State University on Women in the World of

Work. From there 80 women went to the main welfare office for a picket line sponsored by CLUW. "Share the work, full pay, we want jobs not welfare," was their chant.

- In New York City, 1500 women marched down Fifth Avenue in a demonstration sponsored by over 50 women's organizations, following a small rally held by CLUW.
- California women congregated in Sacramento for a march of 3000 union members sponsored by several unions and the State AF of L.
- International Women's Day activities were also held in Atlanta, Boston, Denver, and Washington, DC.



**LURE OF SUCCESS**

Management certainly realizes how useful the lure of individual success is in keeping us down.

What it amounts to is that 99% cut our own throats in the interests of the 1% who'll make it to the top of the pile. Meanwhile management sits back and laughs.

We can only get out of this vicious circle when we see a way out of our present situation as workers by acting collectively.

We stop clutching at the straws of individual solutions when we stop feeling powerless as a group.

This happens when we are on the offensive, when we're pushing management back to make life better for ourselves. We're on the move, and we're going to change some things to make them go the way we think they should be. We feel the power we have as workers.

**TAKING ORDERS**

There's nothing worse than taking ridiculous orders all day from a pushy, ignorant, arrogant (and as often as not racist and sexist) foreman or supervisor.

You can try to ignore them or you can fight them every step of the way, but they still wear you down. They are a permanent part of the capitalist set-up in which we have to make a living.

They don't let us forget for a moment that we're there to take orders—not to decide what should be done.

We all want to get out of this situation. This is just as true of revolutionary workers as of those who dream of becoming shopkeepers or supervisors. The difference is in the kind of solutions we look to.

We all want to run things, to make our own decisions. We don't want to take orders all our lives. But the vast majority of us can never set up successful small businesses. As capitalism developed, more and more small companies are taken over by larger corporations. Every time capitalism has an economic crisis, as it does today, thousands of small businesses are driven out—they just can't absorb the losses.

**SOCIALIST IDEAS**

But revolutionary socialist ideas are needed to fully overcome the fantasy of "making it" as individuals. Otherwise the old fantasies will regain their hold on us whenever our fights with management slow down or are defeated.

More than one militant worker has finally given up the fight and ended up in the ranks of management.

But for workers who are fighting for socialism, the daily hassles at work are a challenge—part of the struggle that will let everyone "make it"—together.

We have to destroy the entire capitalist system and set up a society based on workers running the economy.

Such a society will put our intelligence to use. It will allow us to use our ability to run things rather than having it stifled and destroyed by the capitalists and their army of managers, supervisors, and foremen.

This is worth working for.

# BUILDING UNION CAUCUSES

by Sandy Boyer

[The Trade Union Education League was a militant rank and file labor organization that existed in the 1920's. The first three articles in this series traced its origins, early history and the fights it led for union democracy. Its leaders were members of the Communist Party, which at that time was a revolutionary organization committed to the interests of working people. The TUEL organized rank and file workers to fight for industrial unionism, creation of a labor party, and recognition of the Soviet Union. The TUEL had to organize rank and file caucuses to challenge the conservative union leadership in order to effectively fight for these issues. This column describes some of those struggles.]

The trade union bureaucracy began a campaign of expulsions against Trade Union Education League (TUEL) militants in the mid 20's. This campaign forced the TUEL to turn to organizing rank and file caucuses. The only way to survive in the unions and work for progressive policies was to organize to replace the union leaders.

In many unions the TUEL had little success organizing caucuses. In the mid 1920's prosperity returned. Most American workers had jobs and relatively high wages. They were no longer interested in fights for industrial unionism or union democracy. The listened when their union leaders denounced radicals and reds as "un-American."

But millions of workers were shut out of this prosperity. They were in "sick" industries like coal, garment, and textiles. Low wages, increasing unemployment, and deteriorating working conditions were their problems.

Their unions were doing little or nothing about these conditions. The leaders said not to fight for wages or working conditions that the bosses couldn't afford. Among these workers the TUEL organized their rank and file caucuses. Organizing the unions for an all out fight against the employers attracted wide support. They were able to lead struggles involving tens of thousands of workers.

Hundreds of thousands of workers voted for TUEL slates in union elections. The three most important TUEL caucuses were in the furriers union, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), and the United Mine Workers (UMW).

## FUR WORKERS

The fur workers in New York faced all the unemployment, wage cuts and speed up of workers in the other unions. They also faced a union dominated by gangsters. Every attempt to organize for decent conditions brought vicious beatings for the organizers.

In 1922 a Furriers section of the TUEL was formed, calling for an end to gangsterism and a determined union resistance to the employers. Amalgamation of all the unions in the garment industry and the formation of a labor party were also important demands.

Ben Gold, the TUEL furrier leader, was beaten up by gangsters. Over 1,400 fur workers rallied to protest the beating. At the rally Gold declared, "we have decided no more blood will be spilled. We will not go to the courts, for we know the nature of the courts under our present system. Instead we will build a strong defense organization of the workers' themselves... With an organized defense committee we will take practical steps to free the workers from terror."

In 1925 a coalition between the TUEL and a group of Socialist Party members won control of the New York Joint Board, representing 80% of the membership. The new leadership promised to restore union democracy, end the gangster control of the union, and mobilize the membership for a fight to improve their conditions. Ben Gold was made manager of the Joint Board.

The next year the NY Joint Board contract with the Associated Fur Manufacturers expired. The Joint Board declared a general strike in the New York fur industry. The central demands were for a forty hour week and union control of sub-contracting to protect jobs.

The strike lasted for seventeen weeks. The employers brought in scabs and gangsters to protect the scabs. The union responded by beating up scabs and wrecking scab shops. In some cases the union resorted to hiring gangsters of their own to fight the bosses' gangsters. The strike ended with a decisive victory for the union. They won a 10% pay increase, union control of contracting, and, for the first time, the forty hour week. The victory made Gold a hero to the furriers. Repeated right wing attempts to oust him were dismal failures.

## THE GARMENT WORKERS

The workers in the ladies garment industry had similar problems. But the ILGWU leaders were more interested in expelling Communist Party union members than fighting the employers. The TUEL won control of the New York Joint Board, but they were blocked from



The TUEL rank and file caucus in the mine workers union won support for shorter work days and organizing the unorganized in the 1920's. UMW President John L. Lewis allowed wage cuts and watched mines go non-union to save owners' profits.

implementing many policies by the International leadership.

In 1926 the NY Joint Board had a serious confrontation with the employers. The industry was shut down completely.

After eight weeks the strike leaders learned that the employers were willing to compromise. But the leaders felt they could win more and the union rejected the settlement. The strike continued, and the issues of amalgamation of all garment unions and the labor party became central.

The strike dragged on for eighteen weeks. Finally the International intervened, put the NY Joint Board into receivership, and signed an agreement giving the employers everything they asked for. The left wing suffered a defeat it never fully recovered from.

## MINE WORKERS

Even in good times there are bitter struggles in the mines. The 1920's were anything but good times. The industry was overproducing and overcompetitive. The price of coal was steadily falling. The results were all too familiar—unemployment, wage cuts, and more and more non-union mines.

John L. Lewis, president of the UMW, said the problem was too many miners. He said 250,000 miners should leave the industry.

All Lewis did was call for "No backward step." And then he would accept more wage cuts and even more mines would go non-union. Since Lewis believed that the miners' well-being depended on mine company profits he couldn't see any solution.

The Progressive International Committee, the TUEL rank and file caucus in the UMW, had a completely different approach.

They demanded the union fight for wage increases instead of accepting wage cuts. They wanted a six hour, five day week. They said if the mine owners couldn't afford these demands the mines should be nationalized and run democratically by union miners. To win these demands they urged the union to start organizing the non-union mines. At a time when Lewis was signing separate contracts for each district, each worse than the last, the Progressive International Committee called for a national strike to win a national contract.

In 1924 the Committee ran George Voyzey, a Communist miner, for president against Lewis. Running on the TUEL platform he may well have won. But the Lewis machine counted the votes and stole the election.

In 1926 the TUEL helped to form the Save the Union Movement. The new organization had a similar program to the Progressive International Committee.

John Brophy, president of the Pittsburgh district, ran for president against Lewis in 1927. The official count was Lewis 173,000, Brophy 60,000. This meant a vote of 233,000 out of a membership of 273,000, a clear impossibility. District 31 in West Virginia, with 377 dues paying members, cast 14,000 votes for Lewis. Similar frauds were common. In any honest count Brophy undoubtedly would have won the election.

The left wing in the miners' union was never just an electoral organization. They led militant local strikes in places as far apart as Kansas, Pennsylvania, and Nova Scotia. In 1927 when Lewis called a national bituminous strike they succeeded in bringing out many miners from the unorganized mines Lewis refused to touch. In leading these local struggles they convinced many miners to accept their program for the International Union.

In the Furriers, the ILGWU, the UMW and in other unions the TUEL won the support of hundreds of thousands of workers, often in direct opposition to their International Union leadership. They mobilized this support because they showed the unions really fought for the members.

The International leaders were busy explaining that they couldn't fight for better wages and more jobs because the companies couldn't afford it. The Communists proved in action that they would lead fights for these demands and others that workers needed.

Out of these fights many of the best militants joined the Communist Party. They came to see that the fight against their employer and their union leadership were part of a larger fight against the whole capitalist system.

[The final article in this series is about the TUEL attempt to organize the unorganized, including the Passaic Textile strike. Finally it will tell how the TUEL was ruined by the international degeneration of the Communist Parties.]

# Fighting For Socialism

[The Crisis—Social Contract or Socialism, by Tony Cliff. Pluto Press, London. 192 pp. Available for \$2 from Sun Distribution International, 14131 Woodward Ave, Highland Park, MI 48203.]

During the early part of this century, Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution, was fond of stating that Russia was the weak link in the whole capitalist chain. He proved his point in 1917 when Russian workers became the first working class ever to seize power.

From 1917 until the early thirties, when the chain had been snapped, there was the opportunity for workers all over the world to begin the struggle for socialism.

There were revolutions in Hungary, Germany, Italy, China and massive upheavals across the rest of the capitalist world. Sooner or later all these revolutions failed. Yet the lesson had been learned that the struggle for socialism is a truly international undertaking.

Once again, for the first time in over forty years, we are entering a period of potential revolution. And once again we can see where the weak links are in the capitalist chain. Britain is clearly one of them.

An important new book called *The Crisis* has just come out in Britain which presents a strategy for building the British revolution. It is now available in the US. *The Crisis* should be required reading for socialist militants the world over. It is vital in the same way that Lenin's works were vital to the struggle fifty years ago.

The author is Tony Cliff of the British International Socialists. Cliff's earlier books on the shop stewards' movement, the May Events in France, the employer's offensive and Stalinism in Russia have created a growing following in the British working class.

Already, almost 10,000 copies of this \$2 book have been sold in British factories and anyone reading it will immediately understand why. It is a book produced by a fighting workers' organization, for workers involved in the struggle for socialism.

It explains the crisis in a clear and direct way. Without ever talking down to working people, it lays out the complexities of the crisis, its depth, its international scope.

The book explains why the bosses cannot solve their problems without smashing the organized working class. Its international scope, and its understanding of how workers can go over to the offensive against the whole rotten capitalist system, makes it particularly useful for American socialists.

## FIGHTING BACK

Chapters on wage controls, mass unemployment, the threat of repressive right-wing government, the traitorous role of the trade union bureaucrats and the building of a class-wide rank and file movement will strike an immediate cord with any active militant in the American labor movement.

This part of the book shows there are only marginal differences between how the ruling class in Britain screws the workers and how their American counterparts do the same thing. It provides direct proof that the class struggle, by the very fact of its existence, demands co-ordinated international action.

However, the crucial thing for us is that our British brothers and sisters have been facing the direct effects of the capitalist crisis for a longer period than we have.

Consequently they have developed a range of more effective responses to the various problems. They have already made some mistakes and are already applying some of the lessons.

There has been a wage freeze every couple of years for the last decade in Britain, and workers have had to find ways of countering the bosses' powerful argument that a freeze is in the "national interest."

The tactic of factory takeovers against layoffs was reborn in Britain four years ago, and has been developed to a higher level with each subsequent struggle.

The challenge to the class collaboration of the trade union bureaucrats has been built up out of the steady extension of rank and file control at the shop floor level. Britain's present is the picture of our future.

If we use this book as a weapon in our armor against the employers' offensive, we will be in a position to avoid some of the potential blunders which have hampered the movement in Britain.

In fact, this book is there so that we can speed up the development of our own struggle. That is why this book brings fear to the capitalist class wherever it appears.

Towards the end of the book is an important chapter on the creation of a workers' revolutionary party. It carries the conviction that for the first time in generations this aim can be achieved in the immediate future.

The strength of this conviction could only come from someone who is actually involved today in the creation of that party in Britain, who understands the impossibility of creating socialism without such a party—but knows that world socialism can be created by this generation.

*The Crisis* starts from the reality of the struggle in Britain. We are well past the time when socialist leaders could be content to mouth the abstract political ideas.

For that reason it is not the easiest of books for American militants to read. But it is a book which will repay the effort of



reading it. Cliff concludes with a chapter which mercilessly exposes the vicious irrationality of the capitalist system and describes the system of equality and abundance which can replace it in our life-time. You cannot read this book without feeling that with the help of Cliff's acute vision you have seen the future—and it can be good.

Glenn Wolfe



Author Tony Cliff, at left, and the cover of his book.

# FEMINISM and REVOLUTION

[Revolutionary Feminism, by Celia Emerson. Sun Press, 50c.]

Revolutionary Feminism is our history. The mass media would have us believe that women's liberation is a movement for white women, for college women, for career women.

Emerson proves that in fact women's liberation has been overwhelmingly the struggle of women like ourselves—workers, housewives, and oppressed minorities.

Just as blacks have had to fight to make their history known, so women must dig out the truth of our movement.

The questions that are important today, find their answers in the past. This excellent pamphlet can arm those of us involved in the women's movement today against incorrect theories.

By knowing our history, we will be

more consistent and courageous fighters.

Revolutionary Feminism deals with the women's movement from Joan of Arc to today's CLUW. It is a compact history of struggles which are usually not told in the history books.

## HISTORY AND MORE

For example, the suffrage movement in the US began as a radical movement because it was tied to the movement for the abolition of slavery. However, after the Civil War, there were splits in the suffrage movement around extending the right to vote to blacks.

By 1890, most feminists had taken a single issue approach, abandoning the needs of blacks for the issue of women's suffrage. They tried to guarantee to the Democratic Party that if they were given

the right to vote, they would outmar the blacks and foreigners, thus making the capitalist class stronger.

Emerson says, "Both parties were limited in what they could offer by their commitment to capitalism..."

"By only working through the Democratic Party, the suffragists could not wage an independent campaign of their own. This strategy prevented even winning the minimal gain of women's suffrage until 1920."

## WORKING WOMEN'S STRUGGLES

Emerson also tells of the working class women's movement in America and Europe.

The pride that women can garner from the knowledge of their key roles in the historical struggles in the factories, in the revolutionary societies of the Paris Commune (1871) and the Russian revolution is enough to make this pamphlet worthwhile.

Perhaps the most exciting part to women of today will be the section on the Russian revolution, where Emerson describes the gains won by women. The vision of liberation is tremendously exciting.

Emerson points out that the emancipation of women in soviet Russia was not an automatic result of socialism. Rather, the women themselves guaranteed it by organizing independently.

After the revolution, the old, oppressive family structure was shattered. Women were allowed to chose their marriage partners for the first time. No distinctions were made between legitimate and illegitimate children.

Divorce was liberalized and made cheaper. Communal restaurants, laundries, housing and child care freed women from the oppressive aspects of family life. Women were encouraged to work.

## DEFEAT AND REBIRTH

However, when the revolution was defeated, women's gains were reversed as Stalin consolidated his power. The needs of women were subjugated to the interests of the emerging bureaucracy.

Now we are witness to the rebirth of the feminist movement. The history of the feminist movement is important to women, just as black history is important to blacks. And just as black history is no longer George Washington Carver and Martin Luther King, so history for women must no longer be only the suffragists.

The Emerson pamphlet is exciting because it restores to us this history.

Elissa Clarke



"Women's liberation has been overwhelmingly the struggle of women like ourselves—workers, housewives, and oppressed minorities.... History for women must no longer be only the suffragists."

# New I.S. Branch Forms In Philadelphia

A new branch of the IS has formed in Philadelphia, Pa. The branch includes former members of the New American Movement, joined by independent activists.

The Philadelphia branch intends to build its work around rank and file labor activity, such as local and regional work in the UAW. Among other expected activities are work within CLUW, the UFW boycott, and support for Puerto Rican farmworkers in Southern New Jersey.

The collective decided to join the IS after a long period of joint activities with IS members in other branches. This included study groups, joint rank and file labor work, and informal political discussions. The new branch is optimistic about rapidly building the IS in Philadelphia. □

# Bloomington Conference On Food Crisis

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Three panelists discussed the food crisis before an audience of forty here on March 12 in a discussion sponsored by the IS. It was pointed out that scarcity results more from the search for profits than from lack of resources or undeveloped techniques. Food is manipulated so that undeveloped countries are dependent on the advanced capitalist countries for food. In a socialist society food production will be geared to needs, not to profits. □

**Dalou Asahi (Attica Brother) and Jack Trautman (IS National Executive Committee) will speak on ATTICA**

**Concord, Calif., Weds. April 2, Ygnacio Valley H.S., 7:30 P.M.**

**Bay Area Calif., Fri., April 4, Laney Forum, Laney College, Oakland, 8:00 P.M.**

**Seattle, Wash., Sat., March 29, 23rd & East Olive, 7:30 P.M.**

**Los Angeles, Calif., Sat., April 5, Write LA IS branch for details**

**sponsored by International Socialists**

# What We Stand For

The International Socialists is a revolutionary socialist organization. We are open to all who accept our basic principles and work as a member of our organization to achieve them. These principles are:

**INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION**  
Socialism must be achieved by the independent action of the working class. The liberation of the working class can be won only by the struggles of workers themselves.

**SOCIALISM FROM BELOW**  
Both capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism (the system of dictatorship in Russia, China, and the other so-called "Communist" societies) must be replaced through working class revolution. This will create a socialist society controlled democratically by mass organizations of all working people. The wealth produced by labor will be controlled collectively by workers and used to produce a decent life and freedom for all.

**DESTROY THE CAPITALIST STATE**  
The state is a weapon of capitalist class rule. Its institutions like the legislative, army, police and courts cannot simply be taken over by the working class and used to build socialism. The working revolution must destroy the old state and create one of an entirely different kind. It will establish direct rule by the masses of people based on workers councils elected at the workplace.

**UNITE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE WORKING CLASS**  
The trade unions are today the only mass organizations of the working class. To make the unions fighting instruments of workers against the employers, we work to build their struggles, and fight for rank and file control.

**INTERNATIONALISM**  
The socialist revolution must be international. We fight for solidarity with workers in other countries. We oppose all racism and imperialism, and fully support the struggles of all oppressed peoples, in this country and worldwide. We call for international solidarity and cooperation among unions in different countries. We oppose all immigration controls, protectionism, and sub-bribing by workers in one country or one union against those in another.

**AGAINST BUREAUCRATIC COLLECTIVISM**  
The first successful socialist revolution was made by the Russian working class in 1917. But the revolution was isolated, and destroyed by a counterrevolution led by Stalin. Today Russia, China, and the rest of the "Communist" countries are not socialist, but bureaucratic dictatorships. We support workers' struggle in these countries for democracy and freedom and call for revolution against the bureaucratic ruling class.

**THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY**  
To create socialism, the most militant sections of the working class must be organized into a revolutionary party. The party does not represent an elite to rule over the workers "in their interests." It is a political force helping to organize workers and leading them to take state power and control society as a class. The activity of the IS is directed toward building such a party. Building a rank and file movement based on the principles described here strengthens the consciousness, self-confidence and organization of the working class, and is the road by which a revolutionary party will be built.

**WHERE WE STAND**

•For rank and file control of the unions. We oppose bureaucratic control of the unions by bosses and politicians. We support the struggle for union democracy, rank and file control, and the right to strike.

•Against imperialism. No support for the imperialist wars of the United States, NATO and the Western Bloc. For unconditional support to all national liberation movements, against both the Russian imperialist wars and any victory of the National Liberation Front over US imperialism in Vietnam, but we give no political support to the anti-working class demands of the NLF.

•No support to Republican, Democratic and Wallace parties and candidates. For an independent political party of the working class, based on the unions and controlled by the rank and file, to struggle against the capitalist parties.

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# Canadian Socialists Hold Rank and File Conference

Fifty-five people attended a successful conference on Building the Rank and File Movement, held in Toronto on March 15. The conference was sponsored by Independent Socialists (Ontario). The organization has fraternal relations to IS (US) and was founded in February.

Douglas Wolfe of IS (Great Britain) and Bob Marino of IS (US) spoke on building the rank and file labor movement. Trade union militants from post office, hospital, meat packing and public service discussed the situations in their unions.

The relation of the revolutionary party to the working class was the topic of the final speeches, by David Martin (IS, Ontario) and Douglas Wolfe.

The first issue of Workers' Action, newspaper of IS (Ontario) sold well at the conference. It contains articles on fighting unemployment, the struggles of workers in many industries, and on international issues.

Copies of this excellent publication are available to workers in the US through SN Distribution International, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, MI 48203 for 30c. A year's subscription is \$6 from Workers' Action, Box 339, Station "E", Toronto, Ontario. □

# International Socialists

If you agree with the views expressed in this paper and would like more information, or would like to join the International Socialists, then send this form to:

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# DETROIT MAYOR DROPS BUSING SUPPORT

by Kay Stacy

DETROIT—On year ago the black community elected Coleman Young, a black man, mayor of Detroit. Young is one of many black city officials. Detroit is among the few places where black people have moved into city government.

Recent news, therefore, that Young has been quietly twisting arms to halt an NAACP school integration suit caught many of his supporters by surprise.

Young, a Democrat, has been supported in this effort by black officials from the powerful United Auto Workers union and influential black AFL-CIO officials, also Democratic Party supporters.

Their problem is they fear busing will make Detroit become "too black." They reason that if white people continue to leave Detroit, it will discourage investment and retard the city's economic recovery from the present crisis.

It's true that whites are leaving Detroit, and that racism is one of the reasons. But it is only one. Education, medical services, housing and shopping facilities are all deteriorating rapidly, while crime and unemployment rise.

The city has become a ghetto, and black families would be leaving too, if they could afford suburban homes—and if they weren't prevented by racist practices from buying them.

Eighty-four of Detroit's 290 schools have more than 50% white students. The city's student body is 71.5% black. A majority of the members of the Board of Education are black.

## UNSUCCESSFUL

The five month effort to halt busing by Young and UAW officials appears to be unsuccessful. However, the NAACP may still compromise to only demand that limited busing take place—just enough to ensure a black majority at all schools.

Young and his UAW friends believe that black people have a stake in making the system work. When Young became mayor he took responsibility for making Detroit a profitable, livable town. So when making the system work means giving in to racist privileges—as it always does—Young is

perfectly willing to do so.

At present any white student can choose to transfer to a school where the majority of students are also white. Young thinks that if that privilege is taken away, by eliminating the few remaining "white" schools, then more white families will decide to move away.

## AN ALTERNATIVE

Coleman Young had an alternative that would have both kept white people from fleeing deteriorating schools and ended some of the racist oppression against black people.

As a mayor he could have called on white and black parents, students and teachers to organize a fight for quality education to win adequate money from state and federal sources. Young could have demanded the black UAW and AFL-CIO leaders support and build a drive.

Decent education would do more to keep both black and white people from leaving Detroit than all Coleman Young's attempts to keep whites here at the expense of black people's rights.

## Strike, Demonstrations, Soup Line

# ANGER GROWS IN DETROIT

by Bill Hastings

When the massive layoffs hit the Big Three auto companies last year, the work force pretty quietly accepted them. There were individual acts of rebellion and at least one plant was forced to close early. But in general the companies announced the layoffs, the union said they were unfortunate and the workers just walked out of the plants. Slowly, however, this has begun to change.

On Wednesday, March 19, UAW Local 15 (Fleetwood Fisher Body) struck over work standards, closing the Fleetwood and Cadillac plants. There were over 500 "78's"—work standard grievances—in the procedure. The Local only called a "mini-strike" to last through the end of the week. The timing of the strike was perfect. Cadillac was scheduled to begin

by Joanne Stewart

NEW YORK—3000 interns and residents in 23 hospitals in New York have won the first doctor's strike in the country's history. The doctors are members of the Committee of Interns and Residents, a city-wide union of all house staff.

The union was forced to call a strike over the refusal of the hospitals to negotiate. The key issue in the strike was better working conditions so that doctors can provide decent health care for their patients.

Besides the right to negotiate, the doctors won an end to inhuman 100-plus hour work week for interns and residents in favor of an 80 hour work week with shifts no longer than 15 hours.

Night work will be limited to no

less than every third night. Another demand was no out of title work which takes jobs away from other hospital workers and prevents doctors from doing their own work.

These demands generated tremendous support throughout the country. Even the conservative AMA endorsed the strike, declaring it a "strike for better health care."

The hospitals' refusal to negotiate on working condition issues made the continued existence of the doctor's union a key question. The hospitals were attempting to smash the union once and for all.

## SUPPORT

But the strike gathered support. More and more doctors stayed out

on the lines. The pickets won support from the Teamsters and sanitation workers who refused to cross the lines.

Unfortunately, 1199, a union representing hospital workers did not honor the picket line. This was primarily the fault of the doctors, who refused 1199's offer of support contingent upon future support of the doctors for 1199 strikes.

Such an alliance would make doctors and all health care workers unbeatable. It would be a step towards building a powerful movement for decent health care.

This strike will not be the last. Already attempts are being made in Los Angeles and Chicago to organize similar unions. New York's victory is a crucial step forward for the success of these other organizing drives.

production of their new Seville car the following Monday.

A real strike would have been more effective than a mini-strike. But what is important is that rank and file pressure forced an official strike to defend working conditions during a period of high unemployment.

Twenty-five members and supporters of the United National Caucus (UAW) set up a soup line and picketed the GM world headquarters the same day. The soup was to dramatize the plight of the more than 11,000 GM workers who have used up their SUB pay. Said one UNC member, "GM is going to borrow \$600 million dollars to expand and change their plants while the families of our union brothers and sisters go hungry? No way!"

50 UAW-represented truck drivers picketed Chrysler World Headquarters, also on March 19. The union, again acting due to rank and file pressure for jobs, claimed UAW drivers should get the work.

Two hundred workers picketed the Glass House—Ford world Headquarters—on Friday, March 21. This demonstration, called by the Tool and Die Unit of Local 600 was to protest the subcontracting of work on the 1976 Continental Mark IV's to Budd Wheel in Philadelphia.

Tooling for the Mark IV's is usually done at the Rouge by workers in the Tool and Die Unit. Close to 850 of the 1200 or so Tool and Die men of the Unit are already laid off. In some classifications 30 or more years seniority is needed to be working now.

At Local 600, Ford is clearly attempting to do two things with the subcontracting. One is that it must be cheaper to farm out work. Otherwise, Ford wouldn't do it. And secondly, Ford is attempting to interfere in union politics by moving work away from a unit that has elected a militant leadership. The Tool and Die Unit of Local

600 is one of the places in the UAW which has elected United National Caucus members to leadership positions. Ford is pulling the old company tactic of "elect militants and we'll move elsewhere."

## FIGHTING OVER JOBS

The Fleetwood strike and these other recent demonstrations indicate the spread of militancy within the union. But some auto workers have fallen into the companies' trap of fighting among themselves over jobs, instead of fighting for a shorter work week and more jobs.

For example, John Coyne, Local 212 Committeeman for the truck drivers, claimed that the UAW drivers could do the work cheaper than independent drivers. At Local 600, the Tool and Die Unit accepted the local leadership's slogan of "Ford Work for Ford Workers."

Following this logic would mean taking work away from workers at small parts plants and giving it to

laid off employees of the Big Three.

The UAW must insist that Ford not transfer work to undercut the position of a militant union leadership as was the case at Local 600. The union must also insist that in times of recession the companies not move their work to cheaper places. But it must not be made a fight of worker against worker for the few jobs left. That can only undermine solidarity and with it wages and working conditions for all.

The United National Caucus leadership of the Local 600 Tool and Die Unit is committed to a fight for jobs for all through a 30 hour week at full pay, full unemployment and SUB benefits for the duration of the layoffs, and no plant closures.

These demands were on signs carried at the demonstration by members of the UNC's Unemployment Committee. That is the way forward for our fight, which has now begun in earnest.

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# ATTICA INMATES

# Workers' Power

# TELL OF TORTURE



Attica prisoner Charles Pemasilice

## Attica, Sept. '71

In September of 1971, inmates of New York's Attica State Prison began what became the most famous prison rebellion in recent history.

Led and supported by black and white prisoners, the protest of inhuman conditions became highly political as it developed. The inmates declared that they were political prisoners, punished for being at the bottom of a society that keeps them there.

The rebellion turned to massacre when then-Governor Nelson Rockefeller sent the New York State Troopers into Attica. His decision broke off the negotiations for a peaceful settlement, and 43 people were killed, including 11 guards.

Rockefeller's forces immediately began a campaign to blame the prisoners. But as soon as the press was allowed in, the evidence showed that all shots had been fired by the police.

Now the participants in the Attica rebellion are on trial for charges ranging from assault to homicide.

Because the evidence clearly denies the state's story, many charges have been dropped before trial. There have been no convictions yet, but a few acquittals.

But the trials continue for the prisoners. Meanwhile Rockefeller has become Vice-President. By now he should be a convicted murderer.

BUFFALO—Attica prosecutors have been watching their carefully constructed cover-up fall apart for nine weeks. To trial observers it is becoming increasingly clear that the blood of 43 innocent people is on New York State's hands. The prosecutors have been desperately striving to shift the blame to the prisoners who rebelled.

Cruelly reproducing the exact conditions that led to the Attica rebellion, the state has used wanton torture to force "confessions" and pro-state testimony out of inmates. Inside prison walls the naked brutality of state repressive forces is right out front.

In the trial, one witness after another has repeated accounts of beatings, verbal abuse and death threats received from Attica prison guards after the putdown of the rebellion.

They described how the prison-

ers were stripped in a yard and forced to crawl in mud. Guards and State Troopers formed a "gauntlet" through which the prisoners were forced to run while clubs and guns struck their naked bodies.

They locked three men in a cell build for one for several days. Fed infrequently, one witness said he was given a bowl of food only after guards had put "piss and spit" in it.

told him to write down the names of the rebellion's "ringleaders."

The testimony also revealed that not only threats, but promises by the prosecutor, had brought witnesses to the stand.

Flowers got paroled a week after he gave the State a sworn statement about an event about which he had previously and repeatedly denied knowing anything.

### TEARS

In tears, witness John Flowers described how a guard had informed him that he had deliberately killed a good friend of Flowers'.

Witness Charles Colvin, stripped naked, had been put up against a wall; a white X was chalked on his back. He was told it marked him for death. Guards then took him to the administration building where they

Witness O.J. Newport was offered a transfer to a medium security prison, instead of staying at Auburn, a maximum-security penitentiary, in exchange for his testimony.

Almost 30 witnesses have appeared in court during the first seven weeks of the hearing. Once on the stand, many are unwilling or unable to continue bolstering the State's frame-up of the defendants.



# Prisoners

# Of Second Avenue Bell

NEW YORK—On February 27, a fire at New York Telephone's Second Avenue and 13th Street building burned out of control for 16 hours. Telephone workers described the smoke belching forth as "so dense you couldn't see the flames—smoke just seemed to come out of the brick walls."

"It couldn't happen to a nicer building," said one worker with 20 years seniority at the prison-like structure as he stood staring at the blaze.

Finally the fire was out and so were 173,000 phones throughout New York City. New York Tel began a repair blitz to rebuild phone service and their image.

For weeks one could not open a newspaper without reading about the Great New York Telephone Disaster.

Local politicians, telephone company bigshots and the news media daily reported on how well the telephone company operated under an emergency.

Ads in national news magazines stated, "One Bell System. It works. Even under fire."

### MIRACLE?

According to William Ellinghaus, President of NY Tel, the job of restoring telephone service, which would normally take eighteen months, is being accomplished in a few weeks. How are they able to accomplish their "Miracle on Second Avenue?"

By total disregard for the people who work there. Telephone workers are being pushed to the limit, harassed and subjected to appal-

lingly unsafe conditions so that Ma Bell can come out smelling like a rose.

All over the city, telephone workers are being forced to work overtime. In the burnt out building, it is assumed that you work seven days a week, twelve hours a day.

Workers who decide they would like to work a normal 8-5 day, for whatever reason, are made to feel they are letting Ma Bell down. They are often transferred to another work unit and another foreman.

Besides the long hours people work, they are subject to incredible harassment. Officially, there is one foreman for every four craftspeople. In reality there is one foreman for every two workers.

One worker described the scene: "In an area where 15 or 20 used to work there are now 300—maybe more."

There is so much big brass around that the foreman and the foreman's foreman no longer count. They are there to supervise and the bigshots make sure they do just that. Sometimes it takes the ridiculous form of a foreman following a

craftsman around watching that person sweep up scrap wire.

Another worker pointed out that the "foremen don't even know who you are—and they don't know what they are doing—and there are thousands of them not knowing what they are doing."

### VINYL CHLORIDE

The conditions people work under are unbelievable. All over the building there is a horrible stench. It is not just smoke fumes people are breathing in but fumes from burnt vinyl chloride—the same stuff recently found to cause liver cancer. The only protection people get is a totally useless mask.

People work in teams where they have to talk to their partners. But they can't talk through those masks. The telephone company has not uttered a word about the dangers of vinyl chloride.

One worker explained that "they're afraid if people knew what they were breathing in twelve hours a day, they wouldn't be so willing to risk their lives to preserve Ma Bell's good name."

In any given shift there are about 2,000 people working in a building meant to hold 300. Yet, no provisions have been made for evacuating these people. If anything happened, hundreds would be trampled to death in an effort to leave the building.

The unions have done nothing. Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 1101 (the local for plant workers) and CWA Local 1190 (Western Electric) allowed these unsafe conditions to exist. They ignored a perfect opportunity to make demands on the company.

### LAYOFFS

Before the fire, there were meetings and memorandums concerning layoffs. 1101's response was to take the company's word that they were not going to lay off. Now, when it is in a position of strength, 1101 could demand a written addendum to the contract guaranteeing no layoffs. 1101 has done nothing.

Last fall, in New York City Western Electric workers were laid

off. Many from the Second Avenue building. Local 1190 could have demanded their recall before any overtime was worked.

Not only did 1190 remain silent on this issue, but they postponed indefinitely a walkout over an absence control plan. Instead of using this opportunity to win gains for their members, the bureaucrats in 1101 and 1190 have let the company do whatever it pleases.

Among the ranks there is growing dissatisfaction. According to one worker, "The telephone company needs us now, but do you think they'll remember our hard work after the building is back in shape and they decide to lay off?"

There is another lesson to learn—the CWA will not fight the company unless the rank and file forces it to.

The Great New York Telephone Disaster can be a victory for telephone workers if these lessons are learned. It can be a victory if rank and file workers begin organizing to win back the union and make it fight in the workers' interests.

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