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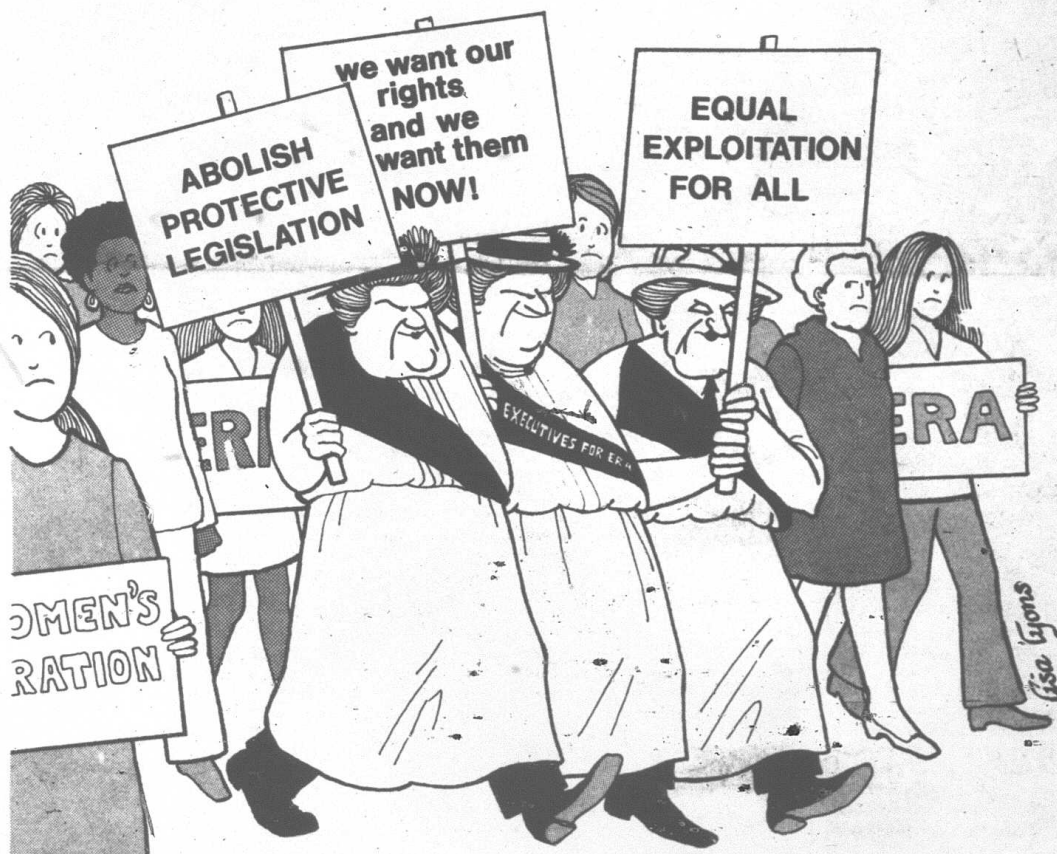
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Women and the ERA



Tombs Revolt - GM Offensive
The Scranton Report - Hardhats
New Stage in Palestine

A New Stage In Palestine

EDITORIAL



—UPI Photo

Palestine commandos in action against Jordanian forces in Amman.

Events since the June 1967, 6 Day War, have sustained the basic analysis of the international socialist position. We reaffirm our position that two nations inhabit Palestine, that both have the right to free, national self-development and self-determination. The clash of these rights, both organized by reactionary nationalisms, and both refusing to recognize the rights of the other nation, has led to a vicious cycle of national chauvinism, war and imperialist intervention, leaving the Middle East a major battlefield between the two imperialist camps.

The only way to break out of this vicious cycle is to develop a program and movement which breaks the ties between the masses of Arab and Jewish workers and peasants and their reactionary, nationalistic ruling classes, and unites them in a common revolutionary struggle from below for a socialist, bi-national Palestine in a Middle Eastern Socialist Federation.

We are against Israeli expansionism and the occupation, for the de-Zionization of the state of Israel, and for the return of the Arab refugees to their homes and land, or for their compensation, to be freely decided by them. We are also against the destruction of the state of Israel by outside forces, just as we were and are against the destruction of the Palestinian Arab state by Israel and Transjordan. Such a solution can only lead to either new slaughters, or a new nationalist, guerrilla movement, this time organized from the Jewish side.

The New Diaspora

The war of '67 has proven the bankruptcy of Zionist policy. No matter how great, or frequent, the Israeli military victories, Israel remains an alien intrusion into the Middle East, incapable of developing a political solution leading to its integration into the area. It can only continue to exist on the basis of Arab backwardness in military technology. When inevitably, sooner or later, the Arabs develop modern military capability, the new Jewish ghetto will either be destroyed, or the conflict will lead to nuclear war. The Israeli government cannot impose its "peace" on the area, because the Palestinian people will not accept a defeat which means their dissolution as a national entity.

Indeed, the military defeat of the Arab regimes has meant the greater determination of the Palestinian Arabs to rely upon themselves rather than the Arab governments. Now, more than even before the military defeat of '67, the Palestinian Arabs have shown their historical viability as a nation. The Palestinian diaspora has acted as a leaven throughout the Middle East, gaining the active sympathy and support of

the Arab masses, and acting as a potential threat to all of the existing Arab regimes. Moreover, cleavages have begun to appear in official Israeli society, which almost entirely, until now, denied the national existence of the Palestinian Arab nation.

With the occupation of Gaza, the West Bank, Old Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights, all of Palestine, and a majority of the Palestinian Arab nation, are under Israeli occupation. The right and duty of the Palestinian Arab nation to defend itself, and to drive out the occupiers, is the same right any other occupied nation has. Not to resist could only mean a shameful collaborationism.

The methods of resistance are sharply delineated and constricted by the repressive policies of the Israeli occupiers, who deny all democratic rights to the occupied Arabs, and severely persecute even Israeli Arabs who engage in political opposition. While we may politically disagree with particular stands and tactics of the resistance, we recognize the right and duty of the Arabs to resist and expel the occupiers by all necessary means.

Trends in the Resistance

The defeat of 1967 also sent a shock-wave throughout the Arab peoples. All of the regimes, not just the traditional, feudal ones, but the more modern bureaucratic-military dictatorships as well, proved incapable of providing an adequate defense against Israel. The decline of faith in the status quo regimes, Nasser's included, led to greater radicalization among sections of Arab society, the Palestinians in particular.

The defeat made a mockery of the slogan of driving the Jews into the sea. Through self-interest, more and more the Palestinian Arabs have been forced to recognize that a chauvinistic, racist, anti-Israel line is a dead-end. Within the main tendencies of the Palestinian resistance (Fatah, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Popular Front) there have begun to develop ideas of a secular Palestine with rights for Jews and Arabs. These trends still remain ambiguous at best, with no group standing for the right of Jewish self-determination, or recognizing the right of the state of Israel to exist. Nonetheless their development is an advance over the previous racism and chauvinism of most Arab groups.

A most significant development within the resistance has been the emergence of the Democratic Popular Front, which bases itself on a class struggle approach, stands for the independent organization of the working class, and defends and develops trade unions of workers and peasants in Jordan. They are revolutionary opponents of all existing Arab regimes, and proponents of a soviet, or

[continued on page 14]

Workers' Power

A revolutionary socialist biweekly, published by the International Socialists.

Subscriptions: \$3.50 a year; Supporting Subscriptions: \$5 a year; Foreign Subscriptions: \$5 a year; Bundles of 10 copies for ten copies or more; Introductory Subscriptions: \$1 for three months.

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14131 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park, Michigan 48203



No. 23

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14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Michigan 48203. Subscriptions: \$3.50 per year. Supporting subscriptions: \$5. Foreign subscriptions: \$5. Bundles of 10 copies or more: 10c per copy. Introductory subscriptions: \$1 for 3 months. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *Workers' Power*, which are expressed in editorials.

Published bi-weekly except semi-monthly in December and monthly in July and August by the International Socialist Publishing Co. at 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich. 48203. Second class postage paid at Detroit, Michigan. Send notice of undelivered copies or change of address to *Workers' Power*, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

Workers' Power is a member of the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) and a subscriber to Liberation News Service and G.I. Press Service.

Fifty years ago women won the right to vote; now, according to many reports, they are about to take a second step on the road to equality. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which states that "Equality of rights under law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex..." has passed the House of Representatives and is now before the Senate. If it passes this body it will go to the states for ratification.

But is this in fact a step forward for the women's movement? Will the ERA help women to achieve greater equality, or will it give token aid to a few women at the expense of the majority? What will the amendment mean for all working women who are protected from the worst exploitative practices of their employers by the collection of protective laws? Unfortunately all evidence indicates that the passage of the ERA will mean the negation of protective legislation. Support to a law which leaves most working women at the mercy of their bosses is out of the question.

This amendment is not new; it was first proposed 47 years ago in the flush of the victory of the women's suffrage movement. One might ask then, why is it so popular today? Obviously, the existence of a women's movement for the first time in 50 years is part of the answer, probably the most important part. But it is not the only factor involved. While the pressure of the women's liberation movement gave first impetus to the passage of the amendment, the fact that it might open up opportunities for employers to do away with protective legislation is also involved.

Does this seem preposterous? What has made employers think that the passage of an equal rights amendment would benefit them? One need only look at the results of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to understand the answer. As a joke, and in the hopes that it would prevent passage of the bill, Southern legislators added the word "sex" to a list of other prohibitions against discrimination in hiring practices. Title VII, as that article of the bill was called, has benefited some women, but it has also been used as an attack on the working conditions of women workers, by invalidating protective laws which apply only to women.

Hard-Won Gains

A look at existing protective legislation should clarify its importance to women workers. Over the past sixty years a number of laws have been passed in many states which grant some protection to working women. These laws are the direct result of numerous, heated struggles on the part of women and organized members of the working class. They not only include limits on hours and set minimum wages, but they also cover the total range of working conditions which women face. Requirements for rest areas, toilet facilities and elevators, mandatory rest and meal breaks, regulations forcing management to supply all uniforms and tools which are required for work, prohibitions against night work, and restrictions on the amount of weight women can lift are all part of the collection of laws known as protective legislation.

For the 85 percent of all working women who are not unionized, these laws form the only basis of protection from the unhindered caprice of their employers. In most cases those covered solely by these laws are the poorest and most exploited sectors of the female working class. Examples include the women who work in the fields of Calif-

ornia agriculture, and some 100,000 needle trade workers in the Los Angeles area who are largely chicana and black. Unionized women also benefit, since this legislation leaves the union free to fight for workers' rights beyond the level achieved by the protective laws.

Men have also benefited from protective legislation. In factories where both men and women work it is so obviously discriminatory to give lunch breaks to women and not to men, that they are given to all workers regardless of sex.

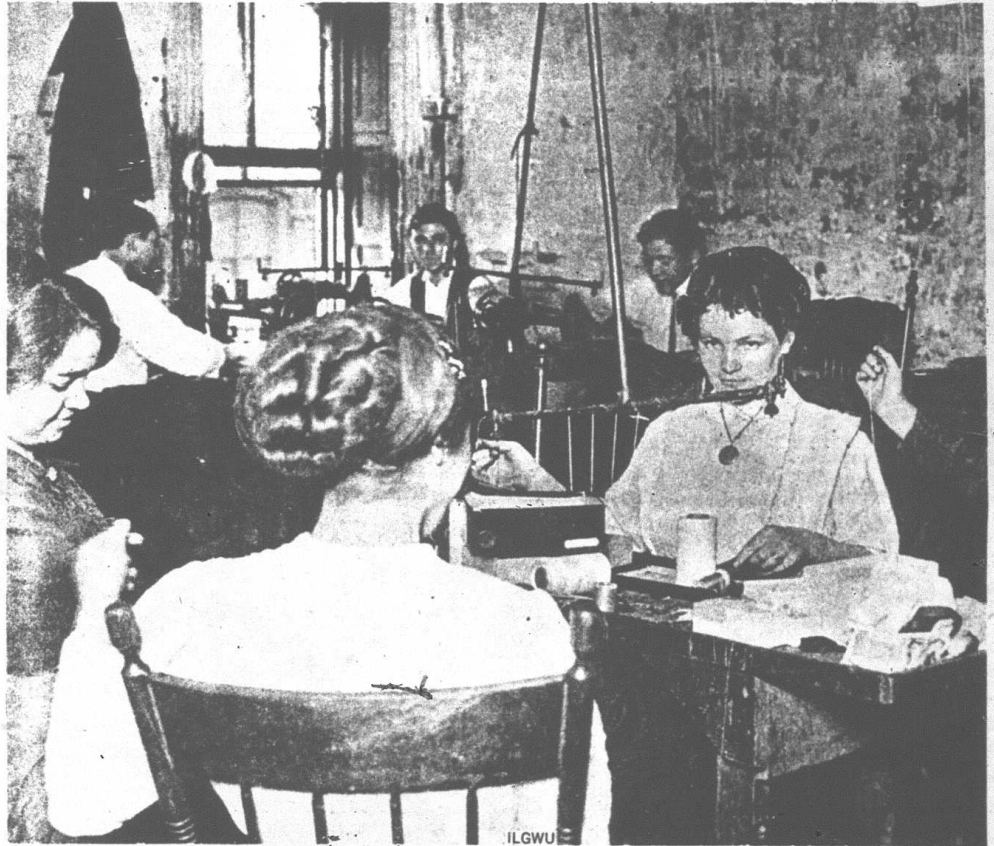
Armed with this interpretation, employers have already begun to move against protective legislation. In the winter of 1969, the Fibreboard Corporation in Antioch, California forced women to work 16 to 17 hours a day, and to lift back-breaking weights. When their union refused to defend them, they organized a caucus to fight for their rights [See *International Socialist*, December 1969; "Women Incorporated," by Susan Strashun.]. How did the company justify this act? — Title VII of the

to the night, both in direct violation of the state protective laws, but justified, according to the Corporation, by Title VII.

Thus, a clear attack has begun on the rights of women workers under the guise of carrying out the letter of the law of Title VII. Supporters of the ERA maintain that their amendment is different. They even quote from Senate Hearings to the effect that the intent of the amendment is not to negate laws which "confer" rights, but only those

Protective Legislation and the ERA

Marilyn Danton



Moreover, in the case of elevators, or rest and toilet facilities, it is often only possible, or just as easy, to give them to both men and women, as to only women. In general, in a society which sees men as superior to women many rights granted by law to women will also be granted to men so as not to give the appearance of granting more to women than to men. (This is not to say that men receive all the benefits from protective laws that women do. They don't, which is why we demand that such laws be extended to men.)

How could the Civil Rights Act be used to abrogate protective laws? The answer is quite simple. Since these laws are special laws applying only to women, they are discriminatory on the basis of "sex" and thus prohibited by Title VII of the Act. Moreover, since most protective legislation is state law, it is automatically superceded by federal law. Women cannot be treated preferentially without violating this act.

Civil Rights Act.

More recently, a vice president at Pacific Telephone sent out a memo to managers to ignore certain provisions of the state protective laws on the grounds that they were invalidated by a US District Court ruling from Los Angeles. This ruling stated that these laws were no longer in effect because they were in conflict with Title VII. Similarly, in Oregon in the middle of September, the State Wage and Hour Commission took away the right of women to have two 10 minute rest periods in a day, and 40 hours in a week. Their rationale was possible violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines as promulgated in the summer of 1969. This commission was set up to enforce the provisions of the Civil Rights Act.

Finally, less than a week ago, Crown Zellerbach of Antioch, California, denied meal breaks to men and women, and forced women to work late in-

which "deny" rights — such as weight-lifting restrictions, maximum hours, laws against night work, and so on! This is serious enough, but, more importantly, it has been practically assured that the amendment would invalidate all preferential and special legislation for women. This is exactly what the Department of Labor and the enforcing officer, Attorney-General Mitchell, have stated. Moreover, there has been no refutation of this statement from either the pro or con forces in the Washington hearings. The situation, then, is quite clear: the passage of the ERA would mean an end to all protective legislation for women.

General Offensive

The fact that employers were able to use Title VII as a weapon against working women when the interpretation was unclear, means that they most certainly will use the ERA, which the Department of Labor and high administration offi-

cialists interpret as invalidating protective laws. This must be seen as another blow in the general offensive by the ruling class against the conditions of working people.

Anti-labor speeches and threats, the postal reform bill, and the tough line taken by GM officials against the UAW are all part of an increasingly uncompromising stance on the part of the bourgeoisie, and can only be understood in the context of a general crisis in the capitalist system which has necessitated an intensified exploitation of the working class. Protective legislation is a barrier to such an offensive, and must go. No one expected that the Civil Rights Act could be used in such a fashion; but this is not the case with the ERA. The fact that several state Chambers of Commerce and employers' organizations are campaigning for its passage should have left no doubt as to its effects.

A real tragedy lies in the fact that it is the women's liberation movement which is handing this weapon to the ruling class, as Meany and the right wing of the labor bureaucracy are so fond of pointing out. One of the major forces behind the ERA is the National Organization of Women (NOW), an organization which represents the right wing of the women's liberation movement, and consists largely of middle class professional women. NOW is opposed to protective legislation because it has been used to discriminate against women in hiring, promotions, and other aspects of employment.

Protection for All

These laws have been used to discriminate, not just against professional women, but also against working women. But total abrogation, which a portion of this organization advocates and actively supports, is not the only alternative. Instead of supporting an amendment which will most certainly invalidate protective laws, one could propose an amendment which would either retain existing legislation, or, even better, extend this legislation to men.

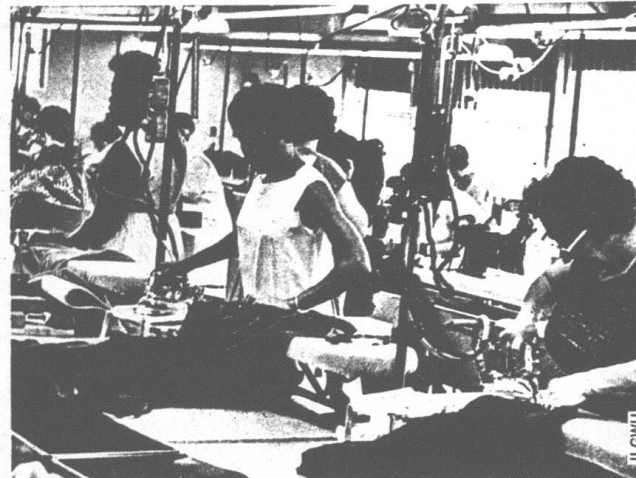
No one should have to work more than 40 hours a week, or be deprived of adequate rest areas and toilet facilities, not to speak of rest and meal breaks, minimum wages, and so on. A movement to extend protective legislation could also enlist men in the struggle for women's rights, and for their own rights, thus strengthening the movement.

NOW rejected this alternative because it feared that an amendment worded in such a way would not pass. The organization was explicit: Understanding the risk to working women, it maintains its position that protective legislation stands in its way, and should be done away with. It is correct to assume that an amendment worded in such a way

as to extend protective laws to men, or even to only maintain existing ones, would probably not pass. To the ruling class it has no redeeming features, unlike the amendment as it now stands.

NOW is not the only force in the women's liberation movement supporting the ERA. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) is also in support of the amendment. They deny that it would abrogate protective legislation, basing their interpretation on testimony in the Senate Judiciary Committee. In addition, the SWP maintains that the existence of a strong united women's movement will insure that the amendment will not be interpreted in a fashion detrimental to working women.

Let's examine this "strong united women's movement." The women's



liberation movement of today is neither strong nor united, and its consciousness is quite low. The constituency is basically middle class professional and radical feminist. Few working women are involved, and thus its consciousness is primarily middle class in orientation. But it is *working class* consciousness which will be needed to fight the abrogation of protective legislation, since this legislation is only in the immediate interests of working women. And at present, this consciousness does not exist. In fact, if the women's liberation movement was conscious of the needs of working women and the importance of involving them in the struggle for women's liberation, it would not support the amendment as it is presently constituted.

What we are beginning to see, then, are the first divisions along class lines in the women's movement. The question of women's liberation, like the

liberation of any oppressed group in a capitalist society, cannot be separated from exploitation in that society. The women's liberation movement must ultimately understand the need for socialist revolution in order to lay the basis for their liberation. Thus, it is to working women that they must look to lead the struggle. But the very fact that an organized sector of the current movement is opposed to protective legislation will make it extremely difficult for class conscious working women to see the women's liberation movement as fighting for their interests.

If the amendment passes, the more conscious sectors of the class will certainly not join a movement which in fact campaigned for a piece of legisla-

tion in support of a demand that protective legislation be extended to men. We support this effort and will fight within the current women's movement for this position.

Let it not be thought for a minute that we are opposed to equal rights. We are for an equal rights amendment which achieves equal protection for men and women workers, as well as equal rights for women. It is not so much that an equal rights amendment would change the material conditions of women, but that it would have a generally beneficial effect on the movement.

Double-Edged Sword

In the first place, the passage of such an amendment would indicate its limits in the struggle for equality. Just as the numerous civil rights measures passed by Congress did not even begin to deal with the real problem of racism, so the passage of an equal rights law for women would indicate the depth of the problem of women's oppression. This would have the effect of raising the consciousness of the movement, by bursting illusions the movement has about the system.

Moreover, the passage of an amendment would also raise the consciousness generally of women not involved in the women's movement, and begin to combat the ideology of male chauvinism which permeates this society. These advantages make it quite clear that the passage of an equal rights amendment which did not form the basis for the destruction of protective legislation would be a step forward for the movement. Support for the existing one must be seen, however, as at least implicitly anti-working class.

Thus, there is no alternative available but to oppose the present ERA, no matter how unfortunate it might seem to do so. Even understanding the benefits to be derived from the passage of this amendment, as discussed above, its major impact will be to leave women workers open to further exploitation. Therefore a demand must be raised which benefits all workers, male and female, a demand that protective legislation be extended to men. Such an action would preclude the use of this legislation as a source of discrimination against women, while assuring the minimal protection which these laws do afford at present.

Moreover, at such a time the passage of an ERA would then be immediately on the agenda, and its effect would be positive and beneficial, instead of the present situation where the net effect would be negative and destructive, not only to the women's movement and women workers, but to the working class as a whole. ■

On Wednesday, October 7, 10 women factory workers at the Hostess Cake Division of the Continental Baking Co. in Detroit went to court in an attempt to preserve protective legislation in the state of Michigan. The suit was filed as a "class action" on behalf of 200,000 employed women in the state.

This action was the result of a ruling last December 30 by the Attorney General of Michigan, that Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act overturned the state protective laws. The main law affected by the ruling limited the number of hours a woman must work. It stated that, in Michigan, a woman could not be forced to work more than an average of nine hours per day, 54

hours per week, or more than 10 hours on any single day.

Prior to the ruling, women at the Hostess plant were on three shifts per day, of eight hours each. However, after the ruling, the plant moved to two shifts, and the women have worked an average of 67 hours per week.

The suit is sponsored by the National Coalition for the Advancement of Women, whose Chairwoman is Myra K. Wolfgang, vice-president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' and Bartenders Union. Myra Wolfgang is also an outspoken critic of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment because of the effects it would have on protective legislation throughout the country.



Hostess Cake And Title VII

AUTO STRIKE '70

G.M. ON THE ATTACK

James Coleman

Ten days after the GM strike began, the UAW International bureaucracy for the first time publicized the demands GM is making around health benefits and working conditions.

These are not counter-proposals, in answer to union demands for improvements. They are a direct attack on workers' living standards and working conditions. They fall into two main categories:

(1) *Health benefits.* Right now, the companies pay the full cost of the premiums on medical benefits — a right the workers won in earlier struggles. GM is demanding that increases in the premiums after September 1971 come out of the workers' paychecks. The UAW calculates that if medical costs keep going up at present rates, this would cost each worker \$192 the first year — and more each following year. The company is trying to put the cost of illness back on the workers' shoulders, and to sneak back a part of whatever it finally grants in a flat wage settlement.

(2) *Working conditions.* GM wants to reduce the representation work of shop committeemen; make the union pay part of their wages (now the company pays all); and weaken the grievance procedure and the machinery for handling work standards. They also want grievances over line speed and work standards to be dropped at the end of each model year and not carried over into the next model year; since grievances can take months to process, this would give the company a free hand for most of the year, and leave them free

to reintroduce the same procedure after change-over. Finally, they want to stop probationary employees (less than 90 days) from filing grievances on line speed and work standards at all.

So far there is no sign that the UAW bureaucracy will really fight against these demands. They were all known soon after negotiations began in July, but the bureaucracy waited until after the strike started before reporting on them. Even then, Woodcock did nothing more than to list them in a news-letter sent to Local officers.

Woodcock has said even less about two even more outrageous demands, which the auto companies say will fight "absenteeism." GM and the others are demanding a reduction in the time a worker can be absent without leave, before losing seniority, and they are demanding the right to have company doctors check on medical absence. Woodcock's only response, when this was first raised by Ford, was that this would punish everyone because of a few "bad" workers.

A union president who was really fighting for the ranks would have said that working conditions are so intolerable that workers *have* to go AWOL to keep themselves from breaking physically and mentally.

Work is a Prison

The truth about working conditions leaked into print when the *Detroit Free Press* — which presents the companies' side of things seven days a week and seven columns a page — decided to de-

vote part of two columns of its Sept. 20 issue to an interview with three workers at Ford's River Rouge plant.

They were careful *not* to interview the youngest workers, the ones the companies and the union are both most worried about. All three have 5 — 10 years seniority and expect to work at the Rouge until they retire. But if the *Free Press* hoped these more experienced men would be more docile, they were disappointed.

"I dropped my glasses yesterday," one of them said, "and I didn't have time to pick them up for two hours. You get behind and you can never catch up. They never stop coming at you."

"You got to turn your mind off on the way to work," said a second. "That's the only way you can make it. I can remember when I walked into the plant, saw the cars waiting there and my tools, and just turned around and walked out."

"It gets worse each year," the third said. "Each year the line is a little faster and the man with the stopwatch watches you all day and has the foreman add a little extra to your job. Mentally, working there is just like being in prison. Some days your mind just can't take it anymore. You wake up at night and you are doing your job in your sleep. That's scary, man. That's enough to make me take a couple of days off."

If Woodcock were fighting for the ranks he would say, "These conditions are enough to make anyone take a couple of days off." But if he did, he would logically have to follow through — the union would have to organize slow-

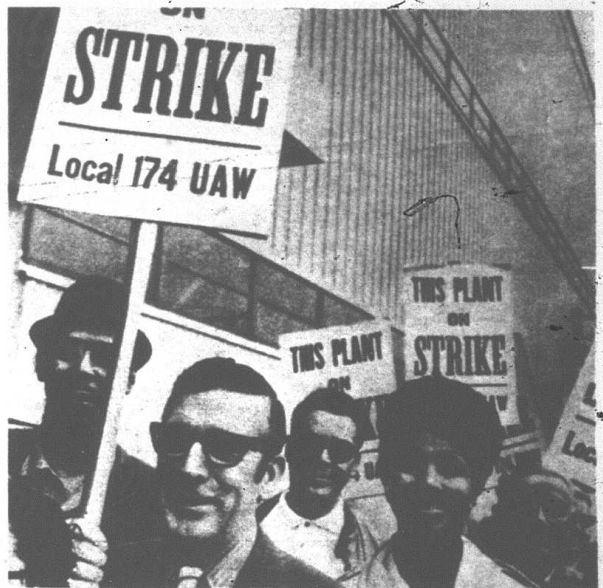
downs on the shop floor; it would have to fight for the right to negotiate line speed and production quotas — a right the UAW once had, but bargained away in the late 1940's; it would have to fight for more stewards, and for the right to strike at any time over working conditions.

Stop the Giveaway

But the bureaucracy won't fight over working conditions. Its strategy is always to *bargain away* working conditions for a showy wage hike — or one not so showy, for example if Woodcock also bargains away the cost of medical premiums. More basically, the union helps the company maintain discipline on the shop floor because it uses its own control over the workers as a lever in negotiations. In return for a wage hike, the union can promise the company to help keep the workers pretty steadily on the job until the next contract. No wildcats — no loss of production. The company can pay a little extra for that. It saves money in the long run.

But in following this strategy, the union gives away the workers' safety and health. Woodcock will not fight for humanized working conditions; the ranks will have to do so for themselves, by organizing rank and file committees to raise programs in the union and to struggle on the shop floor.

A Steward for Every Foreman — Make Line Speed and Production Quotas Negotiable Issues, with Ratification by the Ranks — No Concessions to Management on Work Discipline Rules. ■



WHY IS THIS MAN SMILING?

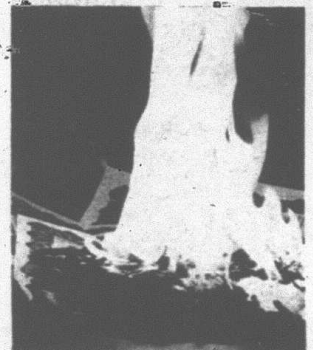
Money To Burn

Auto workers on strike against GM are losing wages at a rate of \$12 million a day. That's a big bite, but it's nothing compared to the \$90 million GM is losing in sales every day. Out of the \$90 million daily intake, GM pays only \$12 million in wages, plus \$20 million in taxes and \$40 million in supplies. *The other \$18 million is profit.* That helps to explain where GM Board Chairman James Roche's salary of \$760,000 (not counting his expense account for the automobiles, yachts, airplanes and houses provided for his use) comes from.

GM (and Ford and Chrysler, etc.) not only manages to take \$1.50 off the back of every worker for every dollar it pays out; it also manages to take back what

it pays out, 1) "passing along" wage increases by raising prices — Ford has conveniently done this before the strike is settled, thus enabling it to pocket the difference until they are forced to grant a wage increase. 2) "Passing along" taxes by including them in the price of cars so that everyone pays twice: once in their own taxes and again in hidden company taxes. 3) Getting what it can't pass along to the consumer by speeding up the lines and taking more out of the workers' hides.

It's a nice racket (if you're a big corporation). Then to add insult to injury, they and the government try to tell us that inflation is caused by what they call excessive wage demands!



The first UAW strike against GM was the Flint sit-down strike of 1937. It lasted for six bitter weeks and was at times marked by bloodshed. GM called in the police and the National Guard in an effort to crush the strike. When it was over, not only had GM been "cracked" and the union successfully installed at last, but the success of other CIO organizing drives in steel, electric and elsewhere was insured as employers retreated in fear of having to undergo what GM had gone through.

Work or Starve

Prior to the strike, GM was a kingdom — run by management. Workers had no rights, no say about what went on, and no choices except whether or not to continue working. Since that choice boiled down to "work or starve," it was no choice at all. The corporation exercised total domination over the workers and the community in which they lived.

The company was rich then, as it is today. It employed 55 percent of all U.S. auto workers in 69 plants. Ten million dollars were paid in salaries to 350 of its officers and directors. Its two top officers received \$375,000 each in 1935.

Auto workers brought home \$900 a year — at a time when the government said \$1600 was the minimum necessary for a family of four to live decently. Foremen could fire at will. Lay-offs between models lasted 3-5 months, without unemployment insurance. There was no seniority, so foremen laid-off whomever they pleased. "If he happened to like you," said a worker at the Chevy Gear and Axle Plant, "or if you sucked around him and did him favors — or if you were one of the bastards who worked like hell and turned out more production — you might be picked to work a few weeks longer than the next guy."

But the worst part was the working conditions. It was the speed-up more than anything else that organized GM. "We didn't even have time to go to the toilet," complained a Buick worker. "You have to run to the toilet and run

back. If you had to ...take a crap, if there wasn't anybody to relieve you, you had to run away and tie the line up, and if you tied the line up you got hell for it."

A Flint Chevrolet worker said that "the supervisors that they chose ... were just people with a bullwhip. All they were interested in was production. They treated us like a bunch of coolies. 'Get it out. Get it out. If you cannot get it out, there are people outside who will get it out.' That was their whole theme."

Genora Johnson described her husband, Kermit, one of the leaders of the strike as "a young man grown old from the speed-up. He has come home at night, when the new models were starting, so tired he couldn't eat. He was wakened the next morning with his hands so swollen he couldn't hold a fork."

The wife of another striker said that she would "like to shout from the housetops what the company's doing to our men. My husband, he's a torch solderer. You should see him and the rest of the men in the buses. So tired like they was dead, and irritable. And then at night in bed he shakes, his whole body, he shakes."

Reign of Terror

Spies were sent into the work force or recruited from it to report on dissidents and union advocates, and to supply management with information that could serve as a basis for dismissal. A spy who had worked his way into the ranks could attempt to discredit a union leader by bringing false charges against him. If he became a union leader he could help to destroy a union by encouraging it to call a premature strike. Between 1934 and 1936, GM spent \$1 million on spies and employed at least 15 detective agencies. A reign of terror existed, in which men were afraid to read or talk about the union even to their neighbors because they never knew who might be watching them.

Moreover, GM set up company unions which had no power and were incapable of acting independently. Workers were

Sit-Down

The Flint Strike of 1937

Jack Trautman

forced to participate in them.

There had been previous attempts to organize auto — under AFL auspices. They had failed primarily because of the AFL approach to unionism, which involved: (1) splitting the workers into craft unions and thereby preventing them from effectively acting together; (2) keeping control of the union out of the hands of the workers by preventing the different unions from associating together and making them responsive only to the national leadership, which was appointed and bureaucratically controlled by the AFL; (3) avoiding militant action on the part of the workers, and gaining government and employer support by convincing them that the new UAW was a good union. Why should anyone join an organization that was obviously unable to protect him or her from the sort of punitive measures likely to come from GM?

But the CIO was just then coming into existence, based on a program of militant, industrial organization, and much more receptive than the staid, bureaucratic AFL to the ideas of industrial democracy — control from below. In July, 1936 the UAW, still a small organization, with most of its membership outside Michigan, joined the CIO. For the union to get established a battle would have to take place — most likely with GM, and the only question was when. In such a battle the workers would have to depend on themselves and control the strike, which was one reason why the AFL did not want to resort to such a tactic.

Seven work stoppages, provoked by speed-ups and wage cuts, occurred at Fisher Body no. 1 in November, 1936. When a foreman fired one man from a three-man unit and ordered the other two to do the work, they refused and were fired the next morning. Word spread quickly through the 7000-man plant — "nobody starts working." The company quickly gave in and rehired the men. After each such incident the union signed up large numbers of members. But the union leadership still did not want to begin a strike — they didn't think the union was ready for it.

Sit Down, Sit Down

Local strikes had begun at Atlanta, Cleveland and Anderson, Indiana. These were not vital spots of the GM empire. But its heart was in Flint, and in Flint the auto workers were talking about joining the strike.

On December 30th, the night shift at Fisher Body Plant no. 1 reported for work. The men found the dies on which ¼ of GM production depended being loaded on railroad cars to be taken out of Flint to somewhere where the union was weak. Immediately, the men decided to take over the plant and make sure they kept their jobs.

Unfinished Buick bodies were placed in front of the entrance to form a barricade. A steel frame was soldered in front of every door. Bullet-proof sheets covered the windows. Foremen and others hostile to the strike were ejected. The building belonged to the strikers.

The strike spread quickly. Fisher Body no. 2 was closed down at once. On January 1, all Chevrolet and Buick plants were closed. By January 7, 100,000 GM workers had stopped working. On January 3, a national union conference was held in Flint and demands for the strike were formulated. They included: union recognition for the UAW, reinstatement of all workers fired because of union membership or activity, seniority to govern all lay-offs, higher wages, a thirty-hour week with time and a half for overtime, abolition of piece-work, and a slowing down of the assembly line.

National Struggle

Support poured in from all over. Auto workers from Detroit and Toledo regularly visited Flint. They joined the picket line, visited with the strikers and stood by to protect them against police attack. Rubber workers in Akron, Ohio, who had recently carried out their own sit-down strike, sent money and manpower. "If them Flint alliance men rush you," they wrote, "don't be bashful in asking for rubber workers. We are with you to a man ... Don't back down one inch, this is our fight same as yours."

Throughout the country the eyes of workers everywhere rested on the auto workers in Flint, who had dared to take GM into their hands. On the outcome of this struggle rested not only the living and working conditions of the men in Flint, but those of hundreds of thousands of production workers throughout the country.

The business world recognized the importance of the struggle and the press made constant attacks on the strikers. There were continual references to "Lewis' strike" (John L. Lewis was head of the United Mine Workers and of the CIO). *Business Week* editorialized: "By means of sitdown strikes, the country has been put at the mercy of thoroughly irresponsible groups which in effect have no leadership, no control, no authority that can restrain them. Great industries, whose operations affect the daily welfare of millions, are confronted with demands to sign contracts with groups which, day by day and hour by hour demonstrate that they have almost no control over their own people, no conception of the validity or the sanctity of a contract, no respect for property rights or for rights of any sort except their own."

Attacks were not confined to words. An injunction was issued, preventing

Time To Toss Him Off!



Labor Action



the workers from interfering with passage into or out of the plants, interfering with merchandise being delivered to and from the plants, picketing, staying in the plants, damaging property, intimidating employees who wished to work, using physical force upon them, or addressing "insulting or abusive language" to them or protecting or aiding anyone who did any of these acts, or conspiring to do any of these acts.

As one of the union leaders put it, "the only thing the writ permitted the union to do was to take a deep breath." GM, however, was prevented by public opinion from enforcing the injunction — when the UAW disclosed that the judge who had granted it held \$219,000 in GM stock.

On January 11, in 16 degree weather, the company turned off the heat and the light and prevented food from being brought into the strikers. Later that night, in what was to become known as the Battle of Bull's Run, the police charged, using tear gas, pistols and riot guns. The strikers fought back: with their hands they picked up the tear gas grenades and threw them back; they hurled cans, snowballs, milk bottles, door hinges, and pieces of pavement, and sprayed the police with water hoses. After many hours the police were forced to retreat and the company to turn the heat back on.

The National Guard was brought into Flint to intimidate the strikers; another injunction was served; GM attempted to

organize a back-to-work movement to weaken the strikers' morale; President Roosevelt, the "labor candidate," tried to force the union to accept GM's terms — all to no avail.

The managers and the corporate heads had good reason to fear the strike. The strikers were demanding a say in how the factory was to be run: how fast the lines should run and who should be hired and fired, and on what basis. Later on, in the 1946 strike, they were to go further and demand control over other management decisions — such as prices. But the precedent was set in 1937, when the workers demanded that they themselves — the people who produced the goods — should have a say in how they were produced.

Furthermore, in the tactic they had chosen — the sit-down strike — they were saying that it didn't matter who "owned" the factories. They worked in them, and if they had to take them over to win their strike, no piece of paper testifying ownership or threatening them with legal sanctions could dislodge them.

As the *Business Week* editorial illustrates, the bosses were upset that the strikers themselves were running the show. In those days the UAW was controlled by its members; there were no union bureaucrats to discipline the workers as there are today. The strike was no run by any authorities — it was run by the men inside the plant.

As soon as the plant had been secured,

the workers held a mass meeting and elected a strike strategy committee of five to lead the strike. Other committees were elected to take responsibility for the things that had to be done: information, sanitation, food, entertainment, education, athletics, and courts to try those who disobeyed the rules. Policy was set at the mass meetings held twice daily, and all members of committees were subject to immediate recall.

On February 11 a truce was signed. GM recognized the UAW; it promised not to interfere with the right of employees to be union members, gave assurances that there would be no discrimination against union members, and agreed to begin bargaining on the other union demands.

After the strike, UAW members had a sense of their own power. They weren't about to be beaten down easily again. Shop stewards aggressively defended the men and women and pushed for favorable settlement of their grievances. When the lines were speeded up, or when other grievances remained unsettled, the men had a simple way of responding: sit down and stop working. Management was much more inclined to listen to the workers under those conditions.

Within the next month there were sit-down strikes in St. Louis, Janesville, Cleveland and Flint. These were strikes called at local levels over immediate grievances. Moreover, the example of the GM strike gave impetus to others. On March 8 a sit-down at Chrysler began — a settlement was reached on April 6. By the summer of that year agreements had been reached with Hudson, Reo, Packard and Studebaker — only Ford remained unorganized.

Fight for Control

What was clear was that management no longer had sole control over what went on in the plant. The union was the tool of the workers and was used aggressively by them to protect themselves. The strike was a testimonial to the power that united workers can exert.

The struggle that began in Flint in 1937 is far from over. The critical question is still, who will control the shop floor and will the conditions of work be oppressive or not? The UAW of today

appears unwilling or unable to wage a determined battle around those questions and so the rank and file is forced now, as it was in Flint, to seize the initiative.

The lesson of the sit-down strike applies here: what makes the union strong is the men and women who are a part of it — their strength and determination to struggle, and their ability to control that struggle. Rank-and-file workers are going to have to fight to control the union: that fight and the battle over control of the shop floor are the same. ■

The Permanent War Economy

T. N. Vance

\$2.50 from I.S. National Office, 14131 Woodward, Highland Park, Michigan, 48203.

This volume contains a selection of materials from *The New International and Labor Action* on the subject of the "permanent war economy," i.e., the present stage of capitalism. It presents an approach to the Marxist analysis of late-capitalism, or "neo-capitalism," which is quite different from, say, that of Andre Gorz or Ernest Mandel or Baran-Sweezy. It definitively rejects the notion, implicit in Gorz and others, that capitalism has "solved the economic question" and that socialists must therefore base themselves on other problems (such as "life styles" for some); and it presents an analysis which shows up the extreme superficiality of the treatment of this question in Mandel's much overrated *Marxist Economic Theory*.

Most of the articles were written by T.N. Vance at around 1950, and they are presented not as the last word on the subject, but rather as the first serious attempt at an in-depth treatment. This book is a must for anyone who wants to work toward a serious understanding of the functioning of advanced capitalism.



The New York Times recently reported (Sept. 10) a tax scandal concerning a multi-millionaire in Italy. It seems that a certain Marquis Camillo Casati-Stampa di Soncino who had a reputed fortune of \$600 million, was paying income taxes on only \$3,200 a year.

Italy, however, is not the only country where the rich pay no taxes. Fortune Magazine reports (July 1970) that in this country there are 225 people who reported incomes over \$200,000 per year who paid no income taxes at all. Who does pay? The wage earner, of course. In 1967, 70 percent of all income tax revenue was from people who earned less than \$15,000 per year, and the situation is getting worse. The recent tax reform bill, much heralded for its attempt to make the rich pay, actually lowered the maximum tax rate from 70 percent to 50 percent. This means that even those people who earn over \$200,000 per year and do pay some taxes, will be paying even less now.

Nor is this all. Since 1960, the government has continually been shifting the

burden of taxes onto the individual tax payer, which means, onto the wage earner. In 1950, business paid 47.8 percent of federal taxes, while individuals paid only 39.2 percent. In 1967, business only paid 33.4 percent, while INDIVIDUALS paid 42.5 percent.

All indications are that this trend will be accelerated. As costs mount for such needed programs as education and pollution control, the government will again try to make the average working person pay most of the cost. For instance, the government, as part of its "attack" on pollution caused by leaded gasoline, is proposing a special tax on lead gasoline. This means an increase in the cost to you of about 3 cents per gallon. The real motivation behind the gas tax, as reported in the Times of 9/10/70, was: "Secretary of the Treasury David M. Kennedy told the House Ways and Means Committee that the government 'desperately' needed the revenue such a tax would produce in the immediate future."

The Rich Get Richer And The Poor Pay Taxes

Mike Urquhart

SPEEDUP IS SPEEDUP

Chris Harman

WEST OR EAST

The Western press has been full of renewed speculation about changes among the Russian rulers. This has been encouraged by the decision to put off the next Congress of the Russian Communist Party until next year, after repeated promises that it would meet this year.

What lies behind all this?

There is increasing evidence that the Russian economy is facing profound difficulties.

In December, according to Pravda, the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party "took note of the lagging behind in the rate of development in a number of branches of industry and the slow growth of labor productivity and the efficiency of social production... Mr. Brezhnev specifically complained of shortfalls behind planned targets in coal mining, ferrous metals, cement, chemicals, paper, petrochemicals, the railways and agriculture (particularly meat, milk, and eggs)."

Russian leaders have referred repeatedly to these difficulties in speeches since then.

According to Brezhnev (Pravda 24 April) "There are major shortcomings in capital construction. The overspending — and not of trifling amounts but by 50 to 100 per cent — of appropriations for construction ... has become quite widespread... The current increases in labor productivity cannot be considered satisfactory."

It was precisely such failures of the economy that caused the downfall of Khrushchev in 1964 and gave rise to the movement associated with Dubcek in Czechoslovakia towards the end of 1967.

From the speeches of the Russian leaders there is no way of telling how serious these failures are at the moment. But it is possible to see that they are worrying Brezhnev, Kosygin, and their friends.

Competition and Discipline

What are the origins of these failures? According to western commentators these show that "socialism cannot work." On the other hand, according to pro-Russian Communists, they are merely minor flaws in the onward march of "socialism."

If you look carefully at what the Russian leaders themselves say, you can easily see that in fact the economic problems of Russia have nothing whatever to do with "socialism" at all. They continually stress two points: the need of the Russian economy to "compete successfully" with the west and the difficulties that arise due to the "indiscipline" of the workers.

In a recent speech (according to Pravda 24 April), "Comrade-Brezhnev dwelt on the question of the economic competition between the two world systems (i.e. the Russian bloc and the west). This competition takes different forms, he said... The fundamental question is not how much you produce, but also at what cost, with what outlays of labor... It is in this field that the center of gravity in the competition between the two systems lies in our time. The all round development of socialist competition remains our constant concern today..."

He went on to point out that in this competition they were hampered by the failure of Russian workers to see things in this light.

"Speaking frankly, sometimes many of our rank-and-file workers and many of our executives need a heightened sense of responsibilities and discipline... There are frequent instances in which precious work time is frittered

away, people come to work late or fail to appear at all without valid reason, and cases of absenteeism, sometimes connected with drunkenness."

The controllers of Russian industry have gone out of their way to introduce measures which look very much like productivity deals in this country in order to encourage workers to work harder and be "more competitive." For instance, "regrading" measures are very important. "An important part in raising labor productivity is played by the movement to combine occupations."

An example managers are always being told to copy is that of the Schekino Chemical Combine where "a considerable amount of the funds economized by reducing the number of personnel is used for encouraging workers who have assumed additional obligations with respect for tending the machines... As a result the number of workers at Schekino was reduced by more than 800." (Both quotes from Novikov, in Kommunist, no. 3, 1969).

Nothing to Gain

But the increased economic problems of Russia's rulers seem to indicate that these moves to increase "productivity" are not being successful. For all the talk about "indiscipline" and a "lack of commitment of workers to the work process" indicates one thing: the Russian workers feel that they as a class have nothing to gain from working harder to build up industry to compete with the west.

After all, it is now 40 years since Stalin first decided to compete in this way. In this time industry has grown enormously, vast formations of tanks which are tanks capable of invading Czechoslovakia have been built up, massive nuclear weapon systems capable of threatening nuclear destruction, whether to the west or to China, have been developed, satellites have been sent into space.

But the average Russian worker has scarcely benefited at all from this. He still has an average pay packet equivalent to about \$25 a week in this country.

He still has an average living space of about eight square yards in his home (just imagine how much room that would leave you).

No wonder he sees little point in working harder — doing his work mates out of a job in the process — just to increase "productivity" even further.

So the two roots of the present crisis in Russia are the fact that the workers resent having no control over production, plus the fact that production is determined by competition.

But no change in the Russian leadership can deal with these problems. They are basic to the whole system that Stalin and his successors have built up in the USSR — (which is why we call it "state capitalist") — just as they are basic to the private capitalist system that exists in the west.

A real and lasting solution to the economic problems of the Russian bloc, as of the western bloc, requires that production should be for the satisfaction of human need, not for competition.

But this first requires a genuine socialist revolution in which the now massive Russian working class once again takes control of industry and links up with workers in the west. ■

[Reprinted from SOCIALIST WORKER, an English International Socialist weekly, July 25, 1970.]

BREZHNEV



How Are You Gonna Keep 'Em Down On The Farm...



LINS

On Sept. 26, Cuba's Foreign Minister, Raul Roa, offered to sign an agreement with the United States for the return of hijackers. Roa said Cuba would return hijackers if the US did the same, if the agreement covered boat as well as plane hijackings, and if there were no exceptions.

One hijacker has already been turned over by Cuba after direct negotiations, and will face trial in the United States.

The US government's interest in getting an agreement with Cuba is clear. Every hijacking costs airlines and insurance companies millions of dollars. To come to the rescue of these corporations, the US government is willing to abandon its own nine-year old rule of never negotiating directly with the Castro government.

Cuba's interest in an agreement becomes clear from Roa's statement that it must apply to boat as well as plane hijackers. Hijacking is increasingly being used by Cubans who want to escape to the United States or other countries.

No Asylum

Castro has always claimed that anyone is free to leave Cuba. Ten years ago, when the Cuban Revolution was new and only the middle and upper classes were discontented, the government did not restrict people wishing to leave. But as years went by, the numbers wishing to leave Cuba did not grow smaller. Instead, the government squeezed off the legal ways of leaving. Now there are only a few flights leaving each month. Hijacking, especially of fishing boats by their crews, has gone up. In addition to getting the refugees out of Cuba, this disrupts Cuba's fishing industry.

Another motive for Cuba in seeking an agreement is indicated by Roa's statement that the agreement must cover "all forms of piracy without exception." This would mean the end of the traditional distinction between ordinary criminals and persons seeking political asylum.

In the past, American revolutionaries have gone to Cuba for asylum or as a first step in fleeing the United States. When Eldridge Cleaver, of the Black

Panther Party, was forced to flee the country to avoid being jailed for his political statements, he is believed to have first gone to Cuba on his way to Algeria. A decade ago Robert Williams, the first Black leader to call for armed self-defense of the Black community, lived in Cuba for several years after police in Canada nearly turned him over to the FBI on false charges.

Roa's terms would not apply to Americans who arrive legally in Cuba, then ask for asylum. But it is difficult to do so. The Mexican airports are watched by American secret agents, and in some cases, even persons visiting Cuba legally have been kidnapped and brought back to the US.

So Roa's offer means that in return for US cooperation in keeping Cubans in Cuba, Cuba will help the United States by denying asylum to US revolutionaries — at least to those who might hijack planes instead of taking regular flights.

The offer creates a dilemma for the US government. On the one hand, it would like to stop hijacking. It would probably also like to reduce the arrival of Cuban refugees, who often can't find jobs, use up welfare money, and are no longer very useful for anti-Castro propaganda. On the other hand, to turn away refugees from a "Communist" country would not be politically popular. So far, the government has not responded to Roa's statement.

Workers' and Peasants' Jail

But the very fact that the offer was made should teach something to the radical movement in the United States. Almost everyone on the left has accepted the view that Cuba is a "workers' and peasants' state." But a state which must ask the cooperation of the world's leading imperialist power, the United States, in keeping workers and peasants from leaving is not a "workers' and peasants' state." Nor is a state which offers to close its doors to revolutionaries from other countries. Roa's offer, reactionary to the core, is symbolic of the kind of bureaucratic dictatorship which tries to pass itself off as socialism in Cuba. ■

The French film, *Z*, a study in the development of the Fascist dictatorship that currently rules Greece, represents an important landmark in the history of political cinema. The film narrates the events involving the assassination of a leftist Deputy by military and police authorities in 1963, the response to his murder on the part of the movement that the fallen man (in real life, named Gregory Lambrakis) had led, the attempts of the authorities to cover up the murder, the relentless work of one honest (and politically naive) investigator to bring the true facts to light — and the military coup that follows the exposure of the plot.

The film's format is that of narrative documentary; writer Andre Costa-Gravas refuses to romanticize either side of the struggle that is taking place. In spite of obvious and admitted partiality to the leftists (at the start of the film a statement is flashed on the screen clearly stating the maker's intent) the film maintains a basic and sometimes brutal honesty throughout; the strengths and weaknesses of all the major characters are presented and developed rigorously.

This extends to Lambrakis himself; rather than the petty and cheap glorification that so many otherwise excellent political films often fall into, the opposition leader is presented as a struggling and contradictory figure — both politically and personally. Yves Montand, incidentally, in playing this role develops the character brilliantly.

Reform and Reaction

Most importantly, from a political standpoint, the film presents a detailed study of the inner workings of the opposition movement. Using the interaction of the chief leaders of the movement — in particular of two lawyers who are central to its leadership — the film articulates the deep political conflicts that develop after Lambrakis' death. The desire of some leaders to maintain the movement as a legal party aimed at reforms, and the deep pressure from below to strike out in a radical direction, find expression through the interaction of these two men throughout the film.

Finally, the coup — which eradicates all the legal gains of the movement and sends its leaders to prison and death in a single blow — carries an eloquent refutation of reformist liberalism and its carefully fostered illusions of reaching justice through "normal," legal channels.

The emotional dynamics of the film form the basis of its strength and power. Costa-Gravas presents the events exactly as they came to public light in the

newspapers, following a tortuous step-by-step trail of rumor, coercion, red herrings, etc. Different witnesses reconstruct their own recollections of events, according to their own prejudices. Piece by piece, the puzzle is fitted together.

As the chief investigator is subjected to intense pressure from the government to drop the case and produce a politically expedient whitewash, the tension builds and builds — and reaches the point of catharsis as the investigator stands firm, and indicts the generals for murder. Then, instead of the expected triumph of justice, we are given two final shattering minutes as the military coup rolls into power, imprisons and murders the leftist leaders, and exonerates the murderers.

Classless Radicalism

If the film contains a major weakness, it is in its treatment of the class bases of the respective political forces. The rightist movement which, on the orders of the police, carries out the murder is depicted as being composed almost exclusively of dock workers, truck drivers, and general laborers — in Lambrakis' words, "a sub-proletariat of the urban areas." The leftists are exclusively middle class — doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. The movement's mass base is depicted as exclusively student; Costa-Gravas forgets that when Lambrakis was buried, 50,000 Greeks turned out for the funeral procession, including large segments of the trade-union movement.

So while the film represents a refutation of liberalism and an affirmation of radical mass action, it is a radicalism of a decidedly classless nature.

This weakness is related to the political weakness of the present opposition in Greece — an opposition which aims at no more than the restoration of parliamentary democracy, with no perspective of mobilizing a class struggle to smash the conservative elites which prevented the previous parliamentary democracy from functioning. In line with this political direction of demanding a return to civilian government, the film portrays the rightist forces as almost exclusively military, whereas the truth is that these military forces were backed by important Greek and foreign business interests. *Z*, designed to appeal to liberal audiences, scarcely hints at this fact.

The film also contains an at least implicit slur on homosexuals. One of the two men who actually commit the murder is rather pointedly presented as gay, although this has absolutely no bearing on the actual plot, and comes across only as further evidence of the murder-

Karl Fischer



Gymn

er's depravity. Costa-Gravas' explanation of this — that the man was actually gay, that this was why the police had a hold on him and got him to do their bidding — holds little water; only his gayness was shown in the film, no mention of police coercion was brought out. This also dovetails with Costa-Gravas' first film (*The Sleeping-Car Murders*) in which the murderer was also gay, and his sexual orientation was used in exactly the same manner.

These weaknesses notwithstanding, the film remains a remarkably vivid and politically honest portrayal of the deep social crisis that the whole of Western society is faced with today. ■



FASCISM, A MATTER OF TASTE

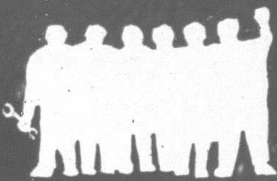
The United States has ended its embargo on shipments of heavy arms and military equipment to Greece. The embargo had been in effect since the military effected a coup and instituted a totalitarian regime. The new government rapidly began to outlaw all opposition political organizations, imprisoning political dissidents, holding them without trial, and torturing them. It outlawed any form of labor organization, censored all publications and even sought to dictate how people should dress if they wanted to survive.

Of course, the United States government doesn't like the present regime — the US said the State Department was "firmly committed" to a rapid return to representative government in Greece. It's decision to resume arms shipments was made entirely on the basis of Greece's military importance to Southern Europe and the Mediterranean. But the US arms

shipments are a guarantee that the struggle to overthrow the regime will be much more difficult.

There's nothing new about this. America has become a bulwark of reaction throughout the world and the guarantor of virtually every right-wing dictatorship that exists. While claiming to fight for individual liberty, this country callously carries on mass extermination of the Vietnamese people to prevent them from exercising their right to self-determination. Thousands of marines were shipped to the Dominican Republic to crush a nationalist uprising because 55 "communists" were found to be active.

What the US government is fighting for is the maintenance of capitalism and the right to exploit the world's population. If in the process it is necessary to make alliances with fascist regimes, we must grit our teeth and bear it. After all, nothing's perfect, is it? ■



Meany And The Hardhats

Last Labor Day Eve, AFL-CIO President George Meany — the man who is paid by the vast majority of American union members to supply overall leadership for American labor — led a contingent of 70 officials from various international unions into the White House to sup and drink with Richard Nixon and officials of his administration. No other president of the United States has been embraced in such a fashion by a labor federation president.

This new low in labor statesmanship has been carved into his career monument by none other than Meany himself. Even his predecessor, William Green — described by John L. Lewis as "the neck that grew up and haired over" — was never so pressured by history, never felt forced to so openly participate in "social intercourse" of this kind.

During the previous week, Meany had announced correctly that the Democratic Party was in the process of disintegration, decried the disappearance of big city Democratic political machines, and denounced Democratic Party liberals as "radical extremists." In the same press interview, taped on August 25 and released August 31, he made it clear that he was officially willing to deliver the votes of the most conservative sections of labor to the Republicans.

Concrete evidence that Meany might really be able to deliver this vote was provided by the "hardhat" demonstrations in New York and half a dozen other cities, demonstrations openly organized by the official city-level leadership of the building trades unions.

Crisis at the Top

It is unlikely that Meany is willing to do all this only because he is in broad political agreement with Nixon. By his open turn to the right, he is creating an ever more visible split in the top leadership of organized labor. No union with a large racial minority within it could possibly make this turn with Meany. It is no accident that the leaders of the mass production unions in the auto, electric and rubber industries were not present at the White House Labor Day dinner. Jerry Wurf and David Selden, the presidents, respectively, of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), now make a point of advertising that they were not present at the dinner.

Semi-official leaks have let it be known that even among the union leaders that accepted invitations there are doubts and disagreement about the wisdom of the Meany move to establish a working relationship with Nixon. The conservative president of the Steelworkers, I. W. Abel, in his keynote address to his union's convention, clearly sep-

arated himself from Meany and jibed that electing Republicans to protect workers' interests was like "putting the fox in the coop to guard the chickens."

Putting aside for now the question of the defenselessness of those in the coop when it is guarded by Democrats, Meany is opening up the deepest split in the American labor leadership since the early 1930's crisis in the AFL, which eventually led to the formation of the CIO.

Other than individual labor conservatives like Lee Minton, Republican President of the Glass Bottle Blowers Association, at Meany's side is but one united segment of labor officials, all from the building trades. They have decided to try Meany's strategy.

Under the cover of Agnew style patriotism, the building trades are willing to get out the votes for Nixon, Rockefeller or anyone in power who will pump public tax money into construction programs of any kind. Several big city building trades union leaderships have turned their ranks loose in the streets to demonstrate with ready-made reactionary signs and banners. The demonstrators had official union, employer and police sanction.

What if the strategy does not pay off? For union members to take to the streets to demonstrate for their opinions has become a legitimate tactic with official sanction. If numbers of "hardhats" or other workers one day want to dem-

onstrate in the streets for another point of view, that will put the officials in a tight spot. Meany may well have begun an experiment that will deal a damaging blow to conservatism in the labor leadership of the United States — for reasons that go far beyond the inability of the Nixon administration to subsidize full employment in the construction industry.

A part of the package that Meany is willing to deliver to the Nixon administration and the employers, especially those in the construction industry, is speedup of the work pace of rank and file labor and the loss of the strike weapon. In the already mentioned press interview released on August 31, Meany made it clear he now believes that "where you have well-established industry and a well-established union, you are getting more and more to a point where a strike doesn't make sense." His answer is compulsory arbitration.

A week later, Meany's corporal and head of the federations Building Trades Department, C. J. Haggerty, released a statement to all affiliated unions in order to raise some fundamental questions about the "shortcomings" of building trades workers. The shortcomings listed are the failure to "deliver a full days work for a full days pay," the failure to "honestly and rigidly observe the provisions of collective bargaining contracts," the absentee and quit rate in

the industry and the "continuous and devastating work stoppages as a result of jurisdictional disputes."

Demonstrating for the war and voting for Republicans is not enough; the deal Meany has offered also demands year-round increases in the amounts of blood and sweat shed daily on-the-job. Meany's strategy has created a bomb. All that is in question is the length of the fuse.

There is tremendous confusion in the American laboring class about war, inflation, and the whole series of crises facing the nation. This confusion is now reflected in the outright reactionary attitudes that have developed in large sections of the working class. But it must be understood that the source of those attitudes is confusion rather than realistic self interest.

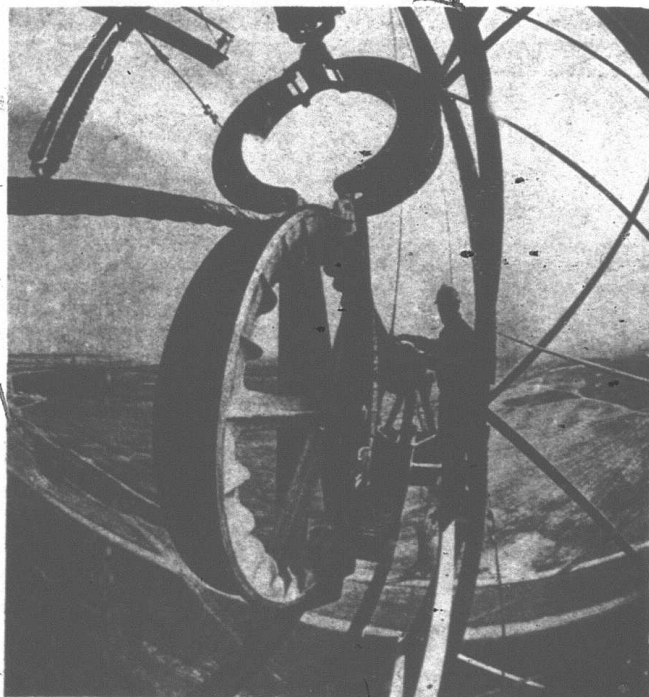
Large numbers of workers in all industries are unable to understand the rebellion of college and university students. They feel the barrenness of their own lives that is a product of the work they do. They assume that those with a university education and professional jobs have escaped this slow death and they cannot understand how young people with the opportunity to get such an education and jobs can have cause to rebel. To them, trashing and window breaking is scandalous delinquency rather than a sign of total alienation from an unresponsive and imperialist establishment.

Similarly, those workers who do not have the money to move from the central city to the suburbs are confronted with the threats and violence of street gangs, which is really the expression of the total frustration of the hopes of youth in the ghettos. The crisis in the cities makes middle-aged black workers anti-youth and feeds the racial prejudice of middle-aged workers who are white.

Many semi-skilled workers are under pressure to overcome their racial prejudices and their hostility to the militancy of youth. They are driven so hard by their employers in the factories, mills, and mines that they are being forced to unite with all workers on the job, regardless of race or nationality, in order to struggle for decent conditions of employment, and they are turning toward militant tactics to wage that struggle.

Speed Cliques

This same pressure is not felt in the same way by the more skilled workers of the construction industry. Three and a half million strong, they are the most insecure and fearful of any section of the American working class. They are the most obvious and main target of the drive of the black community to obtain more and better jobs. They have high hourly wages, but most of them average less than eight months of work each year. ■



In order to get more work, they are forced to become part of the speed cliques that comprise the core of workers hired by every construction contractor. What the members of each clique endure is not only physical strain, but also personal oppression. To leave the clique is to find more self respect, but also more privation for one's family.

The unions have done nothing to solve this problem. Contractors in most instances are required to give only one hour's notice before firing a worker. Getting a union agent on the job is often as useless as it is difficult. Quitting and moving on to find another construction job that is hiring is far and away the most common method of trying to achieve dignity. Many times the moves have to be long ones because of a silent black ball system that can follow those who are branded as "trouble-makers."

If a new job is found that seems livable, the slightest crisis in the construction market can turn it into a nightmare. Foremen who are considered "halfway decent" become whip crackers overnight. And how difficult it is to say no to foreman and union agent both, who are demanding that you appear the following day at a demonstration. The job gets worse after you've marched because the righteous loudmouths that always blossom when they feel that the official powers of society are on their side are even louder-mouthed than before, and it's clear that if they aren't already in the clique they soon will be. So, many workers come to believe that they can't fight it, go along, and in effect "join 'em."

Meany and the top leadership of the building trades unions have built empires on this insecurity. The construction workers live with the fear of daily as well as seasonal layoffs. Even the best of jobs cannot be expected to last over a year and seniority with a contractor that extends from job to job is unheard of. Thus, the market requires that construction workers constantly limit their numbers to keep the demand for them as high as possible for as long as possible each year — so that even those who refuse to join the cliques can get in their seven or eight months of work out of the twelve.

No Business Unionism

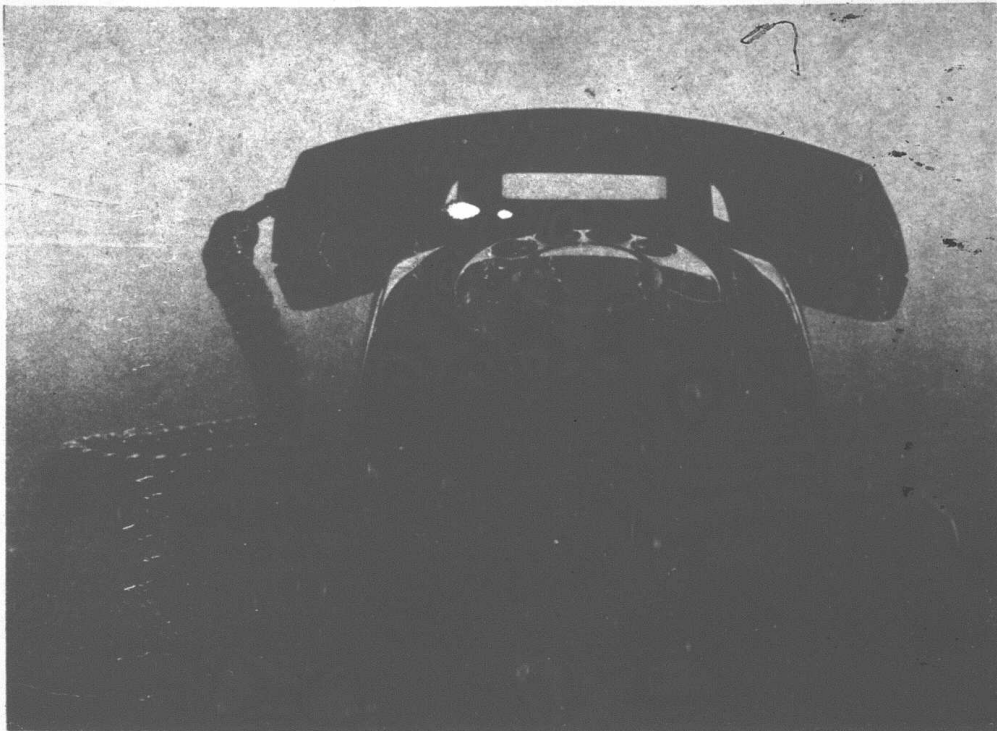
Solutions for the chronic crises of the building industry are not going to be won through the regular "business unionism" championed by the George Meany's. Real, long-term solutions to the problems of construction workers lie only in radical directions.

To win full employment, guaranteed annual wages, and ongoing seniority, the unions must drive construction contractors into a single industry-wide association that, in effect, could act as a single employer like the waterfront employer associations in the stevedoring industry on both coasts. If the contractors refuse, it may be necessary to call for government operation or close control of an already largely subsidized industry, with the government refusing contracts or aid to any contractors who refuse to provide their workers with dignified conditions of employment and financial security.

A militant fight for humanized working conditions and job security would undermine the roots of conservatism and reaction among building trades workers. To begin the job of destroying those roots, a leadership will have to emerge from the ranks that is unafraid to go after real solutions to the tremendous problems of construction workers. ■

Wrong Number

Russell Goodwin



Last May, 7500 New York Telephone traffic workers wildcatted for 16 days against the poverty wages they receive. Though the strike did not win any visible concessions, it did appear to have broken the back of the TTU, Ma Bell's friendly company union. United Bell Operators, the rank-and-file group which led the wildcat, was able to force a representation election to be held, probably sometime before Christmas. Last May it seemed certain that the TTU didn't have a chance. Today, the outcome is far from clear, due to maneuverings and deals on the part of the leaderships of the unions involved in the election.

United Bell Operators has affiliated with District 65 (Distributive Workers). To date, the organizing drive has resulted in 6000 operators signing cards for 65. Though this is evidence of substantial rank-and-file sentiment for 65, the union has not done much to assure its victory in the election. Since the United Bell Operators affiliated, the union has held no citywide meetings, nor organized any demonstrations for job actions against the company, although they have been collecting unresolved grievances for months.

Also, although 65's organizing committee for telephone is larger than many of its locals, the union has refused to grant operators the right to vote in its governing council, which would give the operators some say in the conduct of the organizing drive. And finally, District 65 has never made it clear whether or not it would propose a united front of all non-company unions to fight NY Telephone and to work for eventual unification on the membership level; unification is necessary to gain the strength to really take on Ma Bell.

District 65 is unwilling to carry out these essential aspects of an organizing

drive, despite their importance to the future of the thousands of men and women exploited by one of the world's richest corporations. The union has failed to do so because it would mean mobilizing the rank and file for the militant struggle ahead. The male-dominated officialdom of District 65 is more than a little worried about the effect that militant organization and struggle by 15,000 telephone operators would have on its control, not only over them, but over the rest of 65 as well. They are clearly not enthusiastic about winning the organizing drive if it means abandoning the comforts of business-as-usual unionism.

District 65 and the CWA

The campaign to smash the TTU is further endangered by the competition between the CWA (Communication Workers of America) and District 65. The CWA is the largest telephone union, and is national in scope. It therefore has certain advantages to offer operators, in spite of its pathetic record — which includes its refusal to recognize the wildcat last May. (CWA officials even went so far as to order back to work individual members of Local 1101 who had refused to cross the picket lines). As the campaign goes on, there may be some leaning toward the CWA by those who realize that N.Y. city traffic can't bear A.T.&T. by itself. But it is also rumored that the CWA is working out a deal with the TTU to collaborate in the election. The CWA rank and file must put a stop to this. The CWA is weak enough in N.Y. without inviting in more sell-out artists.

Because of the lackadaisical attitude toward the election adopted by District 65, and the maneuvering of the CWA, the TTU may be able to squeeze in again. If the company union wins, all telephone

workers — craft, clerical, Western, and of course traffic — will pay heavily in the next contract. For only a united, fighting movement can stop a nickel-and-dime sellout from being imposed on all of us next year.

The rank and file, which began it all, must again take the initiative. The rank-and-file organization should be revitalized, and a demand for rank-and-file control over the organizing drive must be pressed. To involve more rank-and-file members in the organizing drive, and to build an ongoing movement, a program which goes beyond the demand for higher wages should be put forth as the basis of the drive. This program must attack the racial and sexual oppression that flourishes in Telephone, as well as the terrible working conditions which contribute to the general discontent. Among the demands which should be included are free child-care centers, an end to the wide wage differentials between operators and craftsmen, shorter and more regular hours, and access to skilled jobs based on company seniority, not on race or sex.

To help assure that the outcome of the organizing drives by both unions will be an advance toward more militant organization of all telephone workers, both the CWA and District 65 should be forced to commit themselves to withdraw in favor of the one which can get the most cards signed before the election, and to form a coalition of all non-company unions for a joint battle against the company in the upcoming elections.

Furthermore, the rank and file must organize to stop any deal between the CWA and the TTU. This is especially important for CWA members, since a concrete example of solidarity such as this could go a long way towards breaking down the distrust that exists between the different sections of the workforce. ■

UFWOC vs the Teamster-Grower Bloc

Kevin Bradley



EL MALCRIADO

The Salinas lettuce strike is still on. 1500 workers are getting strike benefits and manning the picket lines. Though a few important victories have been won, it looks like it is going to be a hard strike. The dominant power in the rich agricultural valleys of California and Arizona is wielded by the growers and the associated agricultural enterprises that make up "agribusiness." It is this social power, which helps make California so conservative and lets Arizona elect a Goldwater, that is now under attack by the farm workers.

The Cooler workers who work in the large vacuum cooling plants where the lettuce is prepared for market stayed off work for two weeks in a magnificent show of solidarity. They are members of the former Packinghouse Workers, now part of the Amalgamated Meat Cutter after their recent merger. But the Cooler Workers are weak, as all processing unions are doomed to be so long as field workers stay unorganized.

Union Scabs

Unlike the Cooler Workers, the other major union connected with agriculture, the Teamsters, has chosen to act as a strike breaker, collaborating with the growers. It has been discovered that it was the Salinas lettuce growers who approached the Teamsters about the Sweetheart Contract they accepted. William Grami, the Teamster's director of organization on the West Coast, had already shown his willingness to attack the farm workers' strike in Delano, (then as now he also supported Reagan for Governor). Grami's staff of full time organizers have been using guns, clubs and pipes to intimidate farm workers. They have spread their efforts as far as the Imperial Valley on the Mexican border, where the Bruce Church Ranch, owner of 25,000 acres in California and Arizona, told its workers to join the Teamsters or be fired.

An even sordid lot are the rank and file Teamsters of San Francisco, who might have been expected to support the farm workers against their union leadership. Instead, they have refused to unload lettuce from the one ranch where the United Farm Workers union of Cesar Chavez has a contract! No doubt they believe that their actions are in the immediate interest of their union. It is the same sort of delusion that has led them to give support to the San Francisco Tactical Squad. But the conservative policies of the Teamster leadership are only going to make them more open to attacks from the employers and the state in the future.

The Teamsters have given the growers a tremendous weapon against the farm workers. The growers can claim that the strike is a jurisdictional dispute between union and union despite the fact that virtually no farm workers sup-

port the Teamsters (Teamster organizer William Grami sits in his office all day watching television, waiting for reports from his lieutenants; the Teamsters hold no meetings or rallies). A local judge has already handed down an injunction preventing picketing at virtually all struck ranches, on the pretext of the supposed jurisdictional strike.

This same judge was the District Attorney in 1936 during the bloody lettuce strike. At that time the jails were packed with strikers, barbed wire and machine guns surrounded the packing plants, and the state cooperated fully with the growers in raising a vigilante army. Things are not quite so bloody in Salinas this time around. The D.A. is now the judge and the farms are run by the sons of their founders.

This is not to imply that there has been no violence. Workers at the J.J. Crosetti ranch were confronted by the grower's son waving a rifle. Crosetti is a liberal Democrat appointed by former Governor Pat Brown to the Board of Agriculture. Since the New Deal the Democratic Party has provided for the growers. It has had workers' votes all sewed up. So now this liberal Democrat is serving scab lettuce to Governor Reagan.

The United Farm Workers union has done little to stop Teamster and grower violence. Moreover, when the local citizenry of small businessmen, growers' wives and racist Teamsters throw up a picket line around Inter-Harvest — the United Fruit Co. subsidiary that signed with UFWOC — the farm workers' union was paralyzed. Instead of organizing flying squads, or in some other way

breaking this pro-grower picket line, it allowed Inter-Harvest to be idle for over a week.

The AFL-CIO has imported some members of the Seafarers International Union to protect the farm workers. These goons live in a motel like the Teamsters and drive around Salinas in Cadillacs. Being the flunkies for the SIU officials, kept around for jurisdictional strikes and to beat up rank and file opponents of the corrupt SIU leadership, they naturally don't bother to walk on the farm workers' picket lines. Cesar Chavez and the UFWOC leadership seem unwilling to trust the farm workers' ability to protect themselves. The result has been some demoralization, as some workers go back to work and scabs are brought in and nothing is done to them.

Weeks before the injunction was handed down the UFWOC leadership was already distributing sign-up sheets for a boycott of lettuce. The day after the injunction was issued, the boycott was announced, citing the injunction as an excuse. No attempt was made to violate the injunction. Further, the strike was not even spread to areas like Brentwood where the lettuce recently matured. The strategy of the strike switched to the boycott.

The strike had been quite successful in cutting down lettuce sales, bringing Inter-Harvest to sign a contract and bringing strawberry and tomato growers to the bargaining table. The Salinas based lettuce growers were still holding firm, but with a militant confrontation against scabs and Teamster goons, the strike could perhaps have been won quickly. However, once the boycott

was announced picketing seemed meaningless to the strikers, especially when the Union avoided all ranches covered by the injunction; the strike would now be won by the boycott, which depends more on the cooperation of union and the public than on the efforts of the thousands of farm workers.

Lettuce Boycott

The lettuce boycott presents different problems from the successful grape boycott. Grapes are a luxury crop which consumers feel they can do without, while lettuce is bought by most families every week. Though over 150 workers, firmly dedicated to the strike, volunteered for the boycott, not everyone was willing to leave for perhaps two or three years, as the boycott sign-up sheet called for. In addition, this strike must confront the Teamsters, who have a powerful influence over the retail supermarkets. Both store managers and retail clerks will be worried about offending the Teamsters.

The position in which the Teamster officials have put the farm workers is indicated by the fact that AFL-CIO labor papers and officials have not publicly condemned the Teamsters action. The AFL-CIO being so weak and bureaucratized, is afraid to condemn the Teamsters whom it often relies upon in strikes. It is hard to say what kind of support the AFL-CIO is going to give to the boycott, when despite all its talk about supporting the farm workers, it refuses even to condemn the Teamsters' cooperation with the growers.

What would be most helpful to the farm workers would be if rank and file Teamsters begin to attack their officials cooperation with the growers. UFWOC is circulating a petition condemning the Teamster raid, but with its limited resources and fear of offending the AFL-CIO it has done little so far. Workers in all unions must push for resolutions and demonstrations condemning the Teamster action. All workers and friends of the farm workers must actively push the lettuce boycott, promoting Union lettuce and stopping the sales of scab lettuce.

The shoddy leadership of the American labor movement is not the fault of the farm workers. A quick victory in the lettuce strike will strengthen their Union in Salinas and insure that it is established with the maximum number of workers out on strike. A prolonged boycott, even as the strike is spread to the Imperial Valley and Arizona, will place a tremendous strain on farm worker morale. They can hardly afford a long strike on their meagre incomes. Confronted with the power of the growers and Teamsters combined it is very hard to maintain complete solidarity. We must do all we can to make their victory come sooner. ■



TV GUIDE

As The World Turns

The Women's Ghetto Of Daytime TV

Kathy Wahlstrand
Dick Arneson

In the newspapers, the women's page is filled with fashion news, advice to the lovesick, and stories chronicling the gala parties and marriages of the very rich. On television, the "women's" shows are the afternoon soap operas. These daytime serials inadvertently say something about the lives of the women who watch them. They also display a whole set of crude female stereotypes, which flicker across TV screens all over the country, six hours a day, five days a week.

There are currently 18 daytime serials on television. The titles themselves — *Love of Life*, *Search for Tomorrow*, *Where the Heart Is* — indicate that even though the subject matter might be earthy the theme is always hearts-and-flowers sentimentality. True to that theme, the acting in these low-budget productions varies from bad to dreadful. Dramatic pauses in dialogue occur as actors try to remember half-memorized lines.

Some actors manage to affect an air of perpetual embarrassment, as though to remind the audience "Don't blame me, I didn't write this script." Otherwise there is no attempt at apology for the tedious plots and inept production. The assumption of the sponsors and creators of daytime television seems to be that anybody desperate enough to watch it is desperate enough to like it. Daytime is not prime time because the audience is not the prime audience.

Who comprises this audience? Many older people watch, as can be seen from the frequent Geritol and arthritis pain-killer commercials. Most viewers are obviously women — housewives with children, women of lower-income families who can't afford the freedom of a second car or regular child-care. But although the soap operas are designed for lower-income women tied to the home, the social setting of the drama is normally upper-income suburbia. The women in the serials are well-groomed, have coffee in their spotless living rooms, raise clean and tidy children, and know what to do when family troubles arise. They may occasionally commit adultery, but only between the cleanest and sweetest-smelling sheets in the neighborhood.

Days of Our Lives

We spent 5½ hours one day recently, watching eleven daytime soap operas. In these eleven shows there appeared 83 characters, 42 women and 41 men. Of the men 29 clearly had jobs, while only 12 women were shown as having any occupation beyond housework and occasional volunteer work. And of the

12 working women, seven were nurses and the nurturing-mothering aspect of their jobs was heavily stressed. Eleven of the male characters were doctors or interns, three were lawyers; almost all had professional or business-executive jobs.

The soap opera image of what working men and women do on the job is vague almost to the point of suggesting a child's conception of what work is like. At the hospital, the doctors spend the day gossiping about their marriages. Lawyers and clients discuss, not the upcoming court case, but the intimate personal details of their friends' lives. Daytime TV viewers are thought to be uninterested in social life outside the home, except insofar as work situations resemble kaffee-klatch conversations. Needless to say, politics and social conflict do not exist on daytime TV, except occasionally as a backdrop to back-fence intrigue.

Women who deviate from soap-opera standards of femininity are subjected to acidic scrutiny. On one episode of *Love of Life*, a woman is working to earn extra money to buy furniture for a new house. Her husband feels that his role as provider is being threatened. Humiliated, he complains to his wife's parents that she is neglecting their child. Her

parents, and through them the writers of the program as well, tend to sympathize with the aggrieved husband.

When working women are sympathetically portrayed, usually their warmth, emotional insight, and other feminine qualities are played up, rather than their ability to be forthright or aggressive or to cope successfully with a demanding job.

The characterization of two formerly married persons on another show illustrates the television norms of proper male and female behavior. The divorced woman, who has "naturally" been left with an infant baby, says of herself: "I'm not thinking about myself. I'm unimportant. It's all for the baby." Her ex-husband is a surgeon who, after a grueling night in the operating room, is told by a colleague to go home. His melodramatic reply: "I am home."

A leitmotif of the soap operas is the expectant bride-to-be rhapsodizing about how happy she will be raising oodles of children and cooking for her husband. The televised fate of women who don't want children is gruesome, as one pregnant wife discovers when she is pleased that a miscarriage allows her to resume her career. During her convalescence her husband has an affair with another woman who bears him a child, and from there

the marriage goes steadily downhill as the organ music builds to a crescendo.

(Our point of view is not that being a mother or manifesting feminine qualities is in itself bad, any more than being a father or exhibiting masculine qualities is necessarily bad. What is bad is the con- striction involved in role-casting. Woman's nature is so narrowly defined in this society that to be more than a wife and mother is to be in danger of being less than a woman.)

The daytime commercials are simply more blatant statements of the subtlety of the serials. The male/female work stereotypes are even more obnoxiously emphasized. What is suggested is that the way for women to attain the gracious way of living they see in the serials is to buy and clean their way there: self-fulfillment through scrubbing floors.

Of 115 commercials aired during a 5½ hour period, 52 percent were sponsored by a product connected with the virtue of cleanliness. Women were shown securing a raise for their husband by displaying mirror-like dishes, marrying the boss after curing his bad breath, fixing their husband's dandruff or their own "feminine odor" problem, and so on. Of the remaining commercials, 25 percent were pushing food items. A tiny smattering dealt with cars or appliances — an indication of the decision making power of TV-watching housewives.

Another World

A clue to the position of women in modern capitalist society is the slightly higher status of male-oriented TV programming as compared to women's shows. Although housewives share their vicarious TV experiences with other bored housewives, a faint social stigma attaches to daytime TV. Its low-grade cultural level embarrasses the women who watch it for lack of anything better to do.

On the other hand, the sports shows aimed at men are technically much better executed and require somewhat more effort to appreciate. Such programs appeal to a stereotype of men as action-oriented and indifferent to human emotion. The rugged he-man concept of masculinity fostered by this society leaves out much that is human, but the stereotype forced on women is clearly the inferior of the two. ■

[Just graduated from the University of California, Kathy Wahlstrand is unemployed and looking for work. Dick Arneson is a student. Both live in Berkeley and both watch TV a lot.]



TOMBS REVOLT

Michael Urquhart



Palestine

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

workers' council, system.

The DPF has also adopted an internationalist stance toward the Israelis and are for joint collaboration with Israeli revolutionaries and progressives in waging the class struggle in Israel, leading to a common socialist revolution. They are anti-chauvinist, and although uncertain about Jewish self-termination, are for a Socialist Middle East Federation, with national rights for all minorities — Kurds, South Sudanese, etc., as well as Jews.

The Democratic Front contains different political tendencies. Trotskyists, Maoists, and independent revolutionaries. Barely a year old, it is still too early to predict whether it will develop in the direction of revolutionary socialism or degenerate into Maoism.

Dual Power

The civil war in Jordan historically develops from the collaboration of Transjordan with Israel in dismantling the Palestinian Arab state. As one of the partners to this crime, Jordan, like Israel, inherits the unresolved Palestinian problem. Like Israel, Hashemite Jordan can only continue to exist by suppressing the right of the Palestinians to self-determination. With the development of an independent Palestinian movement,

the fate of the Hashemite kingdom is sealed.

Although militarily stronger than the guerrillas, Hussein, like Israel, cannot impose his "peace" terms on the Palestinians, who are the vast majority of his subjects. The situation of dual power which existed and led to the civil war, will develop again. No military truce can long contain it. The only alternative would be complete destruction of the guerrilla movement at the hands of Hussein, and Hussein is not capable of that.

Although Fatah has signed an agreement with Hussein not to engage in opposition to his regime, even propagandistically, it is impossible to return, after the civil war, to a policy of separating social questions from the national question, of subordinating the national question to the status quo in the existing Arab states in return for support against Israel. Within the guerrilla movement the opposition to Hussein and the other Arab rulers will grow, forcing Fatah to break the agreement or be supplanted by the more radical tendencies.

Hands Off

Within the resistance the idea of self-reliance and independence from the Arab regimes is gaining more and more support. Although all the Arab regimes fear the revolutionary threat of breaking with the guerrillas, all place their own interests above the Palestinians. Even the Syrians put their relationship with and dependence on the Russians above their ties to the Palestinians, and pulled their tanks out of Jordan, giving Hussein the military victory.

So long as the Palestine problem is unresolved, so long as Israel is an alien

On Thursday, October 1, a prison riot started at the Queens House of Detention in Long Island City. This was no normal prison riot, however, as the revolt quickly spread throughout the city of New York — involving at its peak five out of the six prisons in the city. For the first time, prisoners had felt their solidarity, and had taken collective action, not merely in one jail, but throughout the city, to press home their demands. In each case, hostages were taken, a necessary act to defend the movement from immediate and brutal suppression.

The demands varied somewhat from jail to jail, but tended to focus on the following: speedier trials, lower bails, and an end to the overcrowded conditions. In one jail, they even demanded the establishment of prisoner councils in order to give the inmates some say over the running of the jails.

Political Movement

It is no accident that similar demands were raised, for in jail after jail the conditions are similar. All the jails have close to twice the number of prisoners they were built to hold, bails are excessively high and strike hardest at poor and black people (the \$100,000 bail on the Panther defendants is only the most obvious example of this), and there are numerous instances of people spending 9 months or more in jail awaiting trial.

This was no ordinary prison "riot" where prisoners blindly struck out in anger and fury at the dehumanizing conditions they were forced to live under. This was a political movement. It aimed at winning over people to the prisoners point of view. A demand for a press conference to include

prisoners, Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, and others, was made and won.

Furthermore, the inmates attempted to win over the guards they had taken as hostages. In one jail, they were even able to force the authorities to hold new bail hearings in the jail, while the prisoners still controlled it, and several prisoners won their release.

Liberal Double-Cross

Police ringed the outside of the jails. They were there as much to keep people out as to keep people in, for people were gathering to show their support for the prisoners. This was a significant development, since if real solidities are to be won, the movement must spread beyond the prisons.

The prisoners themselves realized this, and it is why their appeal was a political one. However, one weakness in their approach was their tendency to rely on and place trust in liberal politicians, whether Shirley Chisholm or John Lindsay. It was these same liberal politicians who finally, with the use of some force and much cajolery, were able to win the release of the hostages and end the prison uprising.

As a result of promises given by these same liberals, that there would be no reprisals, hostages were released in one prison. As the prisoners surrendered themselves, they were savagely beaten by guards, and even made to run a gauntlet. At other jails, tear gas and clubs were used.

As a result of the revolt, the Queens House of Detention was declared unlivable, and the prisoners have been transferred to Rikers Island. Someday, a movement will pass a similar sentence on all the other jails. ■

splinter in the surrounding Arab body, the area is ripe for imperialist intervention. Both sides are dependent upon, and client states of, protectors. Al-



STAMP HONORING HIJACKERS

though independent junior partners, they act as catspaws for the imperialists. Given this situation, the area remains a major potential cockpit for WW III.

During the current civil war in Jordan, immediate American, and/or Israeli, intervention was obviated by Russian pressure on Syria, to withdraw its tanks and save Hussein. The Russian betrayal of its own erstwhile ally, Fatah, to help the client of the Americans, Hussein, was the result of their recognition that the Palestinians are not willing to accept an imperialist peace on the area dictated by the Russians and Americans — an imperialist peace which does not recognize their national rights.

Within the resistance movement the Russian actions during the civil war will strengthen those elements who want independence from Moscow, this, however will be an advance only if it leads in an independent revolutionary direction and not to political or military re-

liance on China.

For the Americans and Russians the Middle East has a decisive importance — it contains 3% of the world's known oil resources. Without Arab oil the economies of West Europe and Japan would come to an immediate halt. The U.S. alone drains off \$1.52 billion a year in oil profits from the Middle East.

This immense natural resource which makes the Middle East an enormous prize in the inter-imperialist rivalry, is also the asset which could help lead to the industrial development of the area on a democratic, revolutionary socialist basis. To control it, to make it the ends of socialist industrial development, will require a struggle to rid the Middle East of all imperialist intervention — and a successful conclusion to that struggle depends upon a just solution to the Palestine problem. ■

MIDDLE EAST FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

A bulletin published in Britain by members of International Socialists, the International Marxist Group and Arab revolutionaries.

The upcoming issue (Number 3) contains a report of the Palestine National Congress of May from the DPF, a background story on the Democratic Popular Front, and one on the People's Republic of Southern Yemen.

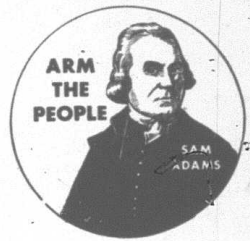
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Socialists and the Labor Movement

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Workers' Power

WE STAND FOR SOCIALISM: the collective ownership and democratic control of the economy and the state by the working class. We stand in opposition to all forms of class society, both capitalist and bureaucratic "Communist," and in solidarity with the struggles of all exploited and oppressed people.

America is faced with a growing crisis: war, racial strife, pollution, urban decay, and the deterioration of our standard of living and working conditions. This crisis is built into capitalism, an outlived system of private profit, exploitation, and oppression. The capitalist ruling class, a tiny minority that controls the economy and politics alike, perpetuates its rule by dividing the working people against each other - white against black, male against female, skilled against unskilled, etc. The result is ever greater social chaos.

Workers' power is the only alternative to this crisis. Neither the liberal

nor the conservative wings of the ruling class have any answers but greater exploitation. The struggle for workers' power is already being waged on the economic level, and the International Socialists stand in solidarity with these struggles over wages and working conditions. To further this struggle, we call for independent rank and file workers' committees to fight when and where the unions refuse to fight. But the struggles of the workers will remain defensive and open to defeat so long as they are restricted to economic or industrial action.

The struggle must become political. Because of its economic power, the ruling class also has a monopoly on political power. It controls the government and the political parties that administer the state. More and more, the problems we face, such as inflation and unemployment, are the result of political decisions made by that class. The struggle of the working people will be deadlocked until the ranks of labor build a workers' party and carry the struggle into the political arena.

The struggle for workers' power cannot be won until the working class, as a whole, controls the government and the economy democratically. This requires a revolutionary socialist, working class party, at the head of a unified

working class. No elite can accomplish this for the workers.

Nor can any part of the working class free itself at the expense of another. We stand for the liberation of all oppressed peoples: mass organization, armed self-defense, and the right of self-determination for Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans; the liberation of women from subordination in society and the home; the organization of homosexuals to fight their oppression. These struggles are in the interest of the working class as a whole: the bars of racism and male chauvinism can only prevent the establishment of workers' power. Oppressed groups cannot subordinate their struggle today to the present level of consciousness of white male workers: their independent organization is necessary to their fight for liberation. But we strive to unite these struggles in a common fight to end human exploitation and oppression.

The struggle for workers' power is world-wide. Class oppression and exploitation is the common condition of humanity. US corporations plunder the world's riches and drive the world's people nearer to starvation, while military intervention by the US government, serving these corporations, awaits

those who dare to rebel. The "Communist" revolutions in China, Cuba and North Vietnam, while driving out US imperialism, have not brought workers' power, but a new form of class society, ruled by a bureaucratic elite.

Whether capitalist or bureaucratic-collectivist ("Communist") in nature, the ruling classes of the world fight desperately to maintain their power, often against each other, always against the working class and the people. Through both domestic repression and imperialist intervention (the US in Vietnam, the USSR in Czechoslovakia), they perpetuate misery and poverty in a world of potential peace and plenty. Socialism - the direct rule of the working class itself - exists nowhere in the world today.

We fight for the withdrawal of US troops from all foreign countries, and support all struggles for national self-determination. In Vietnam, we support the victory of the NLF over the US and its puppets; at the same time, we stand for revolutionary opposition by the working class to the incipient bureaucratic ruling class. Only socialism, established through world-wide revolution, can free humanity from exploitation and oppression; and the only force capable of building socialism is WORKERS' POWER.

THE SCRANTON COMMISSION

If It Moves, Expel It

James Coleman

are now divided."

This vague proposal, if actually carried out, would do little more than provide a platform for Presidential ballyhoo. More concretely, the report also recommended that police and National Guardsmen on campuses should carry rifles and shotguns "only when there is sniping or armed resistance." This would be conciliatory in the sense of making police and Guards more acceptable — they would leave behind their rifles except when really needed (and so avoid incidents like the Kent State killings, which from the government's viewpoint are costly miscalculations) but they would keep their pistols, and especially their clubs, the actual weapons used to smash campus rebellions. The report said nothing about limiting the use of police and Guards for this purpose — and this was no oversight, as we shall see.

The Report also called for greater financial aid for black colleges and universities, and called on other schools to increase black enrollment. This point, as we shall see, followed a line already laid out by such liberal campuses as Harvard.

Those were the conciliatory recommendations. Then there was a proposal for Federal controls on explosives, a response to the rash of campus bombings. These bombings are a mistake for the movement, since the real need is not to destroy war property, which can be rebuilt, but to build mass forces of opposition to the policies which the war properties serve. The government, however, has to show the universities and their clients in the Pentagon and the giant corporations that it can protect their property; at the same time, by publicizing the bombings, the government can get popular support for moving against all campus protest.

Instant Repression

The Commission's last recommendation, however, contained the real heart of its program: the idea that universities should call police as soon as violence begins. Though the report doesn't spell it out, this probably means as soon as a building is seized. Universities should "make clear to students what kind of conduct will not be permitted;" faculty members who take part in "disruptive conduct" should be fired.

To understand these recommendations it has to be remembered that many university presidents have hesitated to call police, fearing that to do so would increase sympathy for the protestors. Many have hesitated to expel protesting students. In particular, many university presidents have hesitated to offend their faculties by moving against professors who take part in protests (though these professors usually find themselves quietly dropped when their contracts expire). The Commission's report was an attempt to push universities to more repressive policies, to

make sure that police will be called earlier and that punishment will be more severe than is now the case.

Some "liberals," you might exclaim. But in fact, these recommendations fit into a pattern which has developed in the universities themselves in the last few years, in which liberals have been at least as active as conservatives in demanding repression.

In the 1950's, many university liberals were indignant at investigations of the campuses by Congress — but simultaneously, they themselves called for banning Communists from teaching jobs. In 1970, the equivalent of the Communist teacher of 1950 is the student protestor. In both cases, when liberal professors talk about "academic freedom," they mean freedom for academics — freedom from interference by Congressmen, and freedom from interference by students demanding better education, an end to war research, or an end to the war.

Center for Reaction

Thus in 1968, a few months after students closed Columbia University for the last two months of the school year, several professors formed the University Center for Rational Alternatives. This sweet-sounding outfit was headed by Prof. Sidney Hook of New York University — who moved from supporting Stalin in the 1930's to supporting the suppression of Communists in the 1950's without changing his basic opposition to democracy. UCRA described itself as a group of the moderate center. Actually it functioned as a pressure group toward the right: its stated purpose was to mobilize faculty support behind "firm" measures to deal with student protestors.

In the next two years, many academics moved in Hook's direction. In 1969, the faculty of the University of Chicago, almost unanimously liberal in their political loyalties, just as unanimously supported the expulsion and suspension of more than 140 students after a sit-in.

In the spring of this year the nation's most distinguished liberal pressure group, the American Civil Liberties Union, published a statement on campus disorders which was in fact a call for repression. ACLU defended the right of students to engage in "non-disruptive" protests. But it described as "abhorrent" protests which "physically obstruct the movement of others; or otherwise disrupt the educational or institutional processes in a way that interferes with the safety or freedom of others."

This would include the closing of any campus building, or a strike of a whole campus. ACLU also "condemned" the action of many protestors in opening university files to seek evidence for their charges of discrimination or of partnership in the war. The ACLU statement also opened the door to a practice traditionally condemned by liberals — the

use of "double penalties," that is, suspending or expelling a student for an incident for which he has been arrested by the regular police. ACLU said this was all right if done "to safeguard the academic process" — a phrase which could apply to any protest carried out on campus.

The line ACLU was drawing was clear. Protest as "moral suasion" was fine, as long as students left the administration free to listen or ignore them, as long as students relied on whatever information the administration was willing to provide about its activities. *Protest as power* was "abhorrent and must be condemned." It was as if an employer said, "It's fine for workers to present their views. But if they use force, if they strike, if they stop business until I talk — that's undemocratic." And of course, employers said exactly that — until workers forced them to change their tune.

So in saying professors should be fired for "disruptive" conduct, the Presidential Commission was only following the line of reasoning already laid out by Sidney Hook and the ACLU.

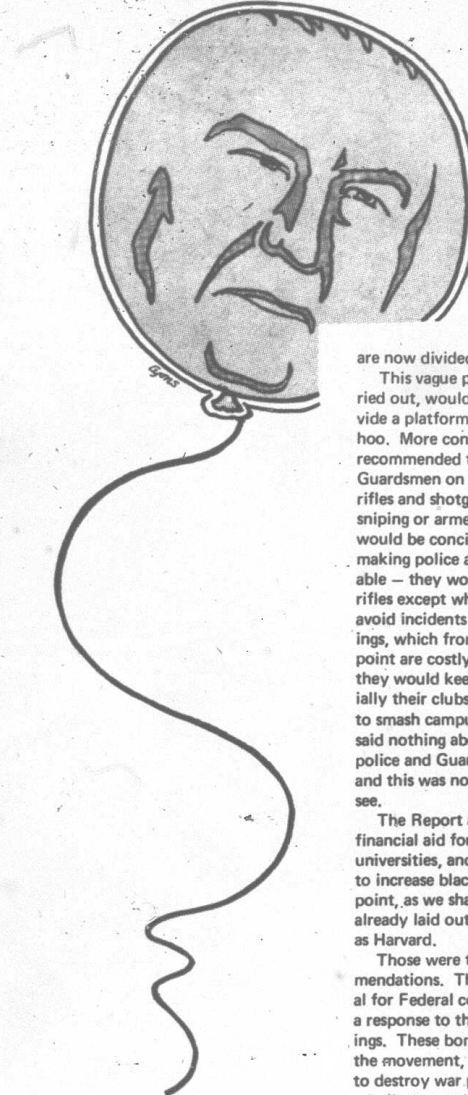
The olive branch the Commission extended to blacks is also nothing new. In the Fall of 1968, the Dean of Harvard College laid out the same strategy with perfect frankness: the "legitimate" demands of black students should be met, he stated in a speech, so that the "inner circle" of committed revolutionaries could be "isolated" and removed from university life.

Classic Pattern

In still another respect, the report fit into a long-established pattern of liberal responses to repression. In calling for repression themselves, liberals try to appease the conservatives who are calling for repression; thus, they claim, they avoid the more repressive measures which the conservatives would carry out. For example, in 1947 President Truman, under Republican attack for harboring "subversives" in the State Department, initiated the Federal Loyalty Program in which employees could be fired without a hearing.

In fact, this tactic never works. The only result of Truman's move was to encourage the Red-hunters in Congress — notably including today's President, Richard Nixon. Once Truman had proclaimed the loyalty program, it was inevitable that Nixon would claim it was not being administered strongly enough.

In attacking the Scranton Report, Agnew has simply followed a classical pattern, correctly sensing that liberal fence-straddling provides conservatives a chance to knock the liberals off the fence. Scranton's report, repressive in itself, accomplishes nothing by its vague phrases of conciliation except to provide justification for an even more repressive policy. ■



Vice-President Agnew — Nixon's ever-ready trial balloon of repression — has just made headlines again by attacking the report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest. The Commission was appointed in June under the chairmanship of former Pennsylvania Gov. William Scranton, a politically washed up figure from the liberal wing of the Republican Party, as Nixon scrambled to calm the campuses still seething because of the Cambodia invasion and the Kent State shootings in May. The report, issued Sept. 26, proclaimed that "Students who bomb and burn are criminals; police and National Guardsmen who needlessly shoot or assault students are criminals."

This was too much for Agnew, who attacked Scranton for criticizing the police and the Guard. (Spiro may also have been disturbed by a reference to "divisive and insulting rhetoric.") But Agnew missed the real significance of the report, or deliberately ignored it. So did the newspapers which ran the story under such headlines as "All Sides Are Told To Cool It."

Actually, while the Presidential Report contained both conciliatory and hard-nosed recommendations, there was a difference between the two. The conciliatory recommendations were all toothless. The major one was for "a series of national meetings designed to foster understanding among those who