

WORKERS' Power

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COPS HIT BLACKS IN TERROR DRIVE



UFW Signs More Contracts

The United Farm Workers union won another important victory in the California grape fields. In the Coachella Valley, the Freedman Ranch, which employs 1500 workers at harvest time, has signed a new contract with the union.

This victory comes at a crucial time for the UFW. The union has been forced by the leadership of the AFL-CIO to drop one of its major weapons, the secondary boycott. Thus, the struggle in the fields assumes even greater importance.

If the fight against the growers is to be won this summer, it will have to be won primarily in the fields.

The Freedman contract follows two victories - in the Almaden and Novitiate vineyards - and a minor defeat at the Larson ranch in Coachella.

Almaden attempted to sign a sweetheart contract with the Teamsters, much like the one at Gallo wines.

The Novitiate management tried to replace some 40 farm workers with a couple of ma-

chines. Both Gallo and Novitiate were defeated and signed new contracts with the UFW.

At the Larson ranch, Teamsters, grower, and an unscrupulous anti-farmworker priest teamed together to announce that the workers had decided on Teamster representation.

At that point the Teamsters signed their standard sweetheart contract.

In the new UFW contract at the Freedman ranch, base pay now starts at \$2.51 an hour - 11c above Teamster wages. Tractor drivers and irrigators will receive \$2.80. Working conditions and living conditions are to be improved.

Had Freedman refused to sign, he would have been struck along with the other growers in Coachella.

The UFW began strikes in the valley several weeks ago, and will step up its activities there as the harvest approaches next month.

For a full report on the strikes in Coachella, see page 5.

SAN FRANCISCO — Stop and search. Under those words, intimidation and harassment by the police await black people in San Francisco. Who will be next?

San Francisco cops call it "Operation Zebra." A better name would be "Operation Racist Hysteria."

Under the pretext of looking for a killer, the police are instituting a reign of terror in the black community. They are spreading a climate of fear and repression.

The same pretext is being used to fan the flames of racism among whites.

This police operation began when the police were unable to solve a highly-publicized series of killings. All the victims have been white, and the police allege all the perpetrators were black.

Their new police-state tactic allows police to stop, demand identification and pat-search the body of any black man. The police have the right to inquire what the man is doing on the street.

As a public relations ploy, a card labelled "San Francisco Police Department Zebra Check" is given to anyone who is stopped. They are supposed to show this paper to prevent future interrogation.

Within the first few days, some people have been questioned and searched as many as five times.

But despite all the publicity, the stop and search procedure is not basically new. It's a day-to-day reality in the black communities of this nation. From time to time, such as in Detroit last winter, similar official campaigns are organized.

In the San Francisco Bay Area itself, before "Operation Zebra" was begun, twelve-year-old Tyrone Guyton was shot in the back by a Berkeley policeman. He was later accused of stealing a car for a joyride. Henry Hicks, an Oakland man, was beaten up for allegedly refusing to pay bus fare.

The Oakland office of the Black Panther Party was broken into by cops who stole voter registration records, and who, the next day, dismissed charges against the

Panthers they had arrested for lack of evidence.

Blacks have always been the victims of such tactics. Whenever a white is killed by a black, the police consider all blacks responsible.

It has never worked the other way around. Lynchings, murders, and campaigns of violence against blacks by whites have usually been met with indifference - and never with stop and search in the white communities. One reason is that the white murderers have often been the police or those working in close cooperation with the police.

San Francisco police claim they will search only blacks who meet the general description of the killer: 5' 9" to 6' tall, slender to medium in build, and between 20-30 years old.

Police Chief Donald Scott says, "We are not going to stop very young blacks or big fat blacks. We are not going to stop seven-foot blacks or four-foot blacks."

Scott's reassurances are not comforting except perhaps to ten-year-olds. The description is so vague that a large majority of black men could be assumed to fit it.

In effect, Scott's order gives a free hand to policemen to stop any black they wish, any time they wish.

The stop and search order is a warning to black people in the USA that they can all be found guilty for the alleged crimes of one of their brothers.

Democratic Mayor of San Francisco, Joseph Alioto, running for governor, was behind the stop and search order. This action on his part was a political act - not a law enforcement one.

A random campaign of searching blacks when the police do not know who they are looking for is not an effective law enforcement tool. It was not intended to be. It will, however, head off a defection of racist white votes to Alioto's Republican opponent for governor.

Opposition to "stop and search" from the black community has been immediate. The Black Panther Party, the NAACP, and the Rev. Cecil Williams of Glide Methodist

Church were among the first to speak out.

The NAACP, together with the American Civil Liberties Union, are threatening court action on Constitutional grounds.

The Constitution forbids unreasonable search and seizure. But black people have known for a long time that the US Constitution, written at a time when human slavery was legal, does not offer them any real protection.

Black people in San Francisco are beginning to fight back against this campaign of repression. Several hundred blacks and some white supporters picketed City Hall April 19.

One speaker pointed out that if the stop and search system is allowed to continue - if an effective opposition is not organized - the next tactic will be house-to-house searches.

And the next victims may be not just blacks, but anyone who causes trouble - such as the thousands of San Francisco city employees who recently waged an effective city-wide strike.

Police agencies from coast to coast will be watching what goes on in San Francisco. If black people allow the San Francisco police to get away with their stop and search program, similar programs will be tried elsewhere.

The fight is going on here and now. Here and now, the police must be stopped. ■

Emmet Casey



Child Care Funding Axed page 11



What We Think

MAY DAY AND MASS ACTION

The first of May is the best-known holiday in the international working class movement. May Day began in the 1880's during the fight to win the eight-hour workday in this country. It rapidly spread to other countries and was traditionally celebrated with a one-day strike and demonstration of working class strength. May Day strikes symbolized both the solidarity of the unions and the working class struggle for socialism.

In this country, May Day passes almost unnoticed in recent years. Union leaders aren't interested in mobilizing the strength of the working class, but in containing it. They have forgotten that important victories for working people are won through mass action which directly pits the power of workers against the bosses.

The leaders of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe falsely claim they have established socialism. In these countries May Day celebrations still occur, but they are meaningless, stage-managed rituals arranged only to promote the glory of the Communist Party.

However, a new world crisis is rebuilding the revolutionary workers' movement. The possibility now exists of reviving the spirit of May Day and the fight for revolutionary socialism.

In the United States, the pillar of capitalist prosperity, the working class and the black community face the greatest attack on their living standards in a generation. In Britain a massive miners' strike brought down a government, while in Italy the collapse of the economy is so severe that fears of a right-wing coup are widespread.

In India, the stagnation of capitalism threatens hundreds of millions of people with famine. In Ethiopia, where hundreds of thousands have already starved, mass strikes break out every day and threaten to bring down the whole feudal structure.

In Chile, the failure of the working class to take power for itself led to a military takeover. The new semi-fascist regime slaughtered tens of thousands of workers. Dozens more are tortured and murdered every week.

We believe that socialist revolution, in the United States and throughout the world, is the only way to end exploitation and oppression and build a decent human society. This will mean the masses of working people must seize control of privately owned industry and run it in their own interests.

To carry through a successful socialist revolution requires more than severe economic crisis. It requires a revolutionary organization, led by those workers who understand the need to organize, lead and convince their fellow workers of the fight for workers' power.

The revolutionary party must be a workers' organization with an open, democratic relationship to the struggles of the working class as a whole.

It is not a new elite which gives orders to the workers because of its supposed superior wisdom. Its role is to continually fight to raise the consciousness of the working class, not dictate to it.

Forty to fifty years ago mass revolutionary parties existed following the victory of the Russian Revolution. But the defeats suffered by the working class in the 1930's and 1940's - the rise of fascism, the destruction of the Russian Revolution by Stalinism, and World War II - destroyed them.

Today, the world crisis and the growing struggles of the working class make the building of new revolutionary parties possible. That is what May Day stands for, and that is the program to which the International Socialists and Workers' Power are dedicated.

Opposition Builds In UAW Locals

DETROIT — With less than two months to go before the United Auto Workers' 24th Constitutional Convention, temporary or permanent layoffs in the auto industry have touched several hundred thousand UAW members.

On the other hand, those still in the plants are finding speed-up and harassment as vicious as at any time before.

As always, the elections for Convention delegates in many locals consist of several slates and a number of individuals. This year, however, there are slates and individuals running that stand out.

What makes many of the slates different is commitment of opposition to the policies of the Woodcock UAW leadership.

As the "Dump Woodcock Slate" of Jefferson Assembly, Chrysler Local 7 puts it, "The UAW leadership is more concerned with doing the company's dirty work than fighting it. The only time you can be sure of seeing your leadership is when you're about to walk out."

"Then they are there in an instant telling us to stay on the job and let the union handle it, which it never does."

"And this is what has become the major function of our union leadership the last few years - to be policemen over the rank and file forever keeping them in line and on the job."

LOCAL SLATES

Opposition here in the Detroit area is fairly widespread.

Several weeks ago, the United National Caucus held a conference and passed a series of resolutions for the Constitutional Convention. Representatives from many different slates reported on their campaigning and organizing efforts.

Groups or individuals have run or are running at Locals 3, 7, 22, 160, 212, 228, 235, 600 and 869. Most are in the UNC or sympathetic to its program.

At some of the early delegate elections, the opposition slates have not done too well. A pattern seems clear, though.

Most of the Detroit plants have suffered heavy layoffs of low-seniority workers - many of those most dissatisfied with Woodcock and Co.

The machines in these locals, many of which have controlled them since their inception, have turned out older workers to vote. And they have used all the old tricks.

At Cadillac (Local 22) a retirees meeting was held the day of the election. 300 retirees showed up... and later voted. The Local 3 (Dodge Main) leadership sent out letters to all retirees slandering members of The Voice of Chrysler Workers slate.

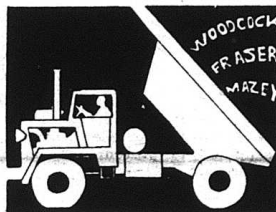
What has become evident at the elections at Warren Stamping and Cadillac is that fewer people than usual are voting. Partly this is due to the lay-offs, and partly also a real lack of interest in the union.

Many opposition activists have pointed out that the members' lack of interest in the union itself reflects the failures of the existing leadership.

The Gear and Axle Justice Committee of Local 235, referring to this lack of interest, states "We can understand why many brothers and sisters feel this way. Our leadership does not seem to care what we think."

"They seem to get their way no matter what happens. But it is a fact that less votes for the establishment and more votes for a change will be telling our leadership that we are not satisfied and that we are willing to do something about it!"

The Justice Committee program calls for effective action against speedup, inflation, management harassment of workers, and health and safety hazards.



At Mack-Avenue Local 212, the United National Caucus slate is demanding the rebuilding of a strong in-plant union that can humanize working conditions, guarantee health and safety, and fight for basic economic needs including 30 hours work for 40 hours pay to help end unemployment.

At Dodge Main Local 3, the Voice of Chrysler Workers slate is demanding that a production workers' council and a skilled trades council, both elected by direct vote of the rank and file, be established with power to act on solutions to problems like speedup and racist discrimination in promotion and transfers.

Virtually all the opposition slates promise that if elected as delegates, their members will publish full reports of the Convention for the information of UAW members

whose dues money is sending delegates thousands of miles at first class plane fares to Los Angeles.

Some of the oppositionists will win their elections. They will then be able to speak out at the Convention - demanding mass action against the corporations to solve the problems of unemployment and speed-up. It will be an important first step towards informing other auto workers about what is going on.

REBUILD THE UNION

But most of the slates and individuals see this year's campaign as just the beginning of the road. Most of the oppositionists see the election as a means of beginning a movement for a new set of policies for the union. At some locals on-going opposition groups exist; at others they may well begin from the slates and supporters. The movement has begun!

No one expects Woodcock to be dumped this year. No one expects oppositionists to play much more than an educational role of the membership - to raise some hell at the convention on the important issues.

But the slates have begun to point out there is more than one strategy for the UAW.

No more will the UAW be unified in making deals with the companies. The unorganized dissatisfaction of many rank and filers will find a new voice and new leadership.

If opposition slates in this election lead to more rank and file organization and a higher consciousness of what is coming down, then they will have been a success.

The Local 7 Dump Woodcock slate states: "We are not afraid of antagonizing Woodcock, Fraser or any of the rest of the rot from Solidarity House. We want to throw them out of office."

"We want to work together with other dissidents and oppositionists to challenge Woodcock's right to continue to rule, and therefore further destroy our union."

"Our election as convention delegates would be the first step on a long road of struggle to transform this union." ■

Bill Hastings

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Steel Pact Cuts Pay, Extends 'No-Strike'



CLEVELAND—Just over a year ago the "Experimental Negotiation Agreement" (ENA) was railroaded past the rank and file of the Steel Workers union. The fruits of that "historic" agreement have just been imposed on the 386,000 workers in Basic Steel.

The results are a disaster for steel workers which will be felt from now until 1980 unless a successful rank and file resistance movement can be built. In the short run the new contract will leave steel workers - both active and retired - with less real income at the end of the agreement than at the beginning.

In the long run the prospect is even worse. The extension of the compulsory arbitration to the next contract means the union will have no strike weapon against the companies until 1980.

Ed Mann, president of the

Youngstown (Ohio) Sheet & Tube Steel Workers local, described the contract to Workers' Power as "lousy." "With the right to strike we could have pushed them to the wall and gotten 50-75 cents in the first year."

Mann noted that the industry has been running at full tilt (and full profit) for over a year now and still can't meet demand. Therefore, stockpiling, which the ENA was supposed to prevent, has been impossible anyway.

Abel gave away the union's power when it was in its strongest bargaining position in years. Unfortunately for the ranks, no similar charity can be expected from the companies when the tables are turned.

Both on wages and on pensions much is being made of the improved cost of living (COL) protection. Mann pointed out,

"While the better COL formula will help some, the package falls far short of covering what we need, particularly since incentive pay portions of the paycheck are not covered."

Abel himself admitted that much of the first year's measly 29 cent increase is merely "catch-up" to cover losses from inflation under the old contract. The 16 cent raises in 1975-76 will also go to cover inflation above the COL protection.

While the increased pension payments will help make up some past losses, the "cost of living escalator" on pensions is a joke. A five percent increase over three years will mean a minimum loss of 15 percent in buying power and that could go to 30 percent if inflation continues its present pace.

So far only a summary of the contract has been released. The doubling of the probationary period for new workers to over 13 weeks is probably only one of the hard-won conditions given up along with the right to strike to get this miserable, wage-cutting contract.

The compulsory arbitration scheme has also weakened the local bargaining over conditions. According to Mann all important local items - including upgrading, apprenticeship and testing procedures, etc., were described by the company as "economic," referred to national negotiations and then ignored.

The ENA has put a strait-jacket on the Steel Workers union for the entire 1970's.■

Steve Carter

WOMEN WORKERS BATTLE RUNAWAY SHOPS

Women who went to the recent CLUW conference in Chicago couldn't help knowing about the "Boycott Concord Fabrics" emblazoned on t-shirts worn by delegates, on shopping bags, key chains and leaflets.

The Concord strike and boycott are actions taken by members of District 65, Distributive Workers of America, to fight the callous runaway shop policy of Concord Fabrics.

Last summer 75 male warehouse workers in a New Jersey Concord plant were laid off. The company was transferring its work to Lyman, South Carolina and Milledgeville, Georgia.

The New Jersey workers received \$5-6 per hour. In the southern plants, the company can hire employees at \$2 an hour. Also laid off when Concord closed were 1500 ILGWU skilled workers.

Sixty-three office workers, mainly women, from the New York City Concord office retaliated against the plant closing by calling a strike to demand restoration of the warehouse jobs. They realized they would be next on the company's list of layoffs if effective action was not taken to stop all layoffs.

For six months now these women have been picketing the Concord Broadway office, but the company has refused to meet with the union to discuss the demands.

SECONDARY BOYCOTT

District 65 has now called a nationwide boycott to support the strike. The boycott follows up earlier pickets at Georgia, North Carolina and New Jersey plants which do piecework for Concord.

The company went to court claiming that this activity was a secondary boycott. The court suits have slowed this action over the past months.

Picket lines have now been set up across the country outside major department stores and fabric centers to ask consumers not to buy Concord fabrics.

Previously the insignia of Concord, the American flag, was found along the selvage of the fabric. This has been removed, making it more difficult for consumers to point out Concord among the racks of fabrics.

However, an effective part of the boycott is found in the textile shops where District 65 workers refuse to handle Concord fabrics. This action is also being supported by ILGWU workers.

WORKERS' SOLIDARITY

All workers should support the striking Concord workers. This is an important example of worker solidarity that is so necessary in this period of increasing unemployment.

Concord's action also points out the need for a serious union organizing drive, particularly in the southern states.

The recent victory of the Farah strike was an important first step toward winning rights in the South and eventually putting an end to the vicious runaway shop practice.

WOMEN PRESS DEMANDS

Like the Concord strike, the Farah strike also involved mainly women workers in the struggle. This illustrates the importance of union women pressing the demand that the labor movement seriously organize tens of millions of unorganized workers in this country.

When workers in the south are making a decent living wage, companies like Concord won't be able to run away to make better profits off another group of workers.■

Joan McKiernan

Steel Back Pay Deal Falls Far Short

A deal was recently announced between the federal government, the steel industry, and the top leadership of the Steel Workers union over discrimination in the steel industry.

While previous government estimates of back pay owed minority workers due to discriminatory hiring and promotion practices were from \$50-75 million, the deal will pay only \$250-\$500 per worker or from \$16-20 million. Thus the steel companies have saved \$34-59 million.

This robbery is yet another example of the distance that IW Abel, president of the union, has moved from the minimal principles on which the Steel Workers union was founded.

There is no doubt that black,

Latin, and women workers are owed back pay for past discrimination. For years they have been compartmentalized in the worst, most dangerous and unpleasant, and lowest paying jobs by departmental seniority lists.

Only after the uprisings of blacks in the 1960's have the government and the companies felt threatened enough, by the anger and power of black and other minority workers, to make token efforts to quiet this anger.

This robbery of aggrieved workers was possible only with the collaboration of Abel. There are no blacks, Latins, or women on the union's Executive Board. None played any part in the secret negotiations that led to this deal.

Rather than fighting for the

rightful due of his members, Abel, as in his negotiations to give up the right to strike, played the role of front man for the companies and their swelling treasuries.

The agreement also abolished the discriminatory departmental seniority lists and provides some income protection for workers who transfer departments. Details of the agreement are not yet available, but if it matches most of Abel's efforts it will certainly be a shuck.

Abel has called a special conference of local union presidents for early May to "explain" the plan. In our mid-May issue Workers' Power will provide full coverage of the conference and of the new agreement.■

WORLD IN CRISIS



Murder Sparks Massive Protests

the Workers and Students Committee in Yucatan (the southern peninsula of Mexico), two months ago.

The kidnapping set off a wave of school and higher education strikes and a strike of the Independent Trade Union Front. A mass demonstration in Merida City center, demanding Calderon Lara's return,

was met with troops using machine guns, tear gas and bazookas.

Students and workers defended the university with buses, furniture and burning tires as barricades. The battle lasted for hours with even more arrests and many wounded.

Afterwards a general strike of workers, peasants and students began. The extent of the repression against all these groups forced them into common solidarity.

Calderon Lara's body was found five days after his disappearance. He had three bayonet wounds, his face and skull were smashed, his feet broken and teeth missing. He had obviously been viciously tortured before being finished off by a bullet in the back of the head.

A silent march of 4000 attended the funeral.

Gamboa Gamboa issued a statement that "the intention was to frighten Calderon Lara. My men went too far." This casual admission of responsibility and complicity in a brutal has not resulted in Gamboa's arrest.

As protests grew, more and more employers began firing members of the Independent Trade Union Front. Four more students have been kidnapped, and their fate is unknown.

This repression is a result of the escalating struggle in the Yucatan peninsula. A demonstration of 80,000 people on March 4 demanded the dissolution of the corrupt state government.

More and more troops have been brought into Merida. All the ingredients for a mass confrontation exist, even though the workers and peasants are not armed. Their strength lies in their solidarity and independent organization.

PATIENCE ENDED

For 400 years the people of Yucatan have been victims of foreign and absentee landlords, suffering the effects of government corruption under both colonial and then national rule, and subject to repression at the first sign of protest.

The official Mexican trade union federation, the CTM works hand in glove with the bosses and the state. At the height of the struggle around Calderon Lara, the CTM was calling for the use of increased force against workers and peasants in the Independent Trade Union Front.

Laws guaranteeing minimum rights to workers are ignored in Yucatan. Elections are a bad joke, with ballot boxes-stuffed with votes for the ruling party - the Institutional Revolutionary Party - by police and government officials. Now, the seemingly endless patience of the oppressed in Yucatan is broken.

The Workers and Students Committee have sent urgent messages for solidarity and support. Protests can be sent to the Mexican embassy in Washington demanding the end of repression and the granting of trade union rights in Yucatan. ■

Revolutionary Socialists Run Presidential Candidate



Arlette Laguiller



The French revolutionary group *Lutte Ouvriere* (Workers' Struggle) has announced that Arlette Laguiller, a leading woman militant in the strike movement sweeping the banks in Paris and the provinces, will be running in the election to choose a successor to France's dead President, Georges Pompidou.

She is the first woman worker ever nominated to be President of France.

The deep crisis in French society explains why Pompidou's fatal illness was hushed up for so long.

The ruling Gaullist party in France is deeply split. Faced with rising unemployment and a wave of industrial militancy, they could not afford a long public squabble about who was to climb into Pompidou's boots.

So poor old Pompidou had to die on his feet, trying to pretend he was only suffering from piles.

When Pompidou died, the workers in the banks of Paris were beginning the eighth week of their militant strike, and more and more bank strikers throughout France were joining their ranks.

Paris employees of Credit Lyonnais, a nationalized institution, were the first to go on strike. They conducted a sit-in at the bank's central office and some of the branches until forcibly thrown out by police.

The most important strike demands are an immediate \$80 a month pay increase, monthly raises of \$16, and full pay for all days on strike. Safer working conditions and the hiring of more workers to reduce individual work loads are also prime issues.

From the beginning, Credit Lyonnais branch workers elected representatives to a central strike committee, uniting the members of the six trade unions represented in the bank.

One of the leaders of this strike committee is Arlette Laguiller, *Lutte Ouvriere's* candidate.

In 1968, Laguiller organized the

workers in her branch of the bank to join the great general strike of that year.

Today she is the main fighter within the strike committee for the view that the workers must rely on their own strength in order to win, and that it would be a great mistake to return to work before winning their most important demands.

France's main trade union confederation--led by the Communist Party--opposes this view. The confederation argues that the workers should end their strike and leave the union bureaucrats free to bargain with the bank administrators.

Thus, the candidacy of Arlette Laguiller as a revolutionary alternative presents an opportunity for the increasing number of French worker militants to organize themselves as an independent political force through the struggles they are themselves waging.

Her campaign does not represent just a set of militant slogans and demands. She stands for the idea that French workers who are beginning to fight battles independent of the wishes of Communist Party union bureaucrats must carry that independence into the political arena as well.

The political aim of the Communist Party is to become a respectable government party that has ministers in the cabinet in coalition with the big capitalist parties.

To achieve this, the CP has built an electoral alliance with the middle-class Socialist Party. This alliance, which is called the "Union of the Left," puts forward a very moderate reform program in which the needs of the workers are subordinated to keeping French capitalism running smoothly.

The Socialist and Communist Parties will almost certainly back SP leader Francois Mitterand. In the 1950's, Mitterand was a partner in numerous anti-Communist political alliances before he discovered that Communist votes were his best way to the top.

Mitterand was Home Secretary of France in 1954 when the Algerian people launched their long struggle for freedom. Mitterand, acting as an agent of French imperialism, immediately banned the main Algerian nationalist party.

This is the so-called left wing candidate backed by the Communist Party against the revolutionary left. However, since the Communist Party still retains the political allegiance of the majority of French workers, and because the right wing Gaullists are badly split, there is at least an outside chance that Mitterand can win. If he does, the pace of the struggle in France will certainly quicken. ■

Mexico

Para-military thugs directed by Mexico police chief Gamboa Gamboa kidnapped, tortured and murdered Calderon Lara, a member of



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A Farmworker Field Strike:



COACHELLA IS A UNION TOWN!

COACHELLA VALLEY-On Interstate 10, east from Los Angeles, it is a three hour drive past smog-covered suburban split levels, across bleak hills and down, into the barren, sandy desert of the Coachella Valley.

The valley stretches 100 miles, north and south, surrounded by dark brown mountains where nothing grows. Nothing grows in the valley either, except sage brush and scrub and date palms - and grapes, fed by irrigation water pumped over the Little San Bernardino mountains from the Colorado River.

The grape fields of Coachella are small. In the whole of the Coachella Valley, forty-two ranches work a total of 15,000 acres of grapes. In contrast, Joseph Guimarra of Delano owns 14,000 acres of table grapes.

The ranchers of Coachella make their money because they are the first grapes to hit the eastern market. The Delano crop is not harvested till August. Coachella harvests in June.

From the Indio exit off I-10, the town of Coachella lies six miles to the southwest on Highway 86. It is a town of 8,600 inhabitants, lies 79 feet below sea level and at ten o'clock on an early April morning it is already 90 degrees.

It is here that the struggle of the United Farm Workers is renewed every spring with the thinning and pruning in the table grape fields.

In the spring of 1973, the UFW had 42 grape contracts in Coachella. Then came the summer. Goons paid by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters invaded the valley to "protect" contracts stolen from the UFW by William Grami and Frank Fitzsimmons.

TEAMSTER "ORGANIZING"

Houses burned. Bombs exploded. When it was over, two strikers were dead and the UFW was left with three grape contracts. Driving down Highway 111 on the west side of Coachella, the charred remains of a warehouse, a casualty of 1973, stand silently by the railroad tracks.

On a hot Saturday morning, 25 pickets stand across the road from a field belonging to the Karahadian Ranch. In the field 20 to 30 workers

move very slowly down the rows, thinning the bunches of grapes which are forming on the vines.

"If you support the United Farm Workers, throw those grapes in the air," shouts the man on the bullhorn. Bunches of grapes sail up and fall to the ground.

"Work slowly. Take lots of breaks. It is hot today. Get many drinks of water," the man calls out.

Karahadian is a Teamster field. The workers make \$2.30 per hour. They pay \$8.00 per month in dues and \$15 to join the union.

About five miles away on the Freedman Ranch, workers under UFW contract are making \$2.40 per hour. Their dues are two percent of their monthly income. They are negotiating a contract for \$2.50 per hour.

But the most important benefits of UFW contracts are the UFW hiring hall and protection against exposure to deadly pesticides.

FIELD STRIKES BEGIN AGAIN

Carlos, the picket captain at the Karahadian line, explains what is happening in the field across the road:

"See that man? He wants to come out, but he is afraid. He is afraid of being beaten up. He wants to wait until more people come out. There may be as many as eight who will come out. They might wait for lunch break. They are working very slowly, though. We have a lot of support. But people are afraid."

The strike activity going on in Coachella now is not extensive. The thinning and pruning season does not involve large numbers of workers. Carlos estimates 800 people are working in the valley now. When harvest starts in late May and June, there will be thousands of workers in the fields, and thousands more who will come, but not find work.

It is during the harvest that the strike will pick up momentum. Carlos says as soon as the asparagus strikes in Calexico wind down, more union organizers and field workers will come to Coachella to begin work on the grape strikes.

Perhaps the union will send back the farm workers who spent the winter in the large eastern cities

doing boycott work. People have heard different stories and few are positive about what will happen. They are only positive they will need more people working on the strike than they now have.

The Teamster organizers are in the valley, but they are not in the fields," Carlos says. "They don't know how. Just the other day, at this ranch, some people had grievances they wanted resolved so they called the Teamster office."

LTD'S AND BUSINESS SUITS

"You know what those business agents did? They came out here in their LTD's and their fancy business suits and they went in and had a little chat with the grower and then they drove off. They never even spoke to the workers who had the grievances."

On the Freedman Ranch, workers who have grievances take it first to their shop steward. If the steward cannot solve the grievance on the spot, it is taken to the ranch committee, workers at the ranch who have the authority to dispute grievances.

At their office in Indio, the Teamster organization includes three former labor contractors, one ex-sheriff, and Bill Grami, Jr. fresh out of college, working for \$200 a week, plus expenses.

"The Teamsters are trying to buy respectability," one UFW member explains. "They went to MAPA (Mexican-Americans for Political Action) and offered to pay them \$5,000 rent for four months if they could use the MAPA office to set up a model clinic."

"Then they went to the Centro Hispano, a cultural and community center, and offered the woman who runs the center \$700 plus expenses if she would become a social worker for the Teamsters Union. She refused."

At two o'clock, the picket line breaks up. No workers came out of the Karahadian field. The picketers know they are afraid to come out and they know that they can offer the Teamster workers little protection from physical intimidation. As the picketers drive off, the workers in the field shout "Viva la Huelga!"

TEAMSTER RANKS HELP OUT

On Sunday, the workers at the Freedman Ranch sit on the shaded porch of the communal kitchen. They are talking about their contract.

The union must have contracts if it is to survive. The victory at Almaden is discussed and the workers are glad to hear the Almaden workers won \$2.85 an hour.

"This is a very important summer for the union," says one

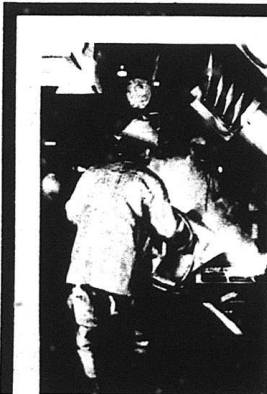
man who has been with the union since its beginnings. "We need contracts. The Teamsters aren't acting any differently than last year. They say they will depend on the growers and sheriff to 'defend' their workers. But things are no different. We need support, too. From all kinds of people. The people in the cities, they are very important."

Bob, who is from Delano, tells about a rally last summer when 200 rank and file Teamsters from the Bay Area came to join the picket lines. "We know the members of the Teamsters are not against us."

Coachella is a union town, the workers say. It is a UFW town. The Teamster officials are from Indio. The growers live in Palm Springs. Only the UFW lives in Coachella. The workers want to keep it that way. ■

Mary Franklin

**Boycott
Grapes,
Lettuce, and
Gallo Wine!**



METAL WORKERS ON STRIKE

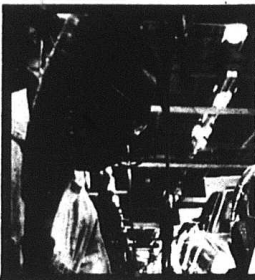
SEATTLE -Five thousand metal tradesmen and women in ten unions are on strike here for a better deal. Workers rejected a union negotiating team's recommended package of \$1.75 an hour over the next three years.

While the union team is looking to a federal mediator for help, the machinists, painters, sheet-metal workers, boiler-makers, iron workers, car builders, foundry workers, and Teamsters are on the picket lines to back-up their demands for a better deal.

It was obvious from the time the ratification polls opened that the rank and file was in a fighting mood and would not follow the negotiating team's advice. One tradesman was overheard saying, "It's time to put some of these super-profits of the companies into our pockets."

As one picketer told Workers' Power, "We've been quiet too long. Now the company and the union know we're not going to be pushed against the wall." ■

William Root



labor briefs

Truckers for Justice, a recently formed organization centered in Tucson, Arizona, has signed an agreement with the **United Farm Workers** that members of the group will not cross UFW picket lines or haul produce which lacks the UFW label. Truckers for Justice has several hundred owner-operator members.

Delegates to a conference of 26 unions representing workers in non-ferrous metal industries met in Tucson last month and reaffirmed the right of their members to strike when contracts expire. The 26-union coalition is led by the Steel Workers, which gave up that right for its members in basic steel. The most important contract in non-ferrous metals this year covers the 30,000 workers employed by the big five copper companies. That contract expires June 30.

A Georgetown University survey shows that about **one out of every ten workers** in Washington, DC has been laid off or had their working hours reduced because of the energy crisis.

The **Detroit chapter of the American Federation of Teachers** is in turmoil. The incumbent administration of Mary Ellen Riordan was unable to win a single delegate in recent elections for this summer's AFT convention. Detroit teachers expect another bitter strike when their contract expires in the fall.

Over 200 workers at the **Chevrolet Corvette plant in St. Louis** got sick the second shift April 5 after the GMAD management attempted to increase the work load from eight to ten jobs an hour. The top officials of UAW Local 25 had warned the workers the previous day not to get sick, but few followed their advice. Solidarity among the ranks has prevented any disciplinary action so far, as the struggle against the speed-up continues.

Members of **International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Local 21** in Longview, Washington have voted "recommending our members do not patronize any Safeway stores and do not buy Gallo wine or California grapes and lettuce from any outlet unless it bears the UFW black eagle stamp."

The Wall Street Journal recently reported that **top business executives live longer than normal people**. Their mortality rate was only 63 percent that of the general white male population. The Journal suggested that businessmen live longer because of work satisfaction and public recognition, or because they "thrive on stressful situations."

Meanwhile, the New York Times published the salaries and bonuses paid to these top executives in 1973. **Harold Geneen of ITT is the winner so far with \$814,299**. Of the 84 executives in the Times' list, only seven made under \$200,000. The Times noted that executive raises during 1973 were "well in excess of 5.5%."

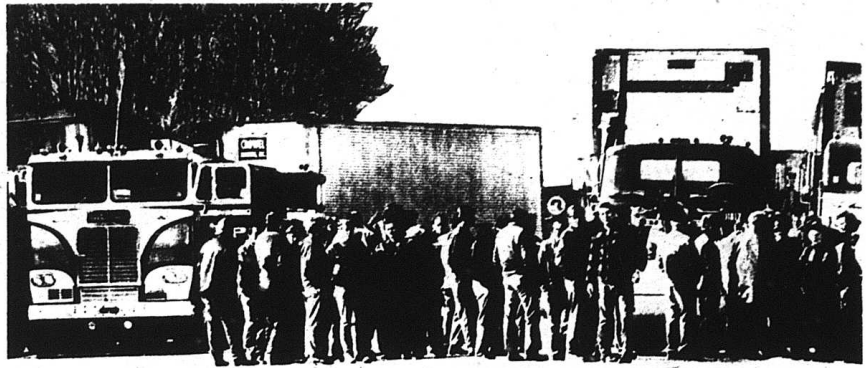
Northwest Airlines stewardesses will get substantial raises and back pay under a ruling by a federal judge. US District Judge Aubrey Robinson ruled that Northwest must give back pay to stewardesses fired since 1965 for being overweight. He also ruled that stewardesses must be paid the same rate as male pursers - almost twice what they get now.

Japanese transport workers won 30 percent wage increases after an illegal three-day strike that paralyzed the country. The raises are expected to set a pattern for other settlements in Japanese labor's spring offensive and provide a good pattern for US workers to catch up with.

City officials in **Jackson, Mississippi** have agreed to give back pay to black city workers denied promotions in past years and to hire one black worker for every white hired until blacks constitute 40 percent of the employees in all city departments. The back pay is token, however, amounting to a maximum of \$1,000 per person. Actual losses in most cases have been many, many times that amount.

Gulf Oil has dropped its plans to buy a circus. Gulf had announced in January that it would buy **Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus**. But the deal fell through. Gulf was apparently embarrassed that in the middle of the oil crisis it was buying a circus. Critics said the plan showed Gulf's lack of interest in expanding its oil production.

What's happening where you work? Send items for this column to **Labor Editor, Workers' Power**, 14131 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203.



MASTER FREIGHT AGREEMENT- OPEN AND SHUT

Frank Fitzsimmons and the rest of the Teamster leadership undoubtedly deserve the worst, lowest paying, most backbreaking jobs under the sweetest of Teamster sweetheart contracts.

Fitz's latest contribution is to the Master Freight Agreement, which sets pay and working conditions for over-the-road truck drivers throughout the nation.

Late last fall when the energy crisis was applied with full force to the truckers, their anger was boiling over. Independent drivers began a series of spectacular highway blockades.

But the lower speed limits also seriously hurt those drivers who worked for wages. Since long-distance truckers are paid on a per-mile basis, their wages fell sharply.

To dampen their anger and prevent more company drivers from joining the owner-operator blockades, Fitzsimmons was forced to reopen the Master Freight Agreement to seek a pay adjustment to make up for the lost wages.

COLLECTIVE STRUGGLE

After four long months, **Fitzsimmons and the Trucking Employers Inc. (TEI) have announced an agreement. That agreement, while not having the far-reaching consequences of IW Abel's no-strike deal in the steel industry, abandons a principle equally as important as the right to strike - the principle of collective struggle.**

The Fitzsimmons-TEI deal specifies that trucking companies will compensate truckers for losses suffered due to lower speed limits, but only on a case by case basis.

Each individual driver must demand compensation and must be able to prove what losses he has suffered. There is no general wage settlement that applies to all drivers.

The deal means it will probably be difficult - even for those drivers who have suffered most from lower speed limits - to collect any compensation.

The trucking companies obviously will reimburse any driver only when absolutely forced. Nobody is automatically entitled to compensation, and the burden of proof is on the driver.

The trucking companies expect

this arrangement to be quite advantageous to them. One spokesman for the employers said maybe one or two percent of the over-the-road drivers might get some reimbursement, "but in any case, it's not going to be a hell of a lot."

Yet, for drivers in well-organized shops with imaginative stewards, the new agreement does offer certain interesting possibilities.

Most important, since wages are no longer definitely fixed by the national agreement, a new flexibility is introduced. This can be turned to the drivers' advantage - if they are aware of it, and if they are in a strong enough position to bring pressure to bear on their employers.

For instance, an employer who refuses to recognize that the fuel shortage has caused reimbursable hardship for all his drivers may find that the fuel crisis is getting worse. His drivers may say the state police are becoming more stringent in enforcing speed limits and so they cannot go nearly as fast. And they therefore deserve a larger base wage to compensate.

If the drivers are sufficiently

determined, such an employer may find that it is better to give everyone a fuel crisis compensation rather than insisting on detailed proof for each and every driver.

Certainly this sort of situation is not what Fitzsimmons and TEI had in mind with the new agreement. This kind of local "bargaining" over additional wages is not at all common in the US, although it is in some other countries.

The energy crisis provided Fitzsimmons with a perfect opportunity to demand wage hikes to prevent drivers losing pay, to win back what had been lost to inflation, and to improve on the tiny gain he negotiated last year.

Fitz chose to do none of these. Reopening the MFA was a concession to Teamster driver militancy spurred on by the owner-operator blockades.

For Teamster drivers today it is their own resourcefulness, organized strength, and the willingness to fight that will raise wages - not the ability of some powerful union leader to smooth-talk the bosses.

Jim Woodward

toward teacher power

STEVE ZELUCK

This new International Socialists pamphlet describes the crisis facing the teachers' union movement today and proposes a strategy for winning substantial gains and quality education through "a break with the conservative philosophy and practices of business unionism and the capitalist system which breeds it."

Order from:
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14131 Woodward Av.
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Wage-Cutting Assault On Protective Legislation

The California Industrial Welfare Commission, a state board made up of labor, business and "public" representatives who set rules and policy on hours, wages and working conditions in the state, recently overturned state legislation which provided that men, as well as women, be paid overtime rates after eight hours a day.

Originally, legislation protecting women workers provided that women must be paid overtime after eight hours. Male workers were automatically paid the same. When protective legislation for women was challenged by employers as discriminatory to male workers, the Commission first extended the protection to men.

Apparently they have realized that this did not exactly satisfy the aims of the employer and have now decided to make men and women "equal" by ruling that all workers can be worked ten hours a day before the employer has to pay them overtime rates. The limit on hours worked in one week was kept at 40 hours.

The lone dissenting vote came from Mike Elorduy, an official of

the Western Conference of Teamsters. However, the major trade unions in California, IBT, UAW and AFL-CIO, are taking no serious, visible steps to prevent the new ruling from going into effect in June.

Most union members are guaranteed overtime after eight hours in their contracts, even though this overtime is often mandatory rather than voluntary. The new ruling will have the most effect on workers who are not organized and have no contracts to fall back on. As usual, this means women.

This latest attack against the unorganized worker may well turn into an attack against the union worker as well. Employers may attempt to change upcoming contracts to allow for the new legal maximum number of hours before overtime is paid.

It is not too late for rank and file workers, union and non-union, to mount a campaign to force the union leaders to commit money and personnel to fight the new ruling. ■

Mary Franklin

Black Woman Sues Chrysler

A black woman auto worker is suing Chrysler Motor Corporation for racist discrimination in firing her 13 months ago.

Augusta Giles, a member of Local 1264 (Sterling Heights, Michigan) of the United Auto Workers, had been repeatedly harassed by white employees at work.

Arthur Dwojakowski, driver of a 2,200 Hi-lo (forklift), had run his truck at her a number of times, pinning her against a wall. He called her filthy racist names, and Giles attempted to defend herself against his attacks by pitching a cowling at him.

Although the cowling came nowhere near him, Dwojakowski charged her with "felonious assault to do bodily harm." A white general foreman insisted she be fired even though Dwoja-

kowski had launched the attack.

The police broke into her home at 1 am to arrest her and Giles was subsequently convicted by an all-white jury.

The judge, however, denounced the verdict and pronounced a sentence of five minutes probation.

Giles charges that her firing by Chrysler was racially motivated. She had continually complained about racial harassment and no action was taken by Chrysler. Chrysler allowed the continual use of racist slurs against Giles and other black workers. Chrysler has continued to back the side of the white employee - even though all evidence demonstrates Dwojakowski has continually harassed her.

The local union has done nothing in 13 months about this racist abuse, the effect of which is to damage the interests of all auto workers. Giles has taken her case to the civil courts to win reinstatement and back pay. ■

Dotty Grant

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?



Kim Moody

Planting the seeds of rebellion

Workers' Power talks a lot about the sell-out, pro-company policies of the top labor leaders and the need of the ranks to organize for militant unionism.

In this column and other articles, we try to point out ways workers can fight the current attack on their living standards.

Many of our readers, however, see the labor bureaucrats and the corporations as so powerful that it is hard to imagine what a small group of militants can really accomplish. The fact is though, successful actions usually began somewhere in the past with a few militants.

The process of turning doubts and gripes into a movement with some power is complicated and, usually, long. We thought it might be useful to union militants to relate the story of one small movement that is gaining momentum right now.

The membership of Local 1101 of the Communications Workers of America went through a seven month strike in 1971-72 trying to overturn a rotten settlement imposed by the top leaders of that international union.

They lost, and they lost badly. Most of the militants in 1101 expect the new contract negotiated this summer will be just as bad.

They also know their local can't get anywhere with a go-it-alone strike against the international union and the Bell Telephone System.

What could a handful of concerned militants do to change things, to get others in the fight for a better contract?

A small group of 1101 members, organized around a newsletter called **United Action**, put forward the idea of an open discussion of bargaining demands in the Local and some commitment by Convention delegates to fight for them.

This would allow the ranks to express their feelings about the new contract and how to fight for it. Right away, the powers that be in Local 1101 rejected the idea. But the militants from United Action kept at it.

They raised the idea at stewards' meetings and in their work places. The idea caught on among a few more militants.

The president of the Local called the members from United Action well meaning, but said the existing bargaining committee could handle things alone. He even used his column in the Local 1101 newspaper, the *Generator*, to reply to the United Action proposals.

The militants among the stewards began to see that the local leaders, traditionally thought of as militants themselves, weren't going to do anything about the up-coming contract. The idea of opening up contract discussion got more popular.

Now, the power of this union president was based on a strong stewards organization. He kept the loyalty of most militants by using the stewards organization to wring concessions from the company - particularly to win important grievances.

Now, however, militants in the stewards organization had to choose between loyalty to the local president or the needs of the ranks in the new contract.

This choice was not simply a moral one. The stewards could not remain effective or even hold their position for long if the ranks became convinced they were putting the local leaders' political machine before the workers' needs.

Since neither the local president nor anyone else could really come up with a convincing argument about why the local shouldn't have open contract discussions, the best stewards

were hard-pressed to continue supporting the Local president's position.

So, by ones and twos, the stewards began to be convinced of the need for a contract committee. Then the militants from United Action proposed that all the militants in Local 1101 who favored their proposals get together.

They got a significant number of stewards, including stewards from the president's own work place and home base, to sign a leaflet calling for a meeting of those who would fight for such a committee. The meeting, we are told, was a success.

This fight is not over, and in the end this proposal may lose. But the life of that Local union has been changed. The demoralization that followed the seven month strike has been eroded.

The willingness of the best stewards to take an independent position - even in the face of open threats from the union president - has been established.

And it all started with a handful of workers who had the will and the patience to convince others of the need for a fight.

Their tools were nothing more than a small mimeographed newsletter, an aggressive presence at various union and stewards meetings, and hours spent convincing individuals.

If you look behind the big strike movements and the ousting of major union leaders, you are more than likely to find a history of small accomplishments such as that in Local 1101.

The lesson here is that the fight against the sell-out union leaders, the profit-hungry employers, and the government that backs them up can be started today and in many places has been by small groups of workers who are willing to stick it out for a long fight. ■

BIG FIGHT AT CITY LIGHT

700 Seattle City Light employees responded to an unfair disciplinary action with a massive walkout. The job action, which began April 9,

was opposed by the leadership of Local 77 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, who have called for a return to work.

The action was in protest of three-day suspensions handed out to two line foremen charged with "goofing off" on the job. Electrical workers, calling this the last straw of arbitrary discipline, demanded the suspensions be lifted and the disciplinary policy rewritten with worker participation.

The strikers also demand nothing less than the removal of City Light superintendent George Vickery. Vickery is the author of a

dictatorial and illegal disciplinary code, and has waged a two-year program to militarize City Light's workforce.

Leafletting by electrical workers of City Light's downtown building and appeals for solidarity resulted in an April 11 midday rally of 800 workers and a march of 1,100 City Light workers on City Hall.

City Light workers have also gathered over 23,000 signatures in an "Oust Vickery" petition drive. A mass meeting of 1,500 voted unanimously to continue the strike following the Easter weekend. ■

Alex Stevens



The Birth Of A Workers' Organization

1968 was a turning point in Europe. In the general strike of May and June in France, and in the rising of Czechoslovakia, the working class exploded back into politics, raising for the first time in a generation the specter of socialist revolution.

For the first time since the defeat of the Russian Revolution in 1928, and the rise of fascism in Germany, there existed an important, sometimes vast section of workers to the left of the traditional working class parties, the Social Democrats and the Communists.

At last, after forty years of isolation, there was a mass audience for revolutionaries in the working class.

In Britain these changes developed more slowly, though they did not go unnoticed. Revolutionaries responded in any number of ways, but the International Socialists in particular drew what proved to be a momentous decision.

In the words of Tony Cliff, a leading member of the I.S., "International Socialism, up to now at best an ideological trend, faces the challenge and opportunity to become linked with the mass working-class movement." The I.S. turned directly to that task.

Less than six years since those words were published, the I.S. has

become the leading revolutionary group in Britain, possibly in all of Europe.

The I.S. has all but transformed itself. The majority of its members are industrial workers, including large numbers of the leading militants in British industry.

Most importantly, even greater prospects lie ahead. The British I.S. stands on the threshold of becoming a mass working class revolutionary party.

ORIGINS OF THE I.S.

The origins of the British I.S. are in the disintegration of the Trotskyist movement in the 1940s. That movement, disoriented by the triumph of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and China, and then unable to understand the development of the arms economy, and hence the long-term growth and economic stability of the post-war period, collapsed, ultimately turning either to outright support for the Communist countries, or to a rigid orthodoxy and sectarianism.

The I.S. broke from all that and developed new theories to suit the reality of the period. In 1955, Tony Cliff published *Russia: A Marxist Analysis*, which described Russia as a new class society, bureaucratic state capitalism.

At the same time the group

developed the theory of the permanent arms economy, chiefly in the writings of Michael Kidron, who later published a summary of these in *Western Capitalism Since the War*.

This work, along with their journal, *International Socialism*, helped establish the I.S. as a force on the revolutionary left.

In the late fifties and sixties the group was active in the Labor Party, a number of unions, and in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the student movement. But, despite its best efforts, the fact was that the I.S. remained confined largely to student and intellectual circles.

SHOP FLOOR STRUGGLE

In the late sixties, the economic "miracle" of European capitalism quickly began to fade, as inflation, monetary crisis, and unemployment, combined with the renewal of international competition to spoil the dreams of liberal democracy.

And this hit Britain hardest. Once the workshop of the world and the foremost imperialist power, Britain entered the seventies as the weak link of international capitalism, burdened with mounting balance of payments deficits and an inability to compete on the world market.

The British working class, on the other hand, entered the seventies with considerable strength. Though the revolutionary forces were weak, the workers' movement itself was confident and aggressive, more so perhaps than in any period since the upsurge following the first world war.

In the fifties and sixties, shop stewards committees up and down the country had taken advantage of booming industry by fighting to exercise considerable control over local management and the piece rate system. In the process, wages and working conditions improved dramatically.

The unofficial (wildcat) strike became the first and foremost weapon of the working class and national union agreements faded into the background.

One result of this was the establishment of a highly confident and combative local leadership, trained in struggle on the shop floor and trusted by the rank and file.

The trade union bureaucracy, unlike in the United States, remained weak and almost totally incapable of controlling the militancy of their membership.

It was to these shop floor leaders that the I.S. turned in the wake of the 1968 events. And, in particular, they responded to one key problem.

PRODUCTIVITY FIGHT

In an attempt to shore up declining British capitalism, the employers, first in cooperation with the Labor government of the sixties and then more recently with Heath's Conservative government, set out on a massive drive to improve the productivity and competitiveness of British industry.

To accomplish this, they resolved first to smash the shop stewards' movement and the strength of the working class on the shop floor.

The employers' tactic was "productivity bargaining," an old trick in the United States, but almost unheard of in Britain in the sixties.

The point was to offer money to the workers in exchange for control over the piece rate and working conditions.

The trick was that inflation quickly made the money meaningless, while such devices as "Time and Motion Studies" and "Measured Day Work" (hourly wage rates) could be permanently used to discipline the workers and undermine the power of the shop stewards.

Some stewards of course succumbed to temptation, but many others were prepared to fight. And the I.S., alone among the left groups, proposed a strategy for that fight.

In March, 1970, the group published *The Employers' Offensive: Productivity Deals and How to Fight Them*, written by Tony Cliff, a handbook for shop stewards.

The group carried on a national campaign against productivity bargaining, thus paving the way for work with the most advanced workers and providing the basis for the first significant recruitment of industrial militants.

At the same time, the employers' offensive was not restricted to the shop stewards. The Conservative Party joined in with anti-trade union legislation (pioneered a few years before by the Labor Party), attacks on welfare provisions, unemployment, rent increases and

inflation, all with the aim of reducing the living standards of the entire working class.

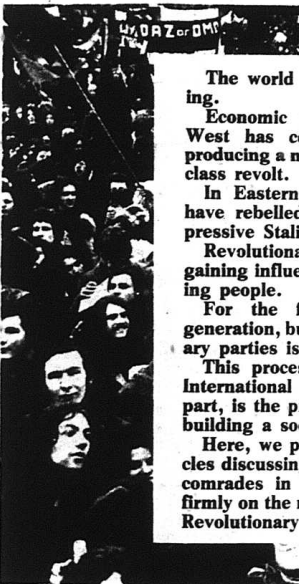
The response of the working class was magnificent. The local, fragmented struggles of the sixties were replaced by massive, national strikes in the seventies. And, in giant confrontations, the government was defeated.

In the winter of 1972, the miners, long among the poorest paid of industrial workers, carried out a national strike, backed by mass picketing to break through the government's wage restrictions.

At the Sattley power station in Birmingham, I.S. shop stewards initiated a picket of 10,000 machinists, closing the station and virtually ensuring the success of the strike.

A few months later, a national strike of longshoremen forced the government to release five workers from prison. These longshoremen had been imprisoned for picketing in violation of the new Industrial Relations Bill (the British Taft-Hartley). And, just weeks ago, another miners strike destroyed the Heath government.

Altogether, the struggle of British workers has reached a fantastic level, while at the same time the influence of revolutionary ideas has



The world is changing.

Economic West has ceased producing a new class revolt.

In Eastern have rebelled massive Stalin Revolutionary gaining influence people.

For the first generation, but any parties is

This process International part, is the part building a society

Here, we produce discussing comrades in firmly on the Revolutionary

spread dramatically. The growth of the I.S. itself has been phenomenal.

The I.S. membership is now nearly 3500, making it by far the largest group on the revolutionary left.

The most important fact of this growth is that it has been almost exclusively among blue collar workers. Only one year ago, the I.S. began building factory branches, and already there are more than 30.

These branches, composed entirely of workers at each particular factory, are located at the heart of British industry, in particular in the auto industry at such plants as Chrysler in Coventry, British Leyland in Liverpool, and Ford at Halewood.

In addition, the group has grown fastest in the working class centers of the industrial North. Manchester

Black Immigrants Face Racist Harassment



There are about two million black people in Britain. Just over half of them are immigrants.

But only one of every three of all immigrants in Britain is black - there are twice as many Irish as Indians or West Indians, and more Germans than Pakistanis.

The difference is that white immigrants are not considered a "problem" - not yet. That is what racism in Britain is about.

Racism is endemic in Britain, most of the time as a lurking subterranean force. It breaks surface whenever the working class movement is demoralized or quiet.

A number of political groups try to fan racism by attacks on

immigrants. Within the Conservative Party there is a right wing group called the Monday Club. Outside the party there are a scatter of others, the largest of which is the National Front.

All these groups campaign to "End Immigration" [the numbers now admitted to the country are trivial] and "Massive Repatriation" [expulsion].

The champion that has done most to create these forces is the Conservative politician, Enoch Powell. He is a British version of Barry Goldwater: "free" prices, "free" rents, end welfare legisla-

[continued on page 14]

A Revolutionary Party

alone has 18 branches. The National Office estimates that the membership in the Glasgow, Liverpool and Yorkshire areas is as much as 85 percent blue collar.

GROWING CRISIS

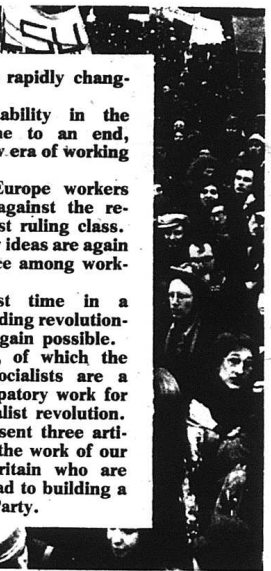
This growth took place primarily during the period of Conservative rule. Therefore it took place when both the Communist Party and the Labor Party could easily compete for the sympathies of radical workers.

Labor in power faces the same problems which destroyed the Conservatives. Committed to capitalism, Labor must inevitably attack the standards and mass institutions of the working class.

The trade union leadership and the Communist Party are committed to the defense of the Labor government, and will apologize for Labor's attack.

This situation therefore offers fantastic possibilities for the British I.S. They remain almost alone as a credible voice on the left. They alone are committed to unqualified support for the working class.

At this point there are literally hundreds of thousands of workers who are not prepared to abandon the struggle of the last years.



Among these workers, a revolutionary party can be built. And while there still exists a tremendous chasm between the I.S. and them, there is no reason to believe it cannot be reached.

All this is still preliminary to the actual struggle for workers' power, though of course it is part of it. The point is that just as 1968 signaled a new period in the workers' movement, the British I.S. today proved what can be done. And the success of the British I.S. should give others courage and determination.

The crisis which now faces British capitalism is just one aspect of the world crisis of capitalism. And the great struggle of the British workers is just one part of an international struggle. ■

Cal Williams

Socialists In The Labor Movement

"IS will have to play a crucial role if a rank and file movement is to be built in Britain today. It will be our members who usually have to take the initiative in pressing its demands, in making sure its activities are effective.

We should not be ashamed of recognizing this. It flows from the fact that our politics, unlike those of the Communist Party and the Labor left, prevent us being bound in any way to the trade union bureaucracy.

At the same time, however, a real rank and file movement cannot be our private property. Thousands of workers who as yet reject revolutionary politics have to feel that it is their weapon for fighting the immediate defensive struggles." (Andreas Nagliati, International Socialism, No. 66, February 1974)

These words, written by the industrial organizer of the British International Socialists, describe the relationship of revolutionary socialists in Britain to the growing movement of rank and file union members.

The basic IS strategy for building a rank and file movement is simple and clear: a leadership willing and able to break through the conservative policies of the top union leaders, which means a leadership that has no loyalty to the employers or their capitalist system; a movement based on policies with which militant unionists can agree even if they are not socialists.

The First National Rank and File Conference, held on March 30, in Birmingham, England, was evidence that this strategy is working.

It is well known that the IS did most of the legwork and drafted the resolutions for this Conference, making it a real success. The enthusiastic response of non-IS militants, however, made the Conference an important step toward a serious national rank and file organization. The more than 500 delegates at the Conference represented about 300 trade union branches, shop steward bodies, and trade councils.

The IS long ago recognized that the old strategy of shop floor struggle-factory by factory-was not enough to meet the nationwide attack on workers' conditions and living standards. To strengthen that fight and meet the new challenge, stewards and other militants need a nationally organized movement.

Neither of the two major traditional leadership groups, the Communist Party or the Labor Party, were willing to lead such a movement.

The Labor Party has sponsored many of the anti-labor laws and policies the rank and file movement must fight. The top trade union leaders have offered only mild

verbal resistance to policies implemented by the Labor Party.

These union bureaucrats and their Labor Party colleagues, as committed to capitalism and the profit system as their Conservative rivals, support policies designed to save the profits of British industry.

COMMUNIST PARTY FAILURE

The Communist Party (CP) is hardly committed to capitalism. That is one reason why many militants have looked to it in the past. But the CP is fully committed to maintaining its influence in the union bureaucracy, and so its actions are little different.

Its own Liaison Committee for the Defense of Trade Unions (LCDTU), set up a few years ago to resist wage controls, was never willing to break with conservative labor leaders and organize mass action by the ranks.

The Liaison Committee rapidly became a "talk shop" and has been unable and unwilling to lead a real fight.

The key to the growth of the IS has been its willingness and ability to lead day-to-day fights on the shop floor, and to give its organization visibility and life through its weekly newspaper, *Socialist Worker*.

Owing nothing to the union bureaucracy, IS militants in industry have been able to lead more and more fights against the bosses.

A good example is the role of the IS in the defense of 24 building trades militants arrested for picketing activities in Shrewsbury, England. Known as the Shrewsbury 24, these workers were fighting the use of scabs during a legitimate strike. When they were arrested the official union leaders refused to do anything in their defense.

The CP, afraid of breaking with these union officials, did nothing. Only the IS came forth with a platform for the victimized workers.

Through its newspaper IS began to publicize this case. IS organized speaking tours and support rallies around the country.

The Shrewsbury 24 campaign has since led other trade unionists to join the protest-for example, the Liverpool Trades Council. The Rank and File Conference, of course, took a strong position on the Shrewsbury defendants and on other workers prosecuted under the various anti-labor laws.

Another example of how IS has fought for militant unionism, was the strike of electrical workers at the Chrysler Corporation in Britain last year.

The electricians' union struck Chrysler, but none of the other major unions at Chrysler would respect their lines. In Britain, an auto company may have three or four unions in one plant, so if the

various unions do not respect the others' lines their strikes will be ineffective.

In Chrysler plants where the IS had members, they led movements to respect the picket lines and build solidarity. While the strike was not won, the IS won the respect of militants who understood the need for solidarity in the face of the employers attack.

SOCIAL & POLITICAL STRUGGLE

While most of the work and resources of the IS are devoted to the struggle in industry, the organization also fights aggressively on political and social issues that affect the whole society.

IS members were active in the anti-war movement in Britain fighting to end the war in Vietnam. They also carry out a vigorous fight against racism and help to organize black and Asian workers to carry their struggle into the factories and unions as well as in their own communities.

When racist or fascist organizations organize rallies to demand that black people be driven out, IS members have organized mass anti-racist counter-demonstrations to push the fascists off the streets.

The IS publishes a magazine, *WOMAN'S VOICE*, to fight for women's liberation and the rights of working women, especially the campaign for equal pay and equal work for women.

The IS is also active in tenants' rights struggles and strikes against rising rents. The organization has also published pamphlets to build massive defense campaigns for strikers thrown in prison, for immigrant workers who suffer harassment and discrimination, and for the rights of gay people.

Socialist Worker has publicized these fights, the attacks by the employers, proposals to fight these attacks, and a consistent set of policies that puts the needs of workers first.

Combined with its aggressive use in the shops and unions, these features have made *Socialist Worker* an effective organizer for the IS. *Socialist Worker* has not only been instrumental in building the IS, but has also solidified a large and growing number of workers who look to IS for leadership.

This is why the IS is now able to play the key role in building a rank and file movement in Britain.

To strengthen the movement and spread the ideas and information that can be used by IS and non-IS union militants, the IS also participates in the publication of twelve or more rank and file papers.

These papers, for example *Car Worker*, *Hospital Worker*, *Rank and File* (teachers), *The Docker*, involve non-IS workers in writing, production, and distribution.

In a number of industries they have become important in building sentiment for organized national rank and file movements. It was ten of these papers that sponsored the First National Rank and File Conference.

A militant shop steward in Liverpool, three years a member of IS, told this writer, "Our policy is simple. We build the IS in the factory and fight to win leadership of the shop stewards committee."

"At the same time we build the rank and file movement. In this way we are building the first revolutionary workers' party in Britain in 50 years." ■

Kim Moody

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

CRISIS: BLAME THE BOSSES!

Who caused fuel shortage?

The oil companies. They have that cheap Middle East oil which has been the lifeblood of the world's economy. They are the ones who have been making huge profits from it. They have been the ones who have been making huge profits from it. They have been the ones who have been making huge profits from it.



They are blamed at the prospect of another winter. They have that cheap Middle East oil which has been the lifeblood of the world's economy. They are the ones who have been making huge profits from it.

What is to be done?

STRIKE HARD TOGETHER. The best method of defence is attack. The more we strike, the more we will win. We will win the struggle back.

Who caused

Israel After the War:

Zionism in Crisis



The political unrest sweeping the state of Israel following the October Middle East war represents a deepening crisis for the entire Zionist ideology which rules Israeli society.

The shuffling of Cabinet ministers, the resignation of Golda Meir and the near-collapse of the whole government are only the most immediate surface indications of the crisis underneath.

Even the mudslinging directed at one-time superheroes over the military setbacks of October only dimly reflects it.

Since the founding of Israel, and even earlier, Zionism as a state ideology has developed a series of myths and illusions to maintain the aggressive self-confidence and national unity of the country.

These myths were necessary, from the standpoint of the ruling establishment.

ZIONIST MYTHS DESTROYED

The state of Israel - defined as an exclusively Jewish state with a perfect right to drive out as many Arab inhabitants, seize as much of their land and expand in all directions as far as necessary to achieve Israel's self-proclaimed destiny as a world Jewish homeland - could exist only as an alien intrusion into the Arab world of the Middle East.

This type of racist, expansionist, chauvinist state could survive only as a military garrison society, and through continual sacrifices by the Israeli workers of their own well-being to the needs of the state.

The rulers of Israel, who are also the leading officials of the main Zionist institutions, always had to prevent certain questions from arising among broad layers of the population. These questions are: Why are we at war with the whole Middle East? What is wrong with the nature of our society that puts us always at the throats of our neighbors?

It was to prevent any such discussion that the myths of modern Zionism were created.

The first and most obvious myth was that Israel could, with high-level military technology combined with continual war readiness and an incredibly efficient army ready

to strike anywhere at any time, maintain a state of permanent superiority over the Arab states.

After 1967, Israeli invincibility became conventional wisdom everywhere. But this illusion was shattered almost immediately after the October war began, when Egyptian troops not only crossed into Israeli-occupied territory but proved able to hold it as well.

A related, but more subtle illusion, was the idea that Israel could keep the military backing and friendship of an imperialist superpower - since 1949, the United States - while at the same time maintaining an independent policy and the ability to "go it alone" with lightning wars and expansion

to strike anywhere at any time, maintain a state of permanent superiority over the Arab states.

Mrs. Brown is a telephone operator in New York City. She makes about \$120 a week, after taxes, and is the sole support of herself and her two children.

She pays \$50 a week to a neighbor for childcare.

Luckily she lives with her mother in the Bronx and pays very little.

Mrs. Brown tried several times to find cheaper day care but has been unsuccessful. Without her mother's help she would not be able to get by and would be forced to go on welfare.

Ironically, being on the welfare rolls might be the only way she'll find inexpensive day care.

Federal day care programs, funded through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, have been reduced over the past few years. Federally funded day care is now available primarily to mothers on welfare who are forced to take part in the Work Incentive Program (WIN).

This program requires welfare recipients to participate in training and work programs. "Trainees" are often forced to work as scab labor, often for pay lower than the

whenever this would be an advantage.

This myth died a violent death in October. Moshe Dayan was obliged to explain to a bitter Parliament that Israel had to accept a cease-fire demanded by its superpower protector, seeing that Israel was unloading US ammunition in the morning and firing it in the afternoon.

In other words, the people of Israel have suddenly learned that they do not control their own future.

They are tied hand and foot to the United States' plans for a new balance of power under US domination in the Middle East (and the Arab peoples of Palestine, Egypt and other countries are beginning to learn that under their present rulers they are in the same fix).

CENSOR CLAMPS DOWN

The only response that the government has to this collapse of its moral authority is to try to prevent all discussion.

Although Israel parades as a democratic country with a free press, all publications must be submitted to a Defense Ministry military censor. In the past non-Zionist and anti-Zionist papers were arbitrarily censored, but in establishment papers the only articles censored were those claimed to contain military secrets.

Today, however, censorship of the Zionist press has become much heavier, and the censor is claiming the right to strike all articles which lower the morale of the military. In practice, the military - which may well be itching to become a more direct political force - is trying to silence all opposition both inside and outside its ranks.

This is like trying to use iron hoops to hold together a barrel which has already rotted from the

inside. The real problem is that the props of Israeli government policy itself have collapsed.

Finally, the Israeli establishment has always claimed that this is a progressive society with advanced social legislation and even "socialist" policies.

This supposedly proved Israel's superiority over "backward" Arab societies. Today, economic pressures have shattered this mirage to bits with the rest.

For some years basic food and public transportation prices were kept somewhat stable by state subsidies of food producers and transit companies. In January all subsidies were ended, and the prices of milk, bread, sugar, flour, eggs and cooking fats went up 50-70 percent.

On February 17 public transportation, on which most Israelis depend, went up 50 percent, while municipal taxes are being raised at least 50 percent all over the

country.

To compensate for this the government offered a six percent cost of living increase to all government workers - about one-third of the work force - which management in the private sector (many of whom engaged in war profiteering) refuses to implement.

The fact is that somebody has to pay for the war. The government has passed the entire burden on to the poor and working classes.

Bitterness over the war, the economy, the political leaders and Israel's position in the world are growing. So far this resentment has found no clear political channel or leadership, either toward an anti-Zionist alternative or the super-militarist, racist and semi-fascist currents on the right. But the tremors so far are nothing compared to the explosions to come. ■

David Finkel
David Goldberg

WOMEN IN THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

LAURIE LANDY



This important pamphlet surveys the position of women in China in the decades of the twentieth century prior to the 1948 revolution as well as the policy of the current regime. It concludes that, despite Mao's claims, the 1948 revolution did not liberate women, but was the latest episode in a long, tragic history.

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HEW Slashes Day Care Funds

minimum wage and certainly less than wages won by union workers.

Although eager to provide day care for welfare recipients while forcing them into union busting, Uncle Sam has little concern for the children of working parents or the parents themselves.

In 1972, the total federal funding for all social service programs, including day care, for needy families and the aged, blind and disabled was limited to \$2.5 billion.

If this sounds like a lot, just think of it as compared with the monstrous \$75 billion defense budget passed by Congress in 1973.

In February 1973 HEW cut back even more. The new social service regulations effective at the end of 1974 will limit day care service to current welfare recipients only.

Under the original provisions some funds were used to provide services for many low-income working families. Those days are over.

If, in other words, Mrs. Brown was forced onto the welfare rolls, she would be able to get free day care as long as she was a WIN

trainee working as cheap labor.

When she finished the program and tried to get a regular job, day care would be taken away and she would be back where she started.

The new eligibility regulations will probably save the government \$800,000 out of the \$2.5 billion social service budget.

In New York alone it will make ineligible half the 34,000 children presently in day care programs.

The quality of the centers that survive is also affected. Provisions for hot lunches, parent participation, and minimum day care standards are threatened.

The worsening child care situation is part of the overall attack on the living standards of working people.

Child care is funded by the government to force welfare mothers into jobs paying less than minimum wage, threatening the wage scales of all workers.

Why pay a living wage when the government will force welfare recipients to work for much less?

For the millions of working women with small children, the cutoff of funds results in whopping

child care bills.

For many working parents the second income does little more than cover these costs. For single parents the cost is often too high and many children are left alone or their mothers are forced onto welfare.

Despite the growing numbers of women workers and the women's liberation movement, the federal government has turned a deaf ear to the needs of women.

In 1985 6.6 million mothers with children under age 5 will be in the workforce - a 32% increase over today. The government has done nothing more with this fact than compile it.

The government's callous disregard for the pressing needs of women workers is only another example - no matter how desperate the needs, social services are not provided if they might cut into capitalist profits.

To win high quality, inexpensive day care - a working woman's right - women will have to rely on their own fighting strength and not on the promises of reform programs handed down from above. ■

WALLS AND BARS

Struggle In The Prisons



LETTER CLEARING SOSTRE HELD UP 4 MONTHS

The government added another atrocity to an already long list in its campaign against jailed Buffalo black political activist Martin Sostre.

New York State prison officials held up for four months evidence clearing Sostre of charges of assault against prison guards.

A fellow prisoner, Joseph Sullivan, stated in a letter dated Oct. 7, 1973 that he as a trustee was performing work as a porter last May 19 in solitary unit 14 when he witnessed prison guards "beat up" Sostre.

"I'm available as a witness," the letter continued, "but all attempts to let Sostre know I'll testify are



Martin Sostre

stopped. The mail clerk here [Dannemora state prison] is the cousin of one of the officers who beat him [Sostre] up."

The letter was delivered to Sostre in late February from the Deputy Commissioner to the New York State Department of Correctional Services. There was no explanation for the delay.

Sostre is serving a 35-year sentence on frameup drug possession charges. He is awaiting judicial action on statements by the government's original witness that the witness committed perjury in the original trial.

The witness, Arlo Williams, freely admits he committed perjury at the insistence of the Buffalo police, who succeeded in the frameup against Sostre.

Sostre has already been convicted of earlier charges of assaulting

prison guards, and faces a life-term sentence if convicted of the charges referred to by Sullivan in his letter.

The only response by the Department of Correctional Services when asked about the four month delay has been "no comment."

Sostre says, "I'm going to fight them all the way. They've got my back to the wall and I have no alternative but to fight back with all I've got."

FIGHT FOR THE LEAVENWORTH 26 CONTINUES

Last summer Leavenworth prisoners revolted against the brutal penal authorities. Since that time 26 prisoners have been held in solitary confinement, and have been repeatedly beaten by prison guards.

The inmates are charged with assault; three are charged with the murder of a prison guard.

Supporters of the Leavenworth Brothers have continually kept pressure on the prison authorities to free the men from solitary confinement and to accede to the list of grievances presented to the warden last July 31 when the rebellion occurred.

In the latest action, last month, over 200 supporters held a march and vigil. The demonstrators were greeted by shouts and cheers from inside the walls.

In addition to the demands to free the Brothers from solitary confinement and the prisoners' list of grievances, the marchers also demanded that charges against the Brothers stemming from the rebellion be dropped.



WOMEN PRISONERS ORGANIZE CONFERENCE

New Jersey women prisoners organized a conference on woman prisoner rights at Clinton State Prison. It was a first, and it was a success.

The conference was sponsored by the Inmates Legal Association of Clinton Prison, the Prisoners Rights Organized Defense, and the National Organization for Women. The one-day event had both plenaries and workshops.

One speaker to the plenary, Dharti Changa of the Committee for a United Newark, pointed out that "95 percent of the prison population are blacks and Latins." She blasted "those who sell us drugs then lock us up for using them."

Another speaker underlined an important aspect of the conference. It was "the first that the prisoners themselves designed, planned and initiated on the rights of women prisoners."

Workshops were held on parole, health services, punishment and rehabilitation, sentencing and other topics vital to prisoners. ■

Automation Cuts Jobs In Telephone

Automation is coming fast to the telephone industry and the union is looking the other way. Flashy new electronic equipment is eating away telephone jobs, but the Communications Workers of America (CWA) has little to say about it in its program for the up-coming contract negotiations.

Over the years, technical changes have eroded many telephone jobs, particularly telephone operators. In the late 1950's employment in the telephone industry actually dropped. Then, as now, the CWA did nothing.

The number of telephone jobs grew rapidly in the late 1960's and relatively little technical change was introduced. Since the 1971 telephone workers strike, however, new types of equipment have been put into use at an increasing rate.

For instance, the number of new Electronic Switching (ESS) centers grew from 200 in 1971 to 375 in 1972, and was expected to reach 600 by the end of 1973. More sophisticated switch boards (TSPS) are being introduced as telephone traffic offices are concentrated and the number of operators reduced.

Directory Assistance operators who once thumbed through the pages of huge phone books now push buttons to produce instant information on a screen. Certain line tests once done by a skilled Test Deskman are now done automatically by an electronic tester known as the LSV.

Automation should mean an end to mindless drudgery and repetitive tasks. Modern technology could mean more enjoyable and interesting jobs as well as more efficient service.

But under capitalism automation results in higher profits as large portions of the work force are thrown on the streets and the remaining workers are sped up.

This has been its effect on telephone jobs. Since 1971, total telephone service employment has risen by less than two percent — from 991,000 to 1,008,000 employees. The number of telephones in service rose by over 10 percent in that period. Total operating revenues rose by 29 percent, from \$22.7 billion to \$29.4 billion. In other words, the companies produced more services and made more

money with practically the same number of workers.

As automation continues, they will be able to provide more service with fewer workers.

Technical change has not affected all telephone workers equally in the past. In 1951, telephone operators were 43.7 percent of the telephone work force, but by 1971 they were only 23.9 percent.

The introduction and improvement of direct dialing systems eliminated thousands of operators jobs. The new electronic equipment is reducing the number of operator jobs even faster. The result has been to reduce the percentage of women in the telephone work force from 66.7 percent in 1951 to 53.8 percent in 1971.

While women will continue to be hit hard, the new electronic switching systems and other changes will also hurt the predominantly male plant maintenance workers.

But the leadership of the largest union of telephone workers, the CWA, will not fight automation and its effects. Somewhere near the end of the Bell System Bargaining Council's program for 1974 nego-

tiations, in an after-thought section entitled "Other Improvements," way down the list, is a sentence calling for "an automation clause to protect workers against technological unemployment and the erosion of existing jobs."

How will this clause protect jobs, prevent down-grading, or stop speed-up? There is not a word anywhere, not in the Bargaining Council's statement, not in the CWA News, not anywhere, about what this clause might say or do.

Even further down the after-thought list is a demand for shorter traffic tours (i.e., work days). This is a good demand and should be farther up the list. But why not demand a thirty hour work week, at the forty or thirty-seven hour rate for all telephone workers? That is the sort of demand that saves jobs.

Just as important, and completely absent from the CWA statement, are those demands that could give the workers the tools they need to fight automation's effects on the job.

Those clauses in the CWA contracts that prohibit strikes or other action over grievances during the life of the contract weaken the union's and the stewards' ability to fight. Workers must not be prevented from striking, slowing down, working to rule or otherwise regulating their own pace of work and resisting speed-up. These tactics can help off-set the effects of automation.

Management rights and responsibility clauses also make it easier for management to erode and down-grade jobs. These clauses allow management to eliminate or modify the content of jobs at will. Not all CWA contracts now include

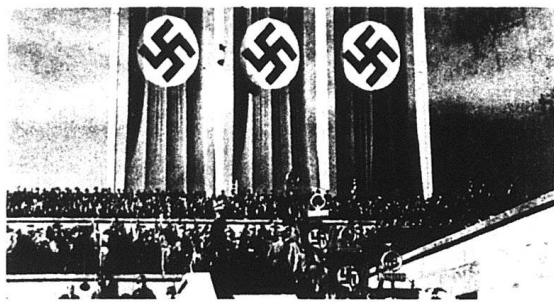
such clauses, but it is certain that the company will push to get such a clause into the new national contract. The ranks must make sure the union does not accept any kind of management's rights clause.

As things stand now, there is no reason to believe that the top CWA leadership will wage any kind of fight over automation and jobs. This fight will have to come from the CWA ranks. To start, militants can put their stewards' organization and their locals on record for a real fight against automation. Local contract committees could be formed to discuss and put forward demands like "30 for 40," drop the strike prevention clauses, and no management's rights clause. ■

Brian Mackenzie



Left-Wing Disunity Helped Hitler To Power



The greatest slump capitalism had ever known hit the world in 1930. Germany was among the worst affected. There were three million jobless, and a similar number were on reduced hours. Two of the major banks collapsed, destroying the savings of a good part of the middle class.

Employers tried to protect their profits by cutting savagely into wages. The government in turn cut welfare and unemployment benefits to the bone. Poverty, hunger and hopelessness became the rule.

All classes were thrown into chaos by this turn of events. They sought desperately to solve problems that had become unbearable. But none could do so without radically reshaping society in one way or another.

Among workers there was a massive influx of support for the Communist Party, particularly among unemployed workers.

But the majority of workers still voted for the moderate Social Democrats.

The ruling class was forced to change its politics. In the years of economic boom it had been prepared to make marginal concessions to the workers' organizations. It was the price it had to pay to keep the workers under the thumb of moderate labor and trade union leaders.

But now it had to withdraw the concessions. Such actions, it knew, could force even the most conservative sections of workers to fight back. And so it had to find some new means of keeping them in order, even if it meant destroying the workers' most elementary forms of organization—the trade unions.

In the boom period the Nazi Party had been a tiny lunatic fringe. Electorally it got no more than 2½ per cent of the vote.

But millions of middle class people were driven to desperation by the slump as they lost both their

jobs, their small businesses or their savings.

Hitler promised them he would transform society. He appealed to both their fears of big business and their prejudice against the working class.

In his speeches he raged against both the "financiers" and the "Bolsheviks". He used anti-semitism to make it seem that both finance and the workers' organizations were controlled by the same people. He claimed that the Jews owned the banks (in fact less than 20 per cent of German banks were owned by Jewish concerns) and ran the unions.

The middle class turned toward Hitler in mass. Their resentments against the "financiers" could be worked out by smashing up Jewish owned businesses.

And their resentment against the organized workers turned them into an ideal unofficial army for breaking up strikes and workers' demonstrations.

So while working-class organizations were weakened, the bulk of big business was left untouched. In return, big business gave increasing amounts of money to Hitler.

Between 1930 and the beginning of 1933 Germany was ruled by a series of what Marxists call "Bonapartist" governments—big business governments without any mass support in the country and without a parliamentary majority of their own, but somehow managing to balance between the mass workers' movement and the mass fascist movement.

The ruling class was not yet ready to hand over all power to Hitler because it was frightened that the working class had the power to smash him.

That power was certainly there. But those who controlled the workers' organization were incapable of putting it to use. The Social Democratic Party had 800,000

members, the unions 5 million. They had their own defense force, the Reichsbanner, hundreds of thousands strong and claimed to control the police force of the largest of the provincial governments, Prussia, which had 80,000 heavily armed members.

But the policy of the official leaders of the labor movement was one of peaceful collaboration with capitalism and their defense forces were to "protect the constitution." Meanwhile they backed the big business minority government as the "only alternative" to Hitler.

But these governments were run by the people who were supplying Hitler with money and arms. And popular hatred of their policies rubbed off on the Social Democrats, so that Hitler gained support, not the official labor leaders.

Nor was big business grateful. The more the Social Democrats gave ground, the more money flowed into Nazi coffers. There was no other way to reduce working-class strength and push up profits.

At the same time the government itself "broke the constitution" by dissolving the Prussian provincial government, which was Social Democratic. The moderate leaders did nothing but make parliamentary protests.

Even when big business finally handed over power to Hitler in January, 1933, the Social Democrats told their supporters to refrain from action. On May 1, 1933 some trade union leaders even offered to work jointly with the Nazis on a May Day demonstration.

Hitler showed his appreciation of their services on May 2 by dissolving the unions and putting these same leaders in concentration camps.

C. P. TREACHERY

In spite of the treachery of such leaders, however, the Nazis could have been defeated. Millions of workers had turned towards the Communist Party because they thought it could provide an alternative road to winning the struggle.

But although the Communists were prepared to fight, their leaders' policies doomed them to failure. In 1928 Stalin in Russia had decreed that the official labor leaders were as bad as the fascists, that they were "social fascists," and that there could be no united front with them against the real fascists.

In Germany, Communist leaders declared as early as 1929 that fascism already ruled Germany.

Such talk made it very difficult to fight realistically against the real fascism of Hitler.

Of course, the Social Democratic leaders stood for the rule of big business. But they did so on the basis of concessions from the ruling class.

When such concessions were withdrawn and the Nazis were paid to attack workers' organizations, the official leaders were completely at a loss to know what to do. Their members, although not yet prepared to support a revolution, were prepared to listen to realistic talk about self-defense.

If the Communists had made proposals about this to the Social Democrat organization—for instance for joint actions to drive the Nazis off the streets—the leaders would have faced a major dilemma.

Either they would have to agree—and thus weaken the forces used by big business against the workers—or they would have to refuse publicly and see their



CP leader Ernst Thaelmann, who died in a Nazi concentration camp, said in 1932 that German Fascism was over-estimated.

members join the Communists in disgust.

Instead the Stalinist policy of the Communist Party made it possible for the official Social Democrat leaders to claim that the Communists were preventing united action. A particular example was when the Communists united with the Nazis against the Social Democrats in a referendum over the future of the Prussian provisional government in 1931.

TRADE UNIONS SMASHED

Even when Hitler had finally taken power, Communist leaders still pretended nothing had changed. Their slogan was "After Hitler, Us."

They soon learned the truth the hard way. Under previous governments, strikes had been broken, demonstrators shot down. There had been starvation wages and mass unemployment.

But the ordinary, every-day workers' organizations had survived. Since capitalism had depended on the Social Democrats to keep the workers in check it could not destroy the rank and file movement.

But Nazism had a mass organization of its own, with members on every block, in every street in the country, directed against the workers' organizations. As soon as it also controlled the government there was nothing to stop it destroying completely the bones of working class strength—not just Social Democratic, but Communist as well. United class action could have stopped the process, but it did not come until it was far too late.

The price paid for this failure was enormous. In trying to solve its problems, the German ruling class let loose organized barbarism on an unprecedented scale.

Because Hitler could not solve the real, material frustrations of his middle-class supporters, he had to misdirect them into the most hideous forms of savagery.

The world was to pay dearly for the lack of a real, revolutionary workers' party at the head of the German working class. ■

reviews

T.V.

The Year of The Cop

We are being bombarded with cops. In the last few years the popular media have hit us with endless police movies and TV shows.

Adventure stories have always been popular. After working a grueling 8 to 10 hours a day, 5 to 6 days a week--what could be better than a good escape story?

But adventure stories have changed. They are less clever and more brutal.

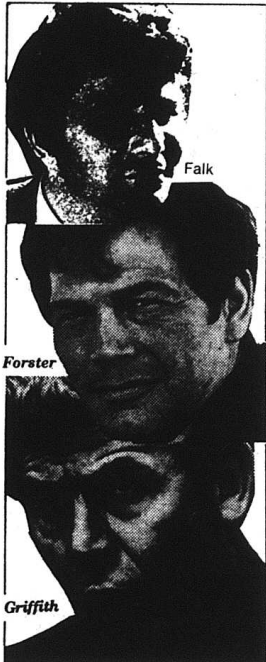
The free-wheeling private eye, who ran circles around the police making them look endlessly foolish, incompetent and dumb, is being replaced by super-men with badges.

Some of the cops, like Kojak, are tough talking, almost brutal men. Others, like Toma, are big-hearted sympathetic liberals.

There is even a working class hero, Colombo, who continually puts down the wealth and pomposity of the upper class criminals he catches.

"Can you tell me where I can get a pair of shoes like that for under \$20?" he asks an exceedingly wealthy crook.

But no matter what their personalities they are all honest and just men. They're not on the take. They don't beat and kill blacks. They don't beat demonstrators. They are conscientious and uncorruptable.



And they serve a very important purpose. Rampant police corruption and brutality have caused the police to be seen as another social problem, not a solution.

More important, more and more people are beginning to question this society and are in opposition to much of it.

Working people, blacks, women Chicanos, Indians, Puerto Ricans, other oppressed minorities as well as students have all taken to the streets demanding a better life.

The role of the police is to protect the system and put down opposition. As more and more people openly protest, the real role of the police becomes clear.

These TV shows are an attempt to again camouflage that role--to show the police as real people on the side of truth, justice, and the common people.

Most of the time TV cops track down real criminals: killers, pushers, pimps and organized crime. This shows us the cops are doing their jobs.

Often they get involved in social struggles--to save a kid from going bad, to help slum residents get something they need, to fight racial injustice.

In those shows they pose a direction for struggle. "Do things the right way through legal channels," they say. "Sometimes the system

is cumbersome and seemingly unfair--but in the end that is the only real way to change things."

ONE EXAMPLE

In *Nakia*, a recently aired pilot film, the hero is an Indian deputy sheriff in New Mexico. He is strong, sensitive and a fighter for the people.

In this case the people are a group trying to save an old mission from destruction by wealthy land developers. Diane, a young Indian woman, is the leader and has convinced the University to renovate the mission and build a Department of South West Studies there.

She is outfoxed in the courts by the real estate men. Nakia tries to help and is told a deputy can't take sides.

In disgust he turns in his badge and goes to the mountains.

Meanwhile Diane and her followers sit in at the mission. Petty thugs rabble-rouse in the town.

They tell the townspeople that land development will bring jobs, and that the Indians and filthy hippies are hurting the town's welfare.

Nakia returns to town as a mob is gathering outside the mission. The real estate men have an injunction against the sit in. The sheriff must clear the mission.

Nakia convinces Diane that she and her people must leave.

The demonstrators are about to put out the fire and save those inside.

Immediately the division in the town ends as everyone pitches in to put out the fire and save those inside.

The top real estate man calls off the deal because "he doesn't like bad publicity" and the mission is saved.

The whole thing is rather silly and unreal. Real estate men don't give up because they don't like bad publicity, and problems aren't solved that simply.

But while this movie combined popular causes--support for the struggles of Indians and struggles against big land developers--that was not its message.

Nakia is telling us "work within the system--no matter how bad it seems."

When he takes back his badge he shows us that cops are good guys, just as Kojak, Toma, Colombo and all the others show us week after week.

Now I'm not saying don't watch these shows. After a long day they're a great escape.

Just remember--they are about as real as Mickey Mouse. ■

Gay Semel

books

Capitalism In Crisis

[The Emerging Crisis of Capitalism, articles by Nigel Harris, Michael Kidron, John Palmer and Tony Cliff. An International Socialists pamphlet. 75 pages, \$.75. Available from I.S. Book Service.]

This aptly titled pamphlet reprints five articles that help to explain the roots of the current economic situation in the US and Europe, and what this crisis can mean for the revolutionary movement.

Nigel Harris' essay "Imperialism Today" explains how most of the old-fashioned colonialism practiced by the imperialist powers could be eliminated, without causing the collapse of the imperialist countries themselves as many socialists had predicted.

In the post-World War II world, the main dynamo of world trade has been between the heavily industrialized capitalist countries, rather than with their former colonies.

The advanced capitalist countries have had much more rapidly growing incomes and therefore expanding markets, while the underdeveloped countries in recent years have actually had more wealth removed from them in the form of dividends, interest payments, and royalties than was sent

to them in the form of foreign investment.

Modern imperialism presents a paradoxical situation. The underdeveloped countries, which are exploited by imperialism, are as dependent as ever on the advanced countries for heavy industrial goods and investment capital.

On the other hand, the imperialist countries are more or less independent of any particular underdeveloped country, as they have diversified their sources of raw materials and as rising prices (such as the skyrocketing price of oil) make production profitable even in their high-cost homeland.

For an underdeveloped nation, the resources for economic development can come only from forcing the population to consume less than it produces, or from abroad in the form of aid, loans or trade. A country which tries to "go it alone" is still subject to the pressures of the world capitalist economy - in other words, of capitalist imperialism - while foreign aid means dependence on this same imperialism.

Real independence and development for the underdeveloped nations today are impossible without socialist revolution in both the advanced capitalist and Stalinist-ruled countries which dominate the

world and block the road of the less developed.

For the past 25 years, however, the industrialized capitalist countries have enjoyed almost uninterrupted stability. The major prop behind this stability and prosperity is explained in the essay "Arms Economy" by Michael Kidron.

In the US, arms expenditures - sustaining high capital investment and helping keep down unemployment which would otherwise reach depression levels - are equal to 60% of each year's new investment in plant and equipment.

Yet these purchases represent economic waste, as they do not re-enter the cycle of production either as consumer or capital goods but instead are blown up in wars or rapidly become obsolete.

The impact of government purchases (representing military spending) is particularly strong for aircraft, non-ferrous metals, electronics, communications equipment and instruments. It must be added that when the economy goes into a downturn, the government by jacking up these expenditures has been able to prevent it from slipping into a depression.

UNEVEN ARMS SPENDING

There are, however, contradictions which have eroded the stability produced by the arms



economy. These begin with the fact that the arms economy does not affect all the capitalist countries equally or in the same way. The US, Britain and France expend the biggest share of their economies on arms, while Japan and West Germany spend relatively little.

Since for a single national economy arms spending does represent waste - no matter how essential it is in order to maintain world stability - it is not surprising that the countries with smaller arms economy have the quickest growth rates.

Countries with the highest rate of arms spending find themselves suffering both a slower growth rate and permanent inflation.

For the US, the huge American military presence abroad and the Vietnam war pushed the US rate of inflation above that of its international competitors, resulting in a trade deficit.

Two articles in this pamphlet, "The Inevitability of Inflation" and John Palmer's "Disintegration of the Monetary System," explain how inflationary pressures are related to the arms economy and threaten to disrupt world trade.

Tony Cliff's "On Perspectives" puts this economic analysis into a more general political context.

[continued on page 14]



Eco-Scabs

Scabbing is not a pleasant business. Eco-scabbing is a particularly hypocritical form of scabbing.

In every strike, the ruling class seeks to find a popular justification for strike-breaking. One of the most well-worn tricks is to attack the "selfishness" of workers who put their own interests above the "good of society."

When the San Francisco Board of Supervisors discovered to its rage that its trusted servant, the San Francisco Labor Council, had actually authorized the recent general strike of public employees, it immediately looked for a handy whip to bring the old dog back to heel.

As a precondition to negotiations the Supervisors insisted that pickets be removed from the city's sewage plants.

When the labor council rejected this arrogant demand, the result was instant moral outrage. Knowing that many people in San Francisco are correctly concerned about damage to the environment, conservationism became a convenient code word for strike-breaking.

Never were such pro-conservation editorials written. Never were so many newly hatched conservationists seen crawling out of smoke-belching Cadillacs.

Panic spread among people who had never minded (or even known) that raw sewage leaks into the bay every time it rains. The sewage and storm drain systems are still interconnected in San Francisco's outmoded system.

Outrage against "selfish unions" was broadcast - even though treated sewage from San Francisco has not met State quality

standards for years.

Raw sewage in the Bay is a real problem. But who is to blame? Unions who strike for a living wage for their members or politicians who show contempt for city workers' battles to keep abreast of inflation?

Why should unions have to make a gesture of contrition for a situation they did not create? If the city wants its sewage treated, it is obligated to pay the workers who treat it a wage they can live on.

The whole point of a strike is that society cannot run without the willing co-operation of an industrial army - the working class.

If any group of workers withdraw their labor, something does not get produced, some service is not provided.

A hole appears in the complex fabric of society. This is the power of the working class.

To demand that workers not be "selfish," to demand that workers do not strike unless their strike has no effect on anything, is to demand that workers do not use their power, to deliver them bound hand and foot into the workhouse of capital. And this, of course, is the whole idea of the Chamber of Commerce.

Capitalism is to the earth, as a living ecosystem, what cancer is to the body as a living organism. Through uncontrolled growth of a non-functional tissue, the life of the whole is thrown out of balance and eventually threatened.

Any human being who wishes to see mankind live in a balance with nature, and not in a master-slave relationship to it, must work for the destruction of the capitalist system.

Emmet Casey

Racism In Britain

[continued from page 8]

tion, break "monopoly" trade unions - and get rid of the blacks.

RACISM UNDER LABOR

Political racism is not restricted to the Right. The National Front is an electoral threat in strong Labor Party districts. Labor's response to the poison of racism is increasingly weak.

A Labor government banned the entry of Asians with British passports expelled from Kenya in 1967; screwed tight the numbers admitted; started manhunts along the coast to catch "illegal" immigrants, and permitted Immigration Officers to arrest even babies in arms arriving at London airport.

The new Labor government has just ordered that married couples and families in Britain must break up and live separately if the husband is foreign and the wife a native British citizen. Back in 1967, the previous Labor government passed its own version of the Immigration Act.

Every Immigration Act has been a great victory for the racists. In 1961, 1967 and 1971, the law was moved closer to being deliberately racist, and so egged on the racists to redouble their efforts.

The worse the crisis of British capitalism, the more the system needed the black man as a

scapegoat for all the failures of the ruling class.

But the law is only the tip of the iceberg. Racism in practice is more specific. It is a 16 percent unemployment rate for West Indian youth (8 percent for natives); continuous discrimination in jobs, training, education, housing.

There is also police harassment of black youth and of Asians, during police searches for passports (supposedly in pursuit of the tiny number of so-called "illegal" immigrants).

LEADING THE STRUGGLE

No organizations so far have been able to mobilize even one community, let alone unite several - the Punjabis and Gujeratis (from India and East Africa), Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, West Indians.

The organizations that tried were either respectable "non-political" ones created as a power base for an aspiring black leadership, or so ultra-left as to be unable to relate consistently to the real issues facing ordinary black people.

Great opportunities were lost. For many of the black people are great fighters with courage and audacity, fully up to the challenge of leading black and white workers in the factories.

In the work place and the unions is the place the fight begins. In the struggle for equality between black and white, for proper representation in shop floor and union organization, a black leadership can force every white militant to prove himself on the racial issue.

With a real base here, there is some power to begin the fight on the streets - against the police,

against all the issues of prejudice and discrimination.

It is clear that there is a black audience looking for the chance to begin to build a revolutionary party provided they have a chance to shape it to fit their wishes.

We do not know beforehand what I.S. politics mean in terms of different national communities, and how we have to transform ourselves and our organization to fit the real fight. So far, we have created some predominantly black branches, both area and factory, and occasional groups for particular communities - especially West Indians, Africans and Asians.

The most effective West Indian member of I.S. will be a member of a factory branch for day-to-day work, of a district for political education, campaigns and public meetings, and a member of a West Indian group that discusses and works on both the struggle in the West Indies and the struggle of West Indians in Britain.

It is vital that I.S. has a proper West Indian context in which members can relax and grow without any trace of the domination of a predominantly white society. This is the precondition for the growth of confidence and leadership, so that in due course the West Indians will, with others, lead our whole organization.

We also produce two Indian-language newspapers, and hope to extend this to the other two main Asian languages. IS branches have showed great initiative in producing Asian language leaflets and bulletins-for example, in Urdu in the textile mills-and holding meetings in two or even three languages.

We have a long way to go, and more lessons to learn than we have learned already. Already, however, some leading black members are emerging.

As the Nigerian secretary of our anti-racism subcommittee put it when she spoke to our National Committee - the black members of I.S. now have enough experience to know what they must teach the whites if the struggle against racism is to be effective. ■

Nigel Harris

[Nigel Harris directs the anti-racism work of the British International Socialists.]

Capitalism In Crisis

[continued from page 13]

During 25 years of unprecedented prosperity created by the arms economy, the wages of working people in industrial countries were expanded greatly through their struggles.

During most of this period these struggles were focussed on narrow local arenas - individual factories or departments - where gains could be won without the necessity for a broader struggle.

The end of stability means that purely local consciousness of workers must begin to break down and develop a broader view if further gains are to be won.

Cliff examines the first great working class outburst in May-June 1968 in France, which marked

the beginning of the end of this long period of relative class peace, and contrasts it to the strike wave that occurred in the First Russian Revolution of 1905.

A striking fact is that in 1906, the revolutionary Bolsheviks had 33,000 members among the 800,000 workers employed in large factories in Russia, and in the capital Petrograd they had 6000 of a total of 81,000 industrial workers in large factories.

In none of the advanced capitalist countries today are there anywhere near such a high proportion of revolutionary workers. Things are changing, however.

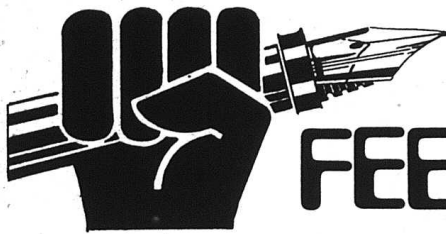
Cliff examines the changing consciousness of young workers and the increasingly political nature of workers' struggles as they develop beyond the immediate boundaries of the shop floor.

He puts forward an incisive analysis of the trade union leaders with their vacillations between the companies, the power of the state and the workers. In the course of the struggle against their policies a new revolutionary movement in the working class can be born.

The real measure of a revolutionary group, Cliff argues, is its ability to raise theory to the level of practice, to take part in and learn from workers' struggles and to overcome its own mistakes.

The theory summarized in this pamphlet can help every militant and revolutionary to understand what is causing the economic breakup of this society, and through that understanding to help make sure that it is the capitalists and their system, not working people, who pay for this crisis. ■

Kevin Bradley



FEEDBACK

Workers' Power Fan

I have received an issue of **Workers' Power**. In most instances I found the articles to be stimulating and informative. A vast readership of **Workers' Power** among the proletariat should hasten political awareness and serve as an impetus to the revolutionary movement.

A Prisoner
Raleigh, N.C.

J. R.
Portland, Ore.

Prosocialist Students

I just wanted to write to tell you how much I think your paper has improved in recent issues and how much I enjoy reading it. It is a long way down the road to being the best paper in the US concerning itself with working class issues.

A couple of notes on recent issues of **Workers' Power**, especially 93, which I just finished. Charles Leinenweber's article on the link between the oil corporations and the state is the kind of theoretical work that needs to be done at this point, especially when published in a paper aimed toward a working class readership.

In general, the paper is doing a good job of being on the one hand nonsectarian, while at the same time presenting a consistent militant socialist perspective. "Labor Briefs" is an excellent feature, as are such articles as the one on the '37 sitdowns.

At one time I thought the orientation of **Workers' Power** made it virtually useless for work on campus, but I now think that it can be extremely useful in attempting to awaken prosocialist students to the real existence of proletarian militancy on the part of American workers.

A couple of words of criticism. I wholeheartedly agree with Mike Patrick's letter criticizing the

"American Graffiti" review. It is essential to avoid an approach to artistic criticism which is couched solely in terms of the militancy of the content of the artistic product.

Also, I would like to see included in **Workers' Power** more coverage of IS's activities, especially in industry. Information on this is, to my knowledge, only available to non-members through word of mouth.

Again, congratulations on the quality of your paper.

Defending Workers' Regimes

Two articles in **Workers' Power** #94 give the impression of being pacifistic, because they evade some hard questions of revolutionary politics.

Workers' Power opposes the drive to bring back capital punishment and promises that under socialism there won't be any hangings or gassings. Fine and dandy, but **Workers' Power** writers should know that both terror and capital punishment have been part of most attempts at setting up and defending workers' regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism.

If **Workers' Power** rejects that tradition, you ought to say so. If not, the right of the proletariat to use capital punishment to establish and defend its dictatorship merits some explicit defense.

Lenin and Trotsky practiced and defended Red Terror, executions and the taking of hostages to defend the Soviets against the White Army.

Partisans hung Mussolini by his heels. Hungarian revolutionaries lynched MVD torturers in Budapest.

Nixon deserves a similar fate - a revolutionary regime might turn him over to the people of Southeast Asia for trial and possible hanging as a war criminal.

We hate violence. We employ it only to bring about its final abolition. Perhaps some of the uses of capital punishment by socialists in the past were excessive or careless. But **Workers' Power** has mused over a basic political distinction in failing to distinguish between the violence of exploitive ruling classes and the measures taken by working-class states.

Workers' Power similarly errs in its blanket denunciation of the Symbionese Liberation Army. The Heart kidnapping is tactically and strategically mistaken. But it was also an expression of class hatred like industrial sabotage or the ghetto uprisings. Even though these events, also, were tactically unfruitful, socialists supported the revolutionary energy behind these actions, and defended their authors.

The Bolsheviks and other working-class revolutionaries have conducted activities similar to those of the S.L.A. Trotsky wrote an article sympathetic to Grynspan, who killed a Nazi diplomat in revenge for anti-Jewish terror. **Workers' Power** defended a Detroit worker, maddened by job conditions, who slew his foreman - although assassination is not the IS strategy for labor. So, comrades, a little more care in how you address these questions.

Derek Briscoe
Los Angeles

Billie Holliday Review

Your review on my recently acquired fan, Billie Holliday, was a welcome delight.

After the movie Billie Holliday my mother purchased the recording "The Best of Billie Holliday" and immediately I fell in love with her.

She leaves nothing to be desired. I love her! I love her! and thank you for the review.

J. P.

OMISSION

The centerfold on day care in **Workers' Power** #95 was written by Bread and Roses - the women's caucus of the New York International Socialists.

Workers' Power wants to hear from you. What you like about the paper - and what you don't. What you think of the political ideas we present, and your comments on problems facing working people. But please be brief.

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• **International Socialism:** the replacement of decaying capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism ("Communism") by a revolution from below, controlled by the working class and aimed at democratic rule over all social institutions.

• **Workers' Power** as the solution to America's ever-deepening social crisis: rank-and-file committees in the unions to struggle for democratic power and to fight where and when the union leaders refuse to fight - independent political action by workers' organizations to fight for labor's needs, in opposition to the Democratic and Republican businessmen's parties - toward a workers' party to fight for a workers' government.

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Seattle, April 27—Workers' Power forum: The City Light Strike. 4333 8th Ave NE, 8 pm.

Workers' Power

96

Racism and Layoffs: Being Broke is Just the Beginning



DETROIT — Early flowers are blooming. Trees are leafing. A new season is beginning.

But through-out the industrial north and mid-west a depression stalks the black communities.

Winter was rough. In November official unemployment was 4.5%. By February it had reached 5.2%. Real unemployment is much higher. Among black people the difference between government

figures and the actual unemployed is astronomical.

In March the government's figure looked a little better. The jobless rate declined ever so slightly to 5.1%.

But there were not more jobs. There were fewer people looking. The winter took its toll in people's hopes of finding work.

In economic's cruel jargon, the labor force has "contracted." A

growing number of people are without work and have slim hope of finding any.

Being broke is just the beginning. Unemployment causes ripples throughout the black community.

Families break up as people join the service, move in search of work or as narcotics takes its ugly toll. City services dry up in a recession. Everybody's on the streets.

Workers' Power talked to people at a Detroit unemployment office.

Mattie Johnson, a Detroit mother of two children, has only six weeks of unemployment compensation left. Her children's father just joined the army - the only job he could find.

Mattie doesn't know how much money he'll send her, but hopes she won't have to apply for welfare.

Detroit's Army Recruiting Office made its quota of recruits in January for the first time since the draft was suspended. The Army is hidden unemployment. Disproportionate numbers of blacks enlist - because it pays.

One of the recruits was Mattie's friend. She told Workers' Power "He really hated to join up, but we didn't have any choice. He didn't want to get into the dope and the army's all that was left."

Rufus Toddley, another laid-off worker in the unemployment line, had a brother that did get into narcotics traffic. Now he's dead. "It's getting real tough to run a hustle, too many cats get into the stuff without going through the dudes that run the franchise. They get word and get down on them." Detroit police report an increase

in execution-style, dope related homicides. They are now predicting a new phase in the drug wars that have subsided since 1972 when over 10% of the homicide rate was officially due to dope wars.

The federal government estimates two-thirds of crimes committed in Detroit go unreported.

Rufus expects things to get hotter in Detroit as the weather does. His layoff hasn't cut too deep yet. His plant's been working one week, then shut down a week.

On the down week Rufus gets 95% of his pay from the United Auto Workers sub-fund. But rumors are rampant in the plant.

RUMORS RAMPANT

He's heard the fund is going broke, the plant's going to lay off an entire shift, and the plant's going to shut down completely. Rufus doesn't know which if any of the rumors are true, but he doesn't like them.

"If the fund goes," he said, "there'll be hell to pay. I can't get by on just what I get here (unem-

ployment), and I only got one kid. Lots of guys have three or four. And my car's paid off too. Whole lot of people worse off than me."

SPREAD THE WORK AROUND

Many of the people Workers' Power talked with think the work should be spread around more. They particularly agreed no one should be working over-time with so many on layoff. The work week should be cut, with no cut in pay.

Food prices, housing and other prices are still climbing. Government figures project a 10% rise in prices this year. Inflation is forcing the most meager luxuries out of the reach of most black people.

Mattie Johnson is glad she learned to cook in South Carolina, where folks have always been poor. "We only eat meat maybe three, four times a week, mostly pig. But I make good grits and beans, so we've been getting by."

But it's not goo for her kids, she says. Being poor rarely is. ■

Kay Stacy

Workers' Power

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Put Your Dough In Apartments

Concerned about inflation? Well, Business Week has an answer for you. Put your money in apartment buildings - become a landlord.

In a recent issue, the business magazine reports that apartment buildings are cheap these days, due to rising costs for fuel, labor, and taxes. But - things are about to tilt in the landlords' favor.

"Rents will start adjusting this spring," says John W. Baird, a big Chicago landlord. Baird doesn't need to explain what he means by "adjusting."

Business Week does have one word of warning: "Don't live in the building you own. Experts say that a wise landlord should live as far away as possible. It's almost impossible to sidestep owner-tenant confrontations if you reside on the premises."

