

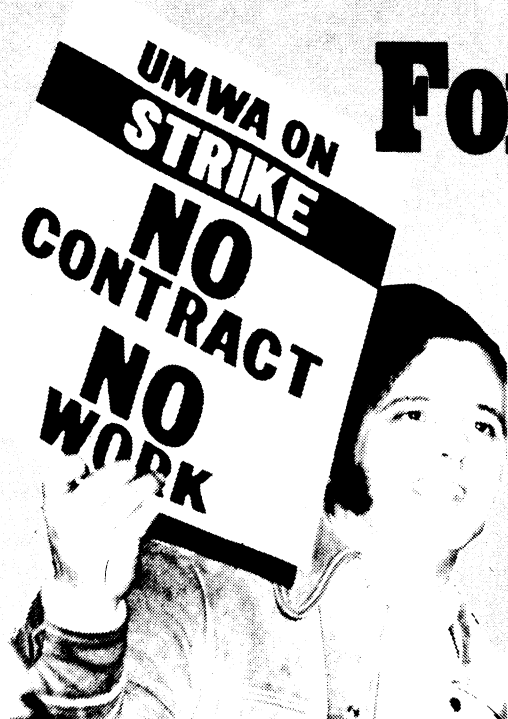
THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

So. Africa puts rebels on trial



SOWETO, JUNE 16, 1976. Student leaders of that rebellion face possible execution in frame-up trials scheduled to begin September 18. See page 3.



For a Fighting, Democratic Labor Movement

By Jack Barnes

Also:
Ferment in the Steel Industry

MAGAZINE SUPPLEMENT
socialist
INSIDE

Defense mounts for Miami Black socialist

—PAGE 4

Mideast summit

Not even high-ranking U.S. officials are claiming that the Camp David summit conference that opened September 6 will do much to achieve a Mideast peace. As one White House staffer explained, "On the basic questions, nothing has changed."

Put more bluntly, five years after the last Mideast war—after all the shuttle diplomacy,

BULLETIN: As we go to press, the 'Militant' has learned of the kidnapping of three Trotskyists in Peru. This takes place amidst an upsurge of strikes in that country.

Two of the kidnap victims have been released. Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco has issued an emergency appeal for the remaining victim, whose whereabouts is still unknown. See page 6 for further news and how you can help.

secret talks, and dramatic posturing—it's clearer than ever that:

- The Zionist government of Israel won't willingly give up *one inch* of occupied Arab land.

- Instead, Israel has spent billions on new illegal settlements and military hardware to tighten its grip on these territories.

- And the U.S. government, while publicly wringing its hands over this Israeli intransigence, continues to supply the Zionist aggressors to the tune of \$2 billion a year.

This is because Washington depends on Israel as a military strike force against struggles by the Palestinian and Arab masses.

Washington is fostering the illusion that it will pressure Israel to make concessions at the Camp David conference table—even though the U.S. government continues to underwrite Zionist conquests on the battlefield.

Carter, like Ford and Nixon before him, hopes that this approach will slow down and sidetrack the Palestinian freedom struggle—and also bolster the shaky regime of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat.

Under this diplomatic smokescreen, the Israeli government brazenly prepares for new attacks on the Arabs.

On September 2, some 100,000 people demonstrated in Tel Aviv demanding peace. This shows that even inside Israel, growing numbers are willing to consider the idea that

Zionist expansionism is the real cause of war in the Middle East.

Such actions, alongside the freedom struggles of the Arab masses, point the way toward a genuine Mideast peace.

Bright spot for labor

This year's Labor Day messages from union headquarters were less than rosy.

United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser charged that big business is fighting the unions and that racism, sexism, and exploitative economic policies make society unfair for millions of Americans.

Jerry Wurf, head of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, hit the Proposition 13-style "tax relief" shams that are benefiting the wealthy while cutting social services and throwing public workers out of jobs.

AFL-CIO chief George Meany bemoaned the defeat of the labor law reform bill, although he tried to excuse labor's betrayers in the Senate by blaming it all on a right-wing-engineered filibuster.

Other columnists and commentators noted shrinking union memberships and the employers' growing demands for "give back" contracts.

Unfortunately, it's all true—the bosses are on the offensive, workers are under attack—and no help is coming from Democratic or Republican politicians.

But absent from Labor Day commentary was the one bright spot on the horizon: working people are beginning to fight back.

Not one labor official pointed to the spirit of the coal miners, who struck for 110 days this winter.

Not one talked about the determination of the postal workers, who have rejected one contract and now threaten to lead the second strike in the postal system's history.

Not one did, because for the top labor officials these are ominous signs of things to come. Their old ways of cooperating with the bosses and supporting Democratic Party politicians are becoming increasingly exposed, and the ranks are beginning to look around for new ways.

Al Barkan, director of the AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education, recently noted that a poll showed labor officials rank second

from the bottom in public esteem. "Thank god for the politicians," who ranked last, he said.

That should have given him a clue about what's wrong, but of course, it didn't. The only way to change the image of union leaders is to change the unions themselves—and the Frasers and Meanys have no intention of doing that.

As Jack Barnes explains on page 11, this task belongs to the ranks of the Steelworkers, Mine Workers, Auto Workers, Postal Workers, and other unionists who are beginning the struggle for a democratic, fighting labor movement.

Defend Leo Harris!

Cops have the idea that it's OK for them to bust the heads of Black people and to harass and victimize political radicals.

An example is the Miami police force. For years they've acted like an occupation army in the Black community. They've brutalized innocent people.

Miami cops have also harassed political activists, acting like they never heard of the Bill of Rights.

This is what is at issue in the fight to halt the police victimization of Leo Harris.

The cops tried to give it to Harris double. He's both Black and a socialist. That's why a cop ran him down at a Haitian civil rights demonstration. That's why Harris, not the cop, was arrested.

That's why patrol cars cruise the street by his house and stand conspicuously outside the Socialist Workers Party Miami offices.

It's an open-and-shut case of political intimidation. Harris's home has even been burglarized—an incident strikingly similar to other break-ins where it turned out the cops were responsible.

But Harris and the Miami SWP are determined not to be intimidated by the cops. And other Miamians are already demonstrating their concern by supporting the Leo Harris Defense Committee.

This is not a "local" problem. Such denial of basic rights is a deadly cancer. Unchecked, it spreads. That's why the *Militant* is doing all it can in behalf of Leo Harris. And that's why we urge our readers to do the same.

For information on how to help, see page 4.

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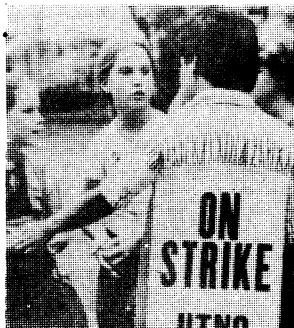
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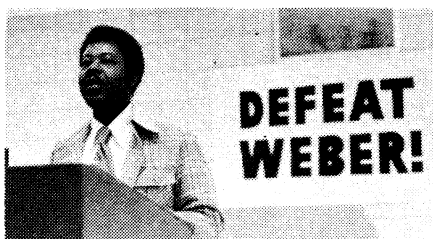
Nicaragua uprising

The rebellion of youth and workers is continuing in Nicaragua. Will Somoza's bloody dictatorship succeed in crushing it? **Page 7.**



Teachers' strikes

Philadelphia and New Orleans teachers have been forced out on strike as school boards claim, "No money." **Page 27.**



Protest 'Weber' suit

Louisiana Blacks, unionists, and women speak out against the new threat to affirmative action in the steel industry. *Militant* staff writer Andy Rose is on the scene. **Page 8.**

The Militant

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So. African rebels face trial

Exiles call for September 18 protests

By Omari Musa

One of the most important political trials in recent years is scheduled to begin in South Africa on September 18.

Eleven Black student leaders will go on trial before the Supreme Court in Kempton Park near Johannesburg on charges of "sedition" and "terrorism."

The students are all members of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), the organization that spearheaded the massive Black rebellions that shook South Africa in June 1976. The SSRC was outlawed last October.

Exiled South Africans living in London, and other opponents of apartheid, plan to hold protests on September 18 against the frame-ups.

SSRC member Majakathata Mokoena has issued a call declaring, "What is needed now *urgently* is a mass campaign in Britain and internationally to force the Vorster regime to release these prisoners."

"We appeal to all people internationally to come out on 18 September to show their solidarity. . . .

"We need demonstrations and rallies leading up to that day involving as many people as we can."

Heading the list of defendants is Sechaba Daniel Montsitsi. He was president of the SSRC at the time of his arrest in June 1977. Montsitsi had been held incommunicado from the time of his arrest until July 28 of this year. According to many reports, he and other student activists have been beaten and tortured.

The ten other defendants are Sandile Seth Mazibuko, George Twala, Wellie Twala, Khotso Lengaane, Sibongile Mthembu, Mafison Morobe, Thabo Ndabeni, Kennedy Mogami, Michael Khiba, and Tebogo Mngomezulu.

The victims' ages range from eighteen to twenty-three.

In addition to the eleven, several prominent Black exiles have been named as "coconspirators." They in-



South African students demonstrating during the 1976 Soweto rebellion.

clude Tsietsi Mashinini, Khotso Seatlholo, and Tromfomo Sono—all former presidents of the SSRC—and Drake Kgalushi Koka, a founding member of the Black People's Convention and now general secretary of the Black Allied Workers Union.

Mashinini and Seatlholo toured the United States extensively during 1976 and 1977. They spoke to tens of thousands about the struggle in South Africa and urged activists to continue organizing a mass movement demanding the withdrawal of all U.S. aid to South Africa.

Sono, a member of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa),

toured the United States and Canada last spring.

Koka is scheduled to tour the United States this fall (see schedule in accompanying article). His tour will include speeches before unions, students, the NAACP New York state conference, and community groups.

He will also participate in the divestment conference initiated by the North East Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa, to be held November 17-19 at New York University.

Koka's tour can be important in exposing the South African government's frame-up of the Black student leaders, as well as the frame-up of

other political prisoners.

When the student leaders appeared in court on July 28, they were charged with demonstrating for the release of political prisoners, "forcing" workers to strike, and allegedly distributing petrol bombs. The "sedition" charge has not been used in South Africa since 1927. Conviction carries a possible death sentence.

The regime is also hampering the students' legal defense efforts. Their lawyer, Shun Chetty, did not even know the defendants' names or the charges against them until twenty-four hours before the preliminary hearing.

Continued on page 4

AFSC dumps So. Africa stock

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) announced August 9 that it was selling \$1.3 million worth of stock it held in U.S. companies doing business in South Africa.

The Quaker organization took the action after the fifteen companies in which it held stock refused to withdraw their operations from South Africa.

According to an AFSC news release, five of the firms expressed their "concern" about apartheid. Nevertheless, the AFSC reports, the companies indicated that their only commitment for the present would be "to move rapidly toward equal pay for equal work and nondiscrimination at the work place."

AFSC Executive Secretary Louis Schneider said, "This commitment simply doesn't present a significant challenge to apartheid in which a

white minority holds virtually all the power over the black majority. . . .

"Over 400 U.S. firms operate in South Africa," Schneider continued. "Their global profits are certainly boosted by cheap black labor which has helped the companies gain up to 18 percent profit rate on activities there."

"We don't think anyone should be making profit from apartheid."

Among the companies affected by AFSC's action are Colgate Palmolive Company, Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, U.S. Gypsum Company, Bank America Corporation, Warner-Lambert Company, and the Eaton Corporation.

In 1976 the AFSC sold all its stock in Mobil Oil after reports that it was selling petroleum products to Rhodesia. —O.M.

Koka charged with 'sedition'

Drake Koka, General Secretary of the Black Allied Workers Union (BAWU) in South Africa is now a "co-conspirator" charged with "sedition" in the frame-up trial cooked up by the apartheid regime against Black freedom fighters.

Koka is scheduled to tour eighteen U.S. cities in October and November, speaking on the "Fight for Black Majority Rule in South Africa."

The tour will provide an excellent opportunity to defend the eleven Soweto student leaders, Koka, and the other "co-conspirators."

It will also give opponents of the regime in South Africa an opportunity to bring U.S. public opinion to

bear against the frame-ups.

The first stops on Koka's tour include:

Indianapolis	October 2-3
Cincinnati	October 3-4
Toledo	October 5
Cleveland	October 6-7

For further information contact the Drake Koka Tour Committee, c/o Greenwich Village-Chelsea NAACP, 42 Grove Street, New York, New York. Telephone (212) 243-1650.

Special offer to new readers

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DRAKE KOKA

...trial

Continued from page 3

When Chetty objected to the September 18 trial date because he wouldn't have time to prepare their case, the judge refused to change the date.

One of Chetty's assistants who would have worked on the case was prohibited from doing so by the government.

The government has also just passed an amendment to the Prisons Regulations that can prohibit an attorney from seeing a prisoner at the discretion of the commissioner of police.

After the student leaders were taken from the courtroom and loaded into a police van, they gave the clenched fist Black Power salute.

The murder of Steve Biko, the threatened execution of African National Congress member Solomon Mahlangu, and the life imprisonment of ANC leader Nelson Mandela indicate the nature of the South African regime's "justice." That is why the appeal for solidarity protests by South African exiles takes on immediate importance.

Messages of support can be sent to: Majakathata Mokoena, c/o 1 Cambridge Terrace, London N1, England.

South Africa conferences

The frame-up trial of eleven members of the Soweto Students Representative Council underscores the need for anti-apartheid activists in the U.S. to redouble their efforts in defense of the South African freedom struggle.

Two important gatherings this fall offer activists an opportunity to discuss and coordinate activities in support of the liberation struggle.

The North East Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa (NECLSA) has called for a conference on South Africa November 17-19 at New York University in New York City.

The Divestiture Working Group has called a "Midwest Conference on University Investment in South Africa" for October 20-22 at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois.

For further information on these gatherings and materials to help build them, contact:

NECLSA, c/o American Committee on Africa, 305 East Forty-sixth Street, New York, New York 10017. Telephone (212) 838-5030.

Beth Julian, Divestiture Working Group, 1570 Oak Avenue #215, Evanston, Illinois 60201.

Defend Leo Harris!

Miami Black socialist wins support

By Rose Ogden and Larry Seigle

MIAMI—A wave of police harassment against a Black activist here has triggered an angry response from a broad range of community leaders and members of a variety of political organizations.

The target of the vindictive cop campaign is Roy Leo Harris, a twenty-eight-year-old electrical worker. Harris, who has been active in a number of Black community struggles against cop terror, is a member of the Miami branch of the Socialist Workers Party.

He is currently facing a possible two years in prison on charges stemming from an August 8 antiracist demonstration by Haitians against a local Winn-Dixie grocery store.

A Leo Harris Defense Committee has been formed by a number of Blacks, Haitians, and political leaders. The committee is demanding that Miami officials act to stop the cop harassment and drop the frame-up charges.

Prominent coverage has appeared in the local Black press, other newspapers and on radio and television.

Harris had been an active participant in the Winn-Dixie boycott, taking part in pickets each day before and after work. On August 8, as he got out of his car and walked toward the picket line, a cop rammed a car into him. Harris was thrown onto the hood of the moving car. Then the cops slammed on the brakes, hurling Harris to the ground.

Harris was bleeding heavily from a deep gash in his leg. He and other demonstrators demanded that the cops summon an ambulance, but they refused. Finally, Arthur Papillon, a leader of the boycott, and other Haitian leaders intervened on Harris's behalf. As Papillon later explained at a defense committee news conference, the cops had told him Harris did not really want medical attention. They said he was "not one of you" and a "troublemaker."

The cops finally said they would take Harris to the hospital. But instead, they drove to the police station where he was charged with disorderly conduct and criminal mischief—for supposedly damaging the car that ran into him!

After nearly an hour, the cops finally took Harris to the hospital prison ward, shackled to a wheelchair.

"This outrageous treatment," Harris's attorney Louis Beller points out, "is inexcusable. Leo's leg was visibly bleeding. Yet they waited more than two hours to give him medical attention!"

Beller is a well-known civil rights attorney in the Miami area and a member of the executive board of the

**You
can
help!**

The Leo Harris Defense Committee urges that messages be sent demanding that the charges against Harris be dropped. Send messages to Dade County State Attorney Janet Reno, 1351 NW Twelfth Street, Miami, Florida 33135.

Copies of the protest messages, along with urgently needed contributions, should be sent to the Leo Harris Defense Committee, 7623 NE Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33138.

Florida Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

Since the arrest, Harris and his supporters have been the victims of an escalating campaign of harassment.

On September 2, at around 4 a.m., cops began pounding on the apartment window of Jack Lieberman, secretary of the Leo Harris Defense Committee. The cops demanded to be let in, claiming they had gotten a phone call that Lieberman's apartment was being broken into. There was no evidence of a break-in in his apartment or in any other in the building.

On August 21, Harris's house was broken into. A stereo and other valuables were left untouched, but a portfolio containing letters and papers was stolen.

Police patrol cars are frequently stationed outside Harris's house, and

outside the offices of the Socialist Workers Party.

The pattern of surveillance, suspicious break-ins, and police frame-up coincides with the national pattern of harassment by the political police uncovered by the lawsuit filed by the SWP against the FBI and the attorney general.

Mary Pike, an attorney for the SWP suit, flew here to provide assistance in the defense committee and gather information that may be relevant to the national suit.

"The series of incidents here is typical of the kind that we have documented through our suit," Pike said. "We will do everything that we can to get out the truth about this case also."

Last year, Leo Harris was falsely arrested and brutally beaten by cops. He filed a damage suit and has frequently spoken out on the police brutality issue.

"In our Black, Puerto Rican, and poor communities, we have no justice," he explains. "Racist police ride roughshod through ghetto streets, leaving a trail of murder and sadistic brutality in the name of law and order."

The defense committee has scheduled a number of public activities prior to the slated September 15 arraignment. Harris has already entered a plea of "not guilty."

Among the growing list of supporters of the defense committee are:

Birry Hardeman, vice-president of Florida Black Student Union; Ken Hall, Black Political Prisoners Alliance; Al Featherstone of PAX-Miami, a prisoners' rights group.

Also, Gretta Lynch, chairperson of Greater Miami International League for Peace and Freedom; H. Clayton Hamilton, Democratic candidate for state representative; Rulx Jean-Bart, director, Haitian Refugee Center; C. Gaylord Rolle, All People's Democratic Club; Bill Cafiero, president, Dade County Coalition for Human Rights.



LEO HARRIS

Militant/Terry Lunn

Mexico: free all political prisoners!

By Arnold Weissberg

Eighty-seven people went on a hunger strike in Mexico City August 28-31 to seek amnesty for political prisoners and the "disappeared" (kidnapped political activists whose whereabouts remain a mystery).

The Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, the Politically Persecuted, Exiled, and Disappeared organized the protest. Many of the participants were relatives of the 367 "disappeared" activists.

The protesters gathered at the main cathedral in Mexico City. The hunger strike received worldwide publicity.

By the end of the four days, Mexican

President José López Portillo agreed to meet with a delegation of the protesters September 19. López Portillo was also forced to mention the hunger strike in his "state of the country" national address a few days later.

In the midst of the hunger strike, the son of the Mexican ambassador to the United States was kidnapped and killed. The Mexican government sought to blame a tiny guerrilla group and use the incident to smear the hunger strikers as violent.

However, Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, a leader of the committee, denounced the kidnapping and the government's slander campaign as an attempt to

discredit the strike. After further widespread protests, the government admitted it had no evidence the guerrilla group was involved in the kidnapping.

Piedra has asked that letters and telegrams demanding freedom for the political prisoners and information about the disappeared be sent to President José López Portillo, Los Piños, Mexico DF, Mexico.

Copies should be sent to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, Box 843 Cooper Station, New York, New York 10013. The defense committee is campaigning to win political asylum for Héctor Marroquín, a former student from Mexico who fled police terror there in 1974.

Big sales week coming up in 'Militant' campaign

By Nelson Blackstock

The *Militant* that goes on sale September 23 will be a very special one.

It will be special both in terms of its contents and in the wide circulation planned for it.

This fall the *Militant* is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary of publication. To mark that occasion, members of the Socialist Workers Party have embarked on an effort to sell 100,000 copies of the socialist press between September 1 and December 15.

To give the drive a big boost, they have set aside the week during which they sell the special issue as a time for intensified efforts to reach new readers.

Socialists in New York City, for example, are discussing the possibility of selling in the neighborhood of 3,000 papers—well above their normal 750 weekly target for the fall.

This issue will deserve the widest possible distribution.

Among its special features will be exclusive coverage of important developments concerning the Steelworkers union—news of interest not only to steelworkers, but to all working people.

Militant staff writer Andy Rose is now on assignment in Louisiana, covering one of the most important developments in the labor movement today. In what has been called the union movement's *Bakke*, a white worker, Brian Weber, is suing to overturn provisions of a union-negotiated contract setting affirmative-action standards at Kaiser Aluminum.

The *Militant* will print the facts about what's really at stake, and what the workers think about it.

Also on steel will be a report on developments among women in the union. Plus an on-the-spot report from the annual Steelworkers convention.

On another front, that issue will carry news of a trial in South Africa that the whole world will be watching. Young leaders of the Soweto rebellion face possible death sentences for their opposition to apartheid.

Socialists are planning to set other things aside to focus their energies on getting this issue into the hands of thousands of new readers.

Saturday, September 23, will be the big sales day in most cities. In other cities, which get their newspaper bundles later, the big day will be Saturday, October 1.

In San Francisco, socialists are planning to combine sales of the press with extensive campaigning for their newly announced campaign for school board.

'Chicano roots'

The next issue of the biweekly *Perspectiva Mundial* will be sold alongside the *Militant* during the big sales week. However, it will go on sale a week earlier than the *Militant*—in time for the widespread celebrations in the Chicano community around September 16, a traditional Mexican holiday.

"Chicano Roots" is a feature in the new *PM* that should be well received at these events. It traces the origins of the Chicano and Mexican peoples and their struggle against oppression.

Also in this *PM* will be reports on the *Weber* case in the steel union, developments in Nicaragua, and a recent speech by Hugo Blanco in Peru.

Socialists set fall quotas

Below are quotas socialists in cities around the country have adopted for the fall drive to sell 100,000 copies of the *'Militant'* and *'Perspectiva Mundial.'*

We'll print the results of weekly sales beginning with how many are sold of issue number 36, which goes on sale September 23.

The overall fall quota will include all single copies each week, plus all introductory subscriptions at ten apiece. How we're doing reaching these goals and the 100,000 will be reported from time to time during the fall.

CITY	WEEKLY SALES QUOTA			OVERALL FALL QUOTA
	Total	Militant	PM	
Albany	125	120	5	1,800
Albuquerque	120	105	15	1,700
Atlanta	200	200		2,900
Baltimore	125	120	5	1,800
Berkeley	150	135	15	2,200
Chicago	450	385	65	7,200
Cincinnati	100	100		1,450
Cleveland	140	130	10	2,000
Dallas	140	125	15	2,000
Denver	140	120	20	2,000
Detroit	250	250		3,600
Gary, Ind.	50	50		720
Houston	350	300	50	5,050
Indianapolis	115	115		1,650
Iron Range, Mn.	50	50		720
Kansas City, Mo.	105	100	5	1,500
Los Angeles	500	400	100	7,200
Louisville	100	100		1,450
Miami	100	80	20	1,450
Milwaukee	100	95	5	1,450
Morgantown	150	150		2,200
New Orleans	150	140	10	2,200
New York	750	650	100	11,000
Newark	150	140	10	2,200
Oakland	175	160	15	2,500
Philadelphia	250	235	15	3,600
Phoenix	125	110	15	1,800
Pittsburgh	150	150		2,200
Portland	90	90		1,450
Raleigh	125	125		1,800
Salt Lake City	135	125	10	1,950
San Antonio	100	75	25	1,450
San Diego	125	105	20	1,800
San Francisco	275	250	25	4,300
San Jose	125	115	10	1,800
Seattle	150	135	15	2,200
St. Louis	150	140	10	2,200
St. Paul	100	95	5	1,450
Tacoma	100	100		1,450
Tucson	50	50		720
Washington, D.C.	250	230	20	3,600



Militant/Andrea Baron

Preventing nuclear war: theme of Sept. conference

By Arnold Weissberg

The Mobilization for Survival, a national umbrella organization that opposes both nuclear power and nuclear weapons, will hold its second national conference September 15-17 in Des Moines, Iowa. MFS staff member Bob Moore estimates that between 500 and 1,000 people will participate in the gathering, which is open to everyone.

The conference will discuss how to build a movement that can reach the MFS goals of "zero nuclear weapons, stop the arms race, ban nuclear power, and fund human needs."

The second MFS conference follows a successful year of antinuclear organizing. Through the spring and summer, the antinuke movement has carried out an impressive series of demonstrations: 1,500 people at Barnwell, South Carolina, and 6,000 people at Rocky Flats, Colorado, last April; 5,000 people at Bangor, Washington, protesting the Trident nuclear submarine, in May; 15,000 at the United Nations calling for disarmament May 27; 20,000 at Seabrook June 25; and Hiroshima Day memorial actions around the country.

And anti-nuclear power activists held an important national conference in August, where a call for actions November 11-18 to mark the death of Karen Silkwood won wide support.

The antinuclear movement is growing. On the other side, the threat of nuclear war is greater now than in many years. The U.S. government has undertaken a bomb-rattling campaign to impose its will in Africa. It is threatening Cuba.

Washington's attempt to forcibly impose its will around the world has led to the brink of nuclear war before. In 1962, the Kennedy administration came within a whisker of starting World War III over the right of Cuba to receive military aid from the Soviet Union—the so-called "Cuban missile crisis."

In 1973, Nixon put U.S. military forces around the world on alert because of what he claimed was "Soviet aggression" in the Mideast.

Every day, U.S. bombers loaded with hydrogen bombs fly towards the Soviet Union. Every day, hundreds of U.S. missiles with their thousands of warheads threaten to destroy humanity.

The hundreds of thousands of deaths at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 showed that the U.S. government will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons if it believes it has no other way of protecting its interests.

The MFS conference can be an important first step in winning a majority of the American people to demand of the Pentagon: "Zero nuclear weapons! Stop the arms race!"

The conference will be held at Washington Irving School, Sixteenth and Forest streets, in Des Moines. For more

information, contact Mobilization for Survival at 1213 Race Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107, or call (215) 563-1512.



Nagasaki, 1945. Threat of another U.S. nuclear attack remains real today.

Massive wave of strikes sweeps Peru

By José G. Pérez

Sept. 6—The military dictatorship of Francisco Morales Bermúdez has unleashed savage repression against an upsurge of strikes in Peru.

Peruvian socialist leader Jorge Lucar told the *Militant* in a telephone interview that the center of Lima today had become a battleground between the police and army on one side and up to 50,000 striking mine workers, steelworkers, auto workers, and government employees on the other. Lucar is a coordinator of the FOCEP (Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front).

At 3 a.m. this morning more than 300 government troops attacked the shanty town set up by miners at the medical school of the University of San Marcos in Lima. Lucar said it is believed several miners were killed and hundreds more arrested. The shanty town, which had been occupied by 3,000 people, was totally destroyed.

At 8 a.m. this morning, government employees went on strike to protest projected layoffs. Police have been brutally attacking their street demonstrations. According to Lucar, cops and troops are swarming through all parts of Lima "as if we were under a state of siege."

And three days earlier, right-wing terrorists kidnapped three Trotskyists as they were coming out of a meeting held at a FOCEP headquarters in Lima. Two were released several hours later. One is still missing.

Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco, newly elected workers deputy to the Constituent Assembly, had a close escape (see box).

For the past month, the central issue in Peruvian politics has been the strike by 48,000 copper miners organized by the FNTMMP, the National Federation of Miners and Metalworkers of Peru. The miners are demanding "labor amnesty"—the reinstatement of 320 union leaders fired during the July 1977 general strike; a 25 percent wage hike (at a time when inflation is 70 percent); and the repeal of two harsh antilabor decrees.

Modest as these demands are, the

Blanco urges protests for kidnapped Trotskyists

Hugo Blanco and the Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front (FOCEP) have issued an urgent appeal for protest messages on behalf of Roberto Famjul, kidnapped by right-wing terrorists as he was leaving a FOCEP office in Lima, Peru, September 3.

Famjul is a reporter for *Revista de América*, a socialist magazine published in Bogotá, Colombia. As of midafternoon September 6, his whereabouts were unknown.

Famjul was kidnapped at 10:15 p.m. as he and 100 other people left a FOCEP headquarters after noticing that several cars without license plates had staked out the area. The FOCEP activists were at a busy intersection when three men started running toward them. Several people were able to lead Hugo Blanco to safety while dozens remained to confront the attackers.

The three terrorists then took out two pistols and a machine gun and opened fire. Apparently they shot into the air, since no one was injured. In the confusion, they were able to kidnap Famjul.

Two Peruvian Trotskyists who had left the meeting earlier—Francisco Santa Cruz and Ricardo Morales Bermúdez—were also kidnapped. They were released after several hours of beatings and ques-

tioning.

According to the two activists, their assailants said they were from the Peruvian Anticommunist Alliance (AAP). They threatened to carry out terrorist attacks against "the ultraleft" in general and especially the FOCEP. They also took credit for bombing the homes of two workers deputies to the Constituent Assembly—Magda Benavides from FOCEP and the only woman in the assembly, and Ricardo Díaz Chávez from the Democratic People's Union and also the chief legal adviser for the miners union. The AAP also took



Demonstration for miners

credit for bombing the offices of the Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party (POMR), one of the Trotskyist groups in the FOCEP.

Evidence suggests that the "Peruvian Anticommunist Alliance" is simply the military in plainclothes. The weapons carried by the kidnapers were of the same type as those used by the armed forces. One of the kidnapped activists was able to peek through his blindfold and see a man in a military officer's uniform at the place where he was held.

Moreover, before Hugo Blanco issued a public protest of the attack, the military-controlled press had already published a denial!

All the workers parties represented in the assembly have protested the kidnapping. They have been joined by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, president of the assembly.

Blanco and the FOCEP urge that protests demanding government action to free Famjul be sent to: Francisco Morales Bermúdez, Presidente de la República del Peru, Palacio Presidencial, Lima, Peru.

Copies should be sent to: Hugo Blanco, Asamblea Constituyente, Lima, Peru, and to the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, New York 10003.

—J.G.P.

Morales Bermúdez dictatorship has rejected them and is trying to break the strike through military force.

The government fears that a prolonged miners' strike would become an inspiration to other workers. And the miners' strike could have a drastic impact on the loan repayments to U.S. and other imperialist banks, since the miners produce more than half of Peru's foreign-exchange income.

The strike has begun to spark other

struggles. On September 5, the Metalworkers Federation in Lima began a two-day walkout.

On September 6, government employees started a one-day strike against projected layoffs. This strike is unprecedented for Peru in recent decades, since government employee unionization is forbidden by law. Finally, the bank workers have announced an open-ended strike, to begin September 8, for labor amnesty.

"People are mobilizing everywhere

in Lima," Lucar told the *Militant*.

"The sentiment against the dictatorship is so great, you can breathe it, you can feel it," he added. "People are outraged."

"The possibility of another general work stoppage, and even more, an open-ended general strike, is being discussed everywhere. There is tremendous sentiment for a general strike against the military dictatorship. Things are coming to a head."

Protests mount against arrests in Brazil

By Russell Morse

Massive protests have greeted a wave of arrests by the Brazilian political police. Twenty-two people were arrested on August 22 and charged with violating Article 14 of the draconian National Security Law.

In the United States the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners has condemned the arrests and is urging that protest telegrams be sent to Brazilian President Ernesto Geisel.

The day after the arrests became known in Brazil, 2,000 students held an assembly at the São Paulo campus of the Pontifical Catholic University (PUC). They voted to hold a protest demonstration the next day. That action was banned by the Military Police, but the students were still able to carry out three "lightning marches" in the center of the city before being dispersed by cops firing tear gas.

The Rio de Janeiro daily *O Globo* reported August 25 that the twenty-two persons are suspected of "involvement with the Liga Operária [Workers League], an organization of Trotskyist tendency linked to the Communist Fourth International."

But according to Alberto Goldman, a representative in the São Paulo state Legislative Assembly who protested the arrests, the accused "are members of Socialist Convergence, which is in the process of formation." For its part, the national coordinating committee of Socialist Convergence denounced the imprisonment of the activists as "with-

out any legal basis" and pointed out that the group is "broad, legal, and democratic."

Socialist Convergence has been functioning openly and legally in Brazil since its founding meeting in January of this year.

The organization's stated purpose is "to build a movement to centralize Brazilian socialists, one that would permit the development of common positions through systematic discussions and that would organize the common struggle for a socialist workers party." One of the group's main activities is to help with the production of a supplement to the legal monthly newspaper *Versus*. The supplement is known as *Convergência Socialista*.

The August 22 arrests were part of a series of repressive moves that have recently hit not only Socialist Convergence but *Versus* and another independent newspaper, *Em Tempo*, as well.

Between July 18 and 20 six Socialist Convergence activists were arrested in Brasília by the Criminal Investigations Unit and tortured for many hours. They are still being held.

Around the same time, police and right-wing paramilitary bands invaded *Versus*'s offices in Brasília and *Em Tempo*'s offices in Curitiba and Belo Horizonte.

On August 23, Socialist Convergence activist Marcos Faria de Azevedo was kidnapped in Rio de Janeiro along with a high-school student, Ronaldo de Almeida. Azevedo later turned up as a

prisoner at the DOPS headquarters in Rio, but Almeida's whereabouts remain unknown.

These attacks on socialists and the press by Brazil's military government have not gone unanswered. In addition to the student meetings and demonstrations in São Paulo, there have been a large number of other protests, including vigils, rallies, and a march of 500 in Rio de Janeiro.

Deputies in the Brazilian Congress and in the state Legislative Assemblies of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have also protested the repression against Socialist Convergence and the two newspapers.

A "Night of Vigil for the Worker Prisoners," protesting the August 22 arrests, was held in Santo André, a working-class suburb of São Paulo, on August 29. In attendance were workers and relatives of prisoners, along with representatives of the Central Student Councils of São Paulo University and Pontifical Catholic University, the State Union of Students, Socialist Convergence, and the CBA.

As of August 31, it was known that ten of the persons arrested August 22 had been released, although it remained unclear whether the charges against them had been dropped. The others were still being held, along with the six activists arrested in July and Marcos Faria de Azevedo. The whereabouts of high-school student Ronaldo de Almeida, kidnapped along with Azevedo, remained unknown.

The following are the names of the

activists arrested July 18-20: Mário Gonçalves, Beliza Maria Gonçalves, Vera Lúcia, Alcides Bartolomeu de Faria, and Flávio Lúcio de Faria. The name of the sixth person is not available.

Those arrested August 22 included Waldo Mermelstein, Aldo Schreiner, Maria José da Silva Lourenço, Bernardo Viana Marques Cerdeira, Oscar Itiro Kudo, Maria Marta Dangelo Cretton, Justino Lemos Pinheiro, José Aziz Cretton, Maria Gerbi Veiga, Hilda Machado, Maria Cristina Salay, João Carlos Agostini, José Maria de Almeida, José Welmowick, Edson Silva Coelho, Celia Regina Barbosa Ramos, Ana Maria de Moura Nogueira, and Maria José Costa Girardi.

Also arrested August 22 were a Portuguese citizen, Antônio Maria Sá Leal; an American, Esther Tenzer; and two Argentines, Hugo Miguel Bressano and Rita Luzia Estrasberg.

USLA urges that letters and telegrams be sent to President Ernesto Geisel, Palacio Presidencial, Brasília, Brazil, demanding the appearance in good health of Ronaldo de Almeida, the immediate release of the Socialist Convergence activists still being held, and the dropping of charges against all thirty persons.

Please send copies to USLA, 853 Broadway, New York, New York, and to the editors of the following newspapers: *O Estado de São Paulo*, São Paulo, Brazil; and *Jornal do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

Somoza bombs rebel youth

Strikes, protests still rocking Nicaragua

By Fred Murphy

"Despite widespread arrests of opposition leaders and youthful protesters, the nationwide general strike to overthrow Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza appeared to be holding firm yesterday," according to a dispatch from Managua, the capital city, in the September 5 *Washington Post*.

The September 6 *Washington Post* quoted a "diplomatic source" who "estimated that 95 percent of the large stores in Managua and 70 percent of the factories were closed yesterday. The source said the industries that remained open were owned by the Somoza family or the president's supporters. The strike is generally thought to be stronger in the provinces than in the capital."

One opposition figure estimated that nearly 700 people had been arrested in a three-day period by Somoza's police.

The strike thus far seems to be on a comparable scale to the one called immediately after the murder of opposition leader Pedro Joaquín Chamorro in January. That general work stoppage lasted two weeks, at which point it was called off by the businessmen and industrialists who had initiated it.

Rebellion in Matagalpa

During the last few days of August, however, Somoza's forces did succeed in quelling the five-day takeover of Matagalpa by students and young working people in that city.

A UPI dispatch in the August 31 edition of the New York City Spanish-language daily *El Diario* reported:

An irregular army of about 500 students took control of two-thirds of the city of Matagalpa and engaged in a merciless battle against National Guard troops that were trying to break their rebellion. . . .

Two days ago the government forces utilized military aircraft to bomb and strafe insurgent redoubts, in a frustrated attempt to silence the fire of snipers that were harassing the infantry troops. Helicopter gunships of the army sought to achieve the same objective yesterday, attacking sniper bastions in the nearby hills with rockets and heavy machine-gun fire. . . .

The battle, initiated on Sunday [August 27] gained force two days ago and continued intensely yesterday. . . . The students used homemade bombs, rifles, pistols, and machetes against the firepower of government troops that were trying to smash the rebellion with heavy machine guns, mortars, and airplanes. . . .

Many older residents, openly supporting the rebellion of the youths, offered the young fighters shelter, food and water, and other aid.

For several days the government's troops were confined to a few square blocks surrounding their garrison in the center of Matagalpa. *Washington*



Young rebels at barricades in Matagalpa: Somoza's National Guard, armed with U.S.-made M1 rifles and Israeli-made sub-machine guns, took five days to smash uprising in Nicaragua's third-largest city.

Post correspondent Karen DeYoung was in the city on August 31 when the National Guard, "armed with [U.S.-made] M1 rifles and Israeli-made sub-machine guns," launched a counteroffensive.

The rebel youth held out for several hours against the National Guard's elite "Black Berets" unit, which had been sent to relieve the local garrison. Finally, during the night of August 31-September 1, many of the young fighters fled into the hills surrounding the city, leaving Matagalpa in the hands of Somoza's forces. Associated Press correspondent Tom Fenton reported from Matagalpa:

"About 2 a.m. [September 1] most of the firing stopped and the guard went in with jeeps, armored cars and a front-end loader and began tearing down the barricades," said a Red Cross volunteer who asked not to be identified.

An armored car equipped with a 40mm cannon opened fire repeatedly during the night to dislodge the rebels, said one Red Cross worker. . . .

A young man fleeing from the city said the guard had staged "a violent assault with rockets and armored cars." He said "people without number" had been shot.

Another refugee, Red Cross nurse Esperanza Mesa de Lanza, said she had been working in a temporary morgue in the city where she had seen the dead "stacked one

on top of the other like wood. There must have been fifty dead." [*Washington Post*, September 2.]

Fenton also reported that more than 200 persons had been wounded in the Matagalpa fighting.

Upsurge spreads

While Somoza's crack troops were being hemmed in by the high school students of Matagalpa, street fighting was also reported in the cities of Jinotepe, León, Coctal, La Trinidad, Estelí, and Diriamba. Demonstrators were said to have erected barricades in some of these areas, although events apparently had not reached the same scope as in Matagalpa.

Agence France-Presse reported August 31 that five guardsmen had been killed in Matiguas, a small town forty-five miles north of Matagalpa. "Insurgents then took over the town and sowed nails in the streets to impede the passage of army vehicles."

The National Guard has begun building a wall of concrete blocks around General Somoza's suburban Managua residence and office complex—a material symbol of the acute and growing isolation his regime now faces. A further measure of Somoza's untenable position is the fact that he has now outlawed both the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and the Nicaraguan Development Institute—two key organs of the capitalist class itself.

Somoza hopes to ride out the storm, but to do so he will need the continued backing of what have long been the bulwarks of his family's power—Washington and the National Guard. Both could now be in question.

On August 28, the Nicaraguan government announced that twelve senior guard officers and seventy-three enlisted men had been arrested and would face court-martial for plotting a coup against Somoza. Other reports put the arrest figures as high as 200. These were reportedly elements who were furious that Somoza had released all members of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) held in Nicaraguan jails. Somoza did this in late August after FSLN guerrillas raided the National Palace and took more than sixty legislators and cabinet officials as hostages.

Somoza also agreed to give the FSLN half a million dollars and to publicize three political statements by the group.

The mass hatred for the Somoza dictatorship was dramatized when thousands of Nicaraguans lined the streets to cheer the FSLN guerrillas as they traveled to the airport with the freed prisoners.

Washington's dilemma

Christian Science Monitor correspondent James Nelson Goodsell reported August 29 that there is "concern in Washington that events in Nicaragua so far this year not only could lead to a civil war within the country but also could have a spillover effect into other Central American countries." His report continued:

The feeling among top diplomatic personnel is that General Somoza has been isolated from reality by corrupt associates and a personal megalomania. . . .

Observers say that two previous general strikes . . . as well as the willingness of the business community to join with the largely leftist terrorists indicate the strength of opposition to General Somoza and the anger of a majority of his people. The feeling is that General Somoza underestimates both of these forces.

Somoza's strategy to avoid being unceremoniously dumped by Washington is to paint himself and his regime as the only force capable of preventing another "Cuba" in Central America.

In reality, Washington has so far shown little inclination to drop its basic support for the Somoza regime, although some military aid has been suspended in hopes of forcing the dictator to work out a compromise solution with his opponents.

What the U.S. imperialists fear most is the deepening radicalization among the Nicaraguan masses. The dilemma they face is becoming increasingly obvious: the longer Somoza stays, the greater the hatred of the masses toward him and his regime. But if he should go, there is little guarantee that the bourgeois opposition could consolidate a government, hold the masses in check, and prevent the destabilization of the other dictatorial regimes in Central America.

The problem facing Washington and Somoza—and the bourgeois opposition as well—was put succinctly by a striking Managua bank worker August 30. "Nobody here says 'Viva the Broad Front' or 'Viva the Conservative Party,'" he told the *Washington Post's* Karen DeYoung, referring to the capitalist opposition forces. "What we say is 'Viva el Frente Sandinista!'"

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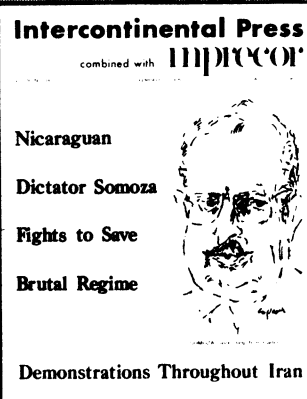
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'A blow to Blacks and women'

La. meeting rips Weber attack on job rights

By Gene Anderson

NEW ORLEANS—Speakers at the Militant Forum here September 1 sounded the alarm about the *Weber* ruling, the most dangerous assault yet on job rights for Blacks and women, and appealed for united action to defeat it.

Jane Van Deusen, a member of the civil rights committee of United Steelworkers Local 13000, explained the background of *Weber v. Kaiser Aluminum and United Steelworkers*. Local 13000 represents some 2,300 workers at Kaiser's Chalmette plant, the company's largest facility in Louisiana.

In 1974, the union negotiated an affirmative-action program in its national contract with Kaiser and other aluminum companies. It created an on-the-job training program for skilled positions such as machinists and electricians. Half the openings for trainees were to go to Blacks, other minorities, and women.

Before 1974, Kaiser had required applicants for these better-paid jobs to have years of prior experience—effectively screening out Blacks and women.

At Kaiser's Gramercy, Louisiana, plant—represented by USWA Local 5702—Blacks held less than 2 percent of the skilled jobs, although nearly 40 percent of the work force in the area is Black. No women were employed in skilled jobs.

"This plan was to continue until each plant reached a certain goal based on the proportion of Blacks in the work force of the surrounding area," Van Deusen explained. "In Gramercy, the goal was 39 percent. For every plant in the country, the goal for women was 5 percent of these jobs."

"Brian Weber, a white worker at Gramercy, filed suit to stop this on-the-job training program. His contention was that this plan was 'reverse discrimination' because Blacks with less seniority were admitted to the program before him."

In "defending" the affirmative-action plan, Kaiser maintained that it had never discriminated against Blacks. This dishonest claim was the basis for the court's pro-Weber ruling.

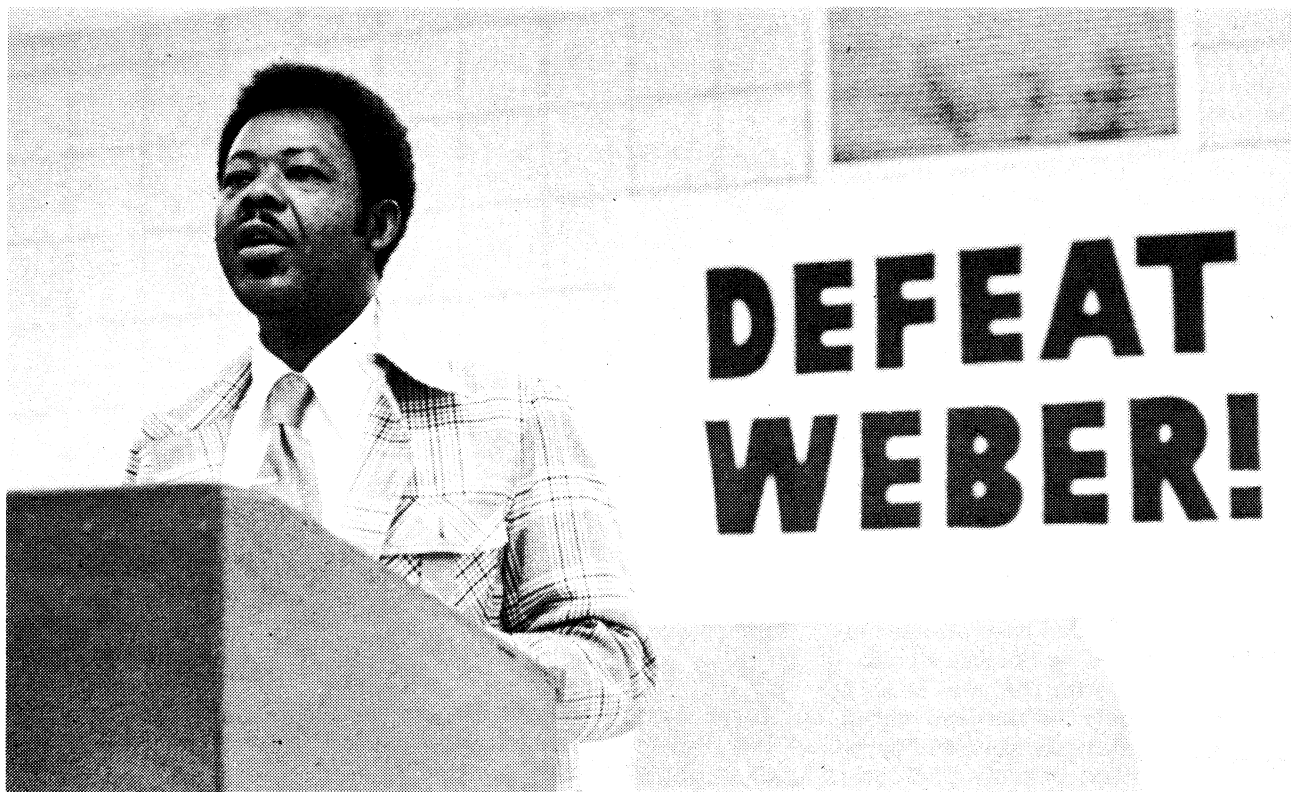
Attack on union rights

A two-to-one split decision by the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals not only upheld Weber and struck down the affirmative-action plan—it also held that no affirmative-action quotas are legal unless imposed by a court. That is, it prohibited unions from negotiating affirmative-action provisions in their contracts.

"Brian Weber's suit is an assault on our union and on our contract," Van Deusen said. "It seeks to pit worker against worker, union member against union member. It seeks to divide and destroy us. It puts into jeopardy every affirmative-action plan negotiated in union contracts, every affirmative-action plan in industry."

The next speaker was Rev. Isidore Booker, head of the Local 13000 civil rights committee and president of the West Bank Jefferson Parish NAACP. He ripped to shreds Kaiser's claim to have never discriminated.

Booker explained that when he went to work at Kaiser in 1952, Blacks were allowed in only two job categories: laborer and porter (janitor). Blacks



Rev. Isidore Booker, head of Steelworkers Local 13000 Civil Rights Committee. 'We ought to arm ourselves with the full knowledge of this case and all its implications.'

started at \$1.07 an hour, while white laborers started at \$1.25 an hour.

Lunchrooms, locker rooms, and drinking fountains were all rigidly segregated.

"There were ample qualified personnel of the Black race working at Kaiser," Booker said. "For instance, there were A-1 mechanics, there were welders, carpenters, who repeatedly attempted to transfer into the [skilled] craft positions. They were denied on each occasion."

This situation began to improve, Booker explained, only when Blacks at the plant filed suit against Kaiser and the union for discrimination. The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigated and verified their complaint. That suit—now twelve years old—is still in court.

'Turning back the clock'

Both the Supreme Court's *Bakke* ruling and now the *Weber* case show, Booker said, that "there are those who are waiting to take every opportunity, every chance to try to turn back the clock, try to place us back in the place where they think we should belong."

"We ought to arm ourselves with the full knowledge of this case and all of its implications, what it means for us as Blacks and minorities," he said. "And when I say minorities, naturally I also refer to women, who are now being hired at the plant. The sad thing about it is that the women today are going through the same things that we went through years ago."

Working people should realize, Booker said, that "we support industry, we support all of the economy. We are the cause of Kaiser's being and all other industry—the poor man, the working-class people. We are the backbone of this nation. And if

we come to realize our potential power, I think we can accomplish a great feat."

Sara Jeffries, president of the New Orleans chapter of the National Organization for Women, pledged NOW's support to the fight against Weber.

'Blow to women's rights'

She noted that the affirmative-action plan at Kaiser directly benefited women. In addition, she said, in that the *Weber* decision "is a blow to Black rights, it is also a blow to women as well. Both groups are last hired and first fired. Rather than fighting each other over crumbs, we should unite behind each other's causes."

The final speaker was Andy Rose, staff writer for the *Militant*. He stated that affirmative-action plans are in the interests of white workers as well as Black, because they make possible a united fight by working people against their real enemies—the employers.

"Workers need unions that are strong, that are democratic, and that represent *all* their members," Rose said.

"Weber's suit is an attempt to prevent and prohibit the unions from representing Black workers and women workers. If this attack succeeds, it will spell disaster for the entire union movement."

"That is why the positive stand taken by the United Steelworkers against *Weber* is so important. That stand should be made known—and translated from a good position on paper into a mobilization of steelworkers to stop *Weber*."

The most important task right now, Rose said, is education. "We have to alert the unions, the Black movement, the civil rights groups, women's rights organizations, students—all those who have a stake in fighting what Weber is trying to do."

Postal workers face arbitration swindle

By Nancy Cole

Face-to-face contract talks between representatives of three postal unions and the U.S. Postal Service resumed September 5.

The rules of the mediation/arbitration plan agreed to by both sides require that disputes be settled by 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 16. If no agreement has been reached, a federal arbitrator will try to impose a contract on the nation's 600,000 postal workers.

Any settlement reached before that date will again go before the ranks of the three unions for a vote. All three rejected the first contract offer, which proposed a mere 10 percent pay raise over three years plus a cost-of-living adjustment capped at 9.5 percent.

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service picked James Healy, a Harvard University "labor relations expert," as mediator in the talks. Among Healy's credentials is his vice-chairmanship of one of the antiunion regional war-labor boards during World War II.

This deal—that binding arbitration may substitute for a voice by the ranks—has not sat well with many postal workers.

Some 200 workers in New Jersey and California are still without jobs, having been fired for striking in protest of the first contract offer. They and their supporters justly demand that amnesty be a part of the new contract.

Sixty local presidents of the American Postal Workers Union have let

it be known that their members will not stand for binding arbitration. "We are speaking out now for an army of postal workers who do not want to be done in," said New York-area President Moe Biller.

Exactly what is going on in the postal talks, of course, is not known to the ranks of the unions. But the top two union negotiators—APWU President Emmet Andrews and Joseph Vacca, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers—are both in the midst of reelection bids. They are carefully weighing how the ranks may react to the results of these new talks.

Business Week quotes a "government insider" with a possible solution for the union officialdom as well as for Carter, who aims to make the

postal agreement his first trophy in the "fight against inflation."

"The settlement was low enough," says the insider, "so that even if the talks produce a slightly sweeter settlement, it will still be possible to hold the wage line." In order words, they could still sell the postal workers a wage-cutting contract.

Other government analysts are working on formulas that would give the postal workers more of the pay increase now and less later—but it would all add up to the same 10 percent.

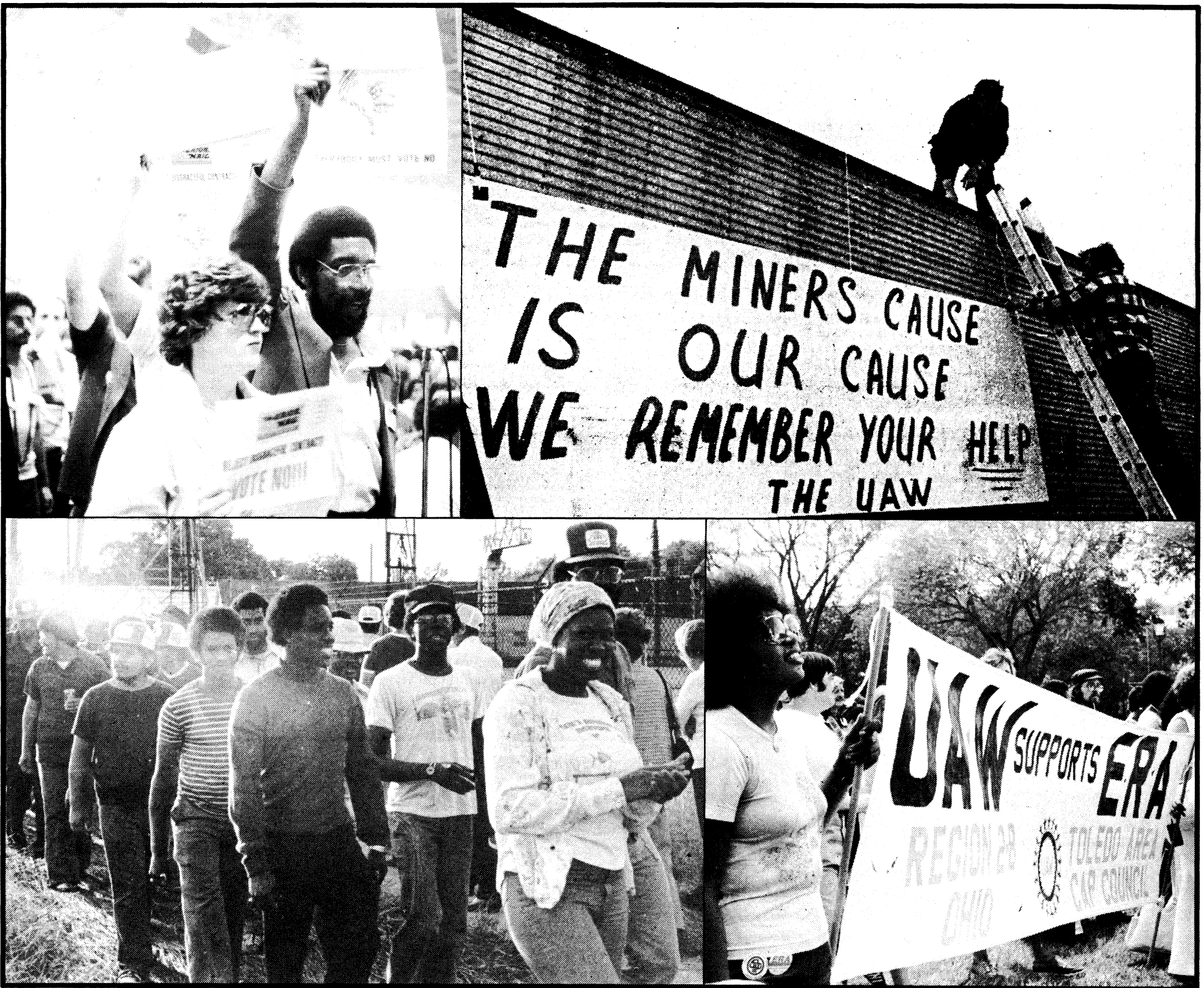
The postal service is reportedly still trying to scrap the no-layoffs clause.

The postal workers' fight for a decent contract is far from over. They need and deserve the support of working people everywhere.

international **socialist** review

For a Fighting, Democratic Labor Movement

By Jack Barnes



Ferment in the Steel Industry

By Andrew Pulley

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

Bright Prospects for the Fourth International

The founding congress of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, was held forty years ago in September 1938. The Socialist Workers Party played a central role in that congress and still stands in full solidarity with the FI, although reactionary legislation subsequently barred it from membership.

The Fourth International had its roots in the International Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky, the co-leader with Lenin of the October 1917 revolution that overturned capitalist rule in Russia.

The ILO fought the rise of Stalinism expressed in the antidemocratic degeneration of the Soviet state and in the replacement of a class-struggle course by counterrevolutionary class-collaborationist policies in the Communist International.

The new International was founded under difficult conditions. Stalinism had strangled revolutions from China to Spain; corrupted or demoralized hundreds of thousands of anticapitalist fighters; purveyed a falsified version of Marxism that became widely accepted as the real thing; and convinced millions around the world that socialism was equivalent to Stalinist tyranny. Revolutionary Marxism was reduced to a small, beleaguered minority in the workers movement.

Nonetheless, the Transitional Program adopted by that first congress set the task of building revolutionary parties on a world scale. It stood by the basic Marxist concepts that had allowed the Bolsheviks to lead the Russian workers to power twenty years earlier.

It held that the proletariat would lead the oppressed of the world to socialism; that the battle for socialism was worldwide, with the class struggle in the imperialist countries (above all, the United States) ultimately playing a decisive role; that mass revolutionary parties rooted in the working class must be built to assure victory; and that the overturn of capitalism would produce a society more democratic than the most democratic capitalism.

The new revolutionary International said that Stalinism was a temporary aberration, from a historical point of view, and that it would be overturned by antibureaucratic revolutions wherever it ruled.

Today the Fourth International and the SWP stand at the opening of a period that offers outstanding opportunities to advance the world socialist revolution. This period differs in key respects from the world revolutionary upsurge that followed World War II, particularly in the relationship of forces between revolutionary Marxism and its main opponent within the working-class movement, Stalinism.

The Soviet Union's victory over Hitler in World War II was a blow to imperialism, which had counted on the destruction of the first workers state. But this victory had a contradictory side ef-

fect. It temporarily increased the prestige of the Stalinist rulers of the Soviet Union as well as that of Stalinist parties around the world. This impeded the growth of the Fourth International, which had been hard hit by repression and assassinations during the war.

The Stalinist parties were thus in a strong position to betray revolutionary upsurges in France, Italy, Greece, and elsewhere. Successful socialist revolutions in these imperialist countries would have opened the road to world socialism.

Instead, by the late 1940s the U.S. and West European imperialists stabilized their rule, and the workers pulled back from a general struggle against capitalism. Capitalism entered a prolonged economic upswing, based in part on arms spending. Among the results of this new lease on life for world capitalism—a gift from the Stalinists—were the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the threat of nuclear annihilation that hangs over the world.

This setback was cushioned by the rise of the colonial revolution (particularly the Chinese revo-

nist rule. These outbreaks revived the concepts of socialist democracy that Stalin tried to stamp out.

The Tito-Stalin split, the Moscow-Peking dispute, and now the rise of "Eurocommunism" shattered the Stalinist monolith.

The Cuban revolution exposed the Stalinist boast that only parties guided by Moscow or Peking could make revolutions. Fidel Castro's July 26 Movement showed that revolutionary currents could win the allegiance of the masses, even in the face of opposition from a Stalinist party that preferred a "live and let live" arrangement with dictator Batista.

The eagerness of the Soviet and Chinese rulers to betray the Vietnamese and other revolutions in the interests of détente with Washington demonstrated to many that their claims to represent socialist revolution were false.

The pattern of revolution in the colonial world shifted. The cities and the working class emerged as decisive forces. This can be seen today in the general strike in Nicaragua and in the massive outbreaks that have shaken the brutal monarchy in Iran.

Stability in the imperialist countries was undermined by the international anti-Vietnam War movement and protests by students, women, oppressed nationalities, and gays—struggles that had a profound impact on the thinking of workers. The May 1968 general strike in France showed that the working class was still able to challenge capitalist rule.

The rapid growth of the Fourth International after 1968 reflected the confirmation in life of the basic strategic concepts of Marxism that it had defended through decades of adversity—as well as the Trotskyists' capacity to participate in, and in many cases provide leadership to, anticapitalist struggles.

The end of the long capitalist boom early in this decade was a qualitative turning point, exacerbating the social crisis already under way. The ruling classes of the United States and its imperialist allies were compelled to launch attacks on the most basic rights won in the past by the workers. The beginning battles by workers against this offensive point in the direction of a confrontation that will pose the question of capitalist or working-class rule in the most powerful countries in the world.

This development—signaled by the 1974-75 world capitalist depression—marked the end of the long and complicated detour in the course of the world revolution that followed World War II.

The standing of the Stalinists, along with the Social Democrats and other bureaucratic labor leaders, will decline further. Their subordination of the defense of the workers' rights and living standards to the policy of collaboration with the bosses will arouse growing opposition.

Only the Fourth International has a program that can enable the workers to win decisive victories in these conditions. Today the forces of world Trotskyism are rooting themselves in the unions and mass organizations of the working class. There, they will participate in building the class-struggle left wing that workers in every country need to effectively defend their interests.

In the coming years, this course will enable the sections of the Fourth International and the Socialist Workers Party to build mass revolutionary working-class parties. Such parties, at the head of millions of class-conscious workers, will bring an end to capitalism and create a society of freedom, equality, and material well-being—in a word, socialism.

In This Issue

This issue of the *ISR* contains the text of two talks given at the Active Workers and Socialist Educational Conference held in Oberlin, Ohio, August 5-12. They have been edited for publication.

The first item is Jack Barnes's "For a Fighting, Democratic Labor Movement." Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

The second item, "Ferment in Steel," by Andrew Pulley, discusses how the radicalization of the American workers is being reflected in the steel industry and the United Steelworkers Union. Pulley is a steelworker and a member of the SWP National Committee.

We think these articles will be of value to everyone interested in the prospects facing the American working class and in the progress and goals of the SWP's turn toward the industrial unions as the center of class struggle today.

lution) which helped prevent World War III and blocked imperialism from reestablishing world domination.

However, the fact that the Chinese revolution was saddled with a Stalinist leadership fostered illusions that Stalinism had revolutionary potential.

The capitalist boom, together with the prevalence of peasant war in the colonial revolution, sparked theories that the peasantry had replaced the workers as the revolutionary class on a world scale and that the working classes of the imperialist countries were no longer capable of opposing imperialist rule. The popularity of such misconceptions slowed the growth of the Trotskyist movement.

These conditions and concepts—which limited the expansion of revolutionary socialist forces, just as they blocked the reemergence of revolutionary struggles by the working class—have been undermined by events, particularly over the past decade.

Uprisings in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia exposed the anti-working-class nature of Stali-

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For a Fighting, Democratic Labor Movement

By Jack Barnes

From Canada to France, from Sweden to Mexico, from New Zealand to Colombia, the central task facing the parties of the Fourth International is to lead a big majority of our members into industry, into the industrial unions, and to do it now.

That is the conclusion of the draft world political resolution entitled "The World Political Situation and the Tasks of the Fourth International," recently adopted by the leadership of the Fourth International. This turn is one of the most important decisions in the history of the Fourth International. Carrying it out systematically and to the end is one of the biggest challenges the International has ever faced.

If this orientation is adopted by the upcoming world congress of the Fourth International, for the first time in more than a decade we will all be heading in the same direction as a united world party with a commonly held program and strategy.

The final part of the resolution sets out the specific tasks of the Fourth International today. The first task, and the central task, as I said, is to lead a big majority of our members into industry. This is necessary if we are not to turn away from the proletarian orientation of the Fourth International. The resolution points out that since its foundation the Fourth International has followed a proletarian orientation. It has advanced the Marxist program, using the method of the Transitional Program to participate as much as possible in the political life of the working class in each country where we have forces, as well as on a world scale.

Part of our proletarian orientation has always been the understanding that only a party that is proletarian in composition as well as in program, that has earned growing respect from the workers for its leadership role in class combat, can win a majority of the oppressed and exploited and lead them in a struggle for power.

The resolution states that new and unprecedented opportunities have opened up for winning industrial workers to the sections of the Fourth International. This is the basic conclusion that flows from the analysis of the development of the world situation since 1974, which is dealt with in the first part of the resolution.

To take advantage of this situation and meet this challenge, special efforts are necessary, including the mobilization of members won previously among other social layers. The resolution points out that these comrades have not yet become part of the industrial working class and its unions and that they should do so without further delay. It is the responsibility of the International to lead this turn.

There are four compelling reasons for making it now.

One, with a base in industry, our political campaigns, our task of explaining to the workers the necessity of thinking socially and acting politically, as Trotsky put it, will be qualitatively advanced.

Two, such a base will make it much more possible for us to play a leading role in building a class-struggle left wing in the labor movement to fight against class-collaborationist policies that cripple the workers in their attempt to use union power to meet the employers' offensive.

Three, it will advance our work in every other section of the mass movement, among the allies of the proletariat, among movements battling for their own needs. It will advance working-class solidarity and links with the struggles of the superexploited—the women, the youth, the oppressed nationalities.

Four, this turn will help solve many organizational problems we face and will face increasingly if we fail to make this reorientation now. Part of the turn is paying conscious attention to

the development of workers, women, and members of the oppressed nationalities as rounded party leaders.

The central goal, the most important result of this turn, will be to build parties of experienced revolutionary workers—worker-Bolsheviks—who are political leaders of the working class and its allies. In other words, the world political resolution comes to exactly the same conclusion for the great majority of the sections of the Fourth International that we came to six months ago for the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, and which other sections and sympathizing organizations have begun coming to also, some sooner than we did, some later.

One thing should be made clear. Simply sending the majority of our present cadres into industry and into the industrial unions is not in and of itself the solution to building a mass revolutionary party of workers. The key to doing this is winning thousands and thousands of workers to the party. Our goal is building a mass party of workers, a party that speaks not only for the interests of the working class—which we have always done through our program—but a party that represents the working class, by organizing the most advanced militant fighters into its own ranks. Getting a big majority of our members into industry and into industrial unions now is a tactic to facilitate building such a party, nothing more.

Drive Through the Turn Into Industry

On the other hand, as we discussed at the last meeting of the SWP National Committee in February, and in the branches following the reports from that meeting, there comes a time when the tactic itself becomes all important. We have come to a fork in the road. We have reached

the moment when if we did not make this turn and carry it through to the end, we would drift away from the strategic goal of building a mass workers party and we would jeopardize the cumulative gains of past work. This turn is the kind of decision that must be made consciously, organized collectively, and carried out decisively, or it will not work—because it requires a sharp shift in the lives of the majority of our members.

What is the situation in most of the parties of the Fourth International? This was explained by several leaders of European parties at the meeting of the United Secretariat that adopted this draft resolution. The year 1968, especially the great general strike in France that year, marked the beginning of a new upsurge in struggles of various kinds all over the world. The Fourth International began growing rapidly. Thousands and thousands of young people, especially students and those from student circles, were won to the Fourth International. As time passed, the overwhelming majority of these members took jobs in fields they'd been trained in, as professionals, skilled technicians, teachers, professors, lawyers, etc. Many became active unionists in these fields. If class society is simply left to take its course, the thousands and thousands of comrades who joined in this period will not go into industry. They will not become industrial workers. What is needed is a conscious decision to carry through a complete reorientation of the jobs, political activity, and lives of thousands and thousands of comrades.

In an earlier period, Trotsky called a similar proposal for our movement a "forced march." He said he did not think that such a forced march alone would turn our parties into the workers parties we aspire to become. A multiplicity of tactics in response to many new political situa-



Like their American counterparts, European workers need a class-struggle strategy to fight employer offensive. Top, French workers protest government's austerity plan. Bottom, striking workers in Turin, Italy.

tions will lead to that. But Trotsky was convinced that, at a decisive moment, if it were not done, we could not advance toward this goal. If it is done, we get ourselves into a qualitatively new position, and we can really prepare for the battles that are coming—or, more accurately, that have already begun. We will be in a position to take our program, to take our ideas as the nucleus of a workers party, to the best organized and most decisive section of the class that must run the world, if the world itself is not to be destroyed.

The turn we are making does not really originate with us. The ruling class, under the compulsion of a new international economic situation, made a turn. It unleashed attacks on the workers on a world scale, and the workers began to react. What we have done is to understand this and to make our turn in response.

What is the political situation that dictates our turn, makes it politically correct? The resolution begins by summarizing the situation in the world

The decades-long detour of the world revolution—during which social struggles and political protests often arose outside of and without any seeming connection to or much impact on the workers or their organizations, and during which the most important battles centered in the colonial world with the activity of peasant forces dominant—that detour has come to an end.

Thus it is not surprising that we now see a growing crisis of leadership of the working class, reflected in the policies of the big bureaucratic apparatuses, such as the top levels of the AFL-CIO, of the large Socialist and Communist parties in Western Europe, and their counterparts around the world. More and more, their class-collaborationist policies come into conflict with the needs, desires, and demands of millions and millions of workers. Advanced workers begin coming forward, attempting to take their fight into their own hands.

But the resolution points out that these politi-

There is a very important aspect to this world capitalist crisis. It is a deep-rooted structural social crisis whose origins go back to before the imperialist defeat in Vietnam and the economic downturn beginning in 1974. They go back to the 1960s, with the radicalization of millions and millions of young people, the oppressed nationalities, women, antiwar fighters around the world. The present situation is thus marked by the fact that many of the allies of the working class have already been radicalized, have gone through political experiences, and many of them make up very important and weighty components of the working class itself.

My job today is not to present the resolution itself as a whole, or its analysis of the interrelations of the three basic sectors of the world revolution—the imperialist countries, the colonial world, and the workers states. It is a very rich resolution. The political committee was unanimous in its opinion that it represented the biggest step forward, and most useful guide to action, since the world congress that reunified the Fourth International in 1963. You can read and study the resolution. It can furnish the framework for a year's education. We will have organized discussion on it prior to and at our convention next year, where we will vote on the resolution in preparation for the next world congress.

Upsurge in the Semicolonial World

We did want to stress one point that is made in the resolution about the colonial revolution. After the defeats suffered by the colonial revolution in recent years, we can see a change coming. The colonial peoples have suffered horribly. They bore the brunt of the world depression in 1974-75. Their living conditions were brutally driven down. Reactionary dictatorships were fastened upon them in many countries. But the ability of the revolution in the colonial lands to recover from these defeats, to raise its head again, is one of its key features. The fact that the hands of the American military machine are more tied than ever before, because of Vietnam and the legacy of the antiwar movement in this country, the fact that Washington's capacity to intervene with troops anywhere in the world has been crippled, has and will have an increasing impact in the colonial world.

This has been shown most strikingly in Black Africa, which has moved for the time being to the forefront of the colonial revolution. Beginning in 1974, with the victorious struggle of the Portuguese colonies, the African revolution has gained momentum. Big struggles have erupted in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa. And in Ethiopia a deepgoing social revolution has occurred. In this situation, a new factor has appeared.

It would have seemed impossible, ten or fifteen years ago, that a tiny country, ninety miles away from Key West, Florida, would be able to send tens of thousands of troops to Africa to fight against the friends of American imperialism. With a decisiveness and revolutionary courage that we haven't seen since the early days of the Bolshevik revolution, the leadership of the Cuban revolution decided to take whatever the consequences would be and commit Cuban troops to oppose imperialism in Africa. This new factor,



Cuban troops in central Angola. Cuba's intervention in Africa gave a boost to the colonial revolution.

as it has developed since 1974-75. The last world congress of the Fourth International was held in 1974. And as you all remember from bitter experience, that year saw the opening of the first worldwide recession in more than thirty-five years.

Shift in Relationship of Class Forces

The resolution points out an extremely important thing. Since 1974 there has been a shift in the relationship of forces between the workers and the capitalists. This is due to two factors. One was the defeat of the American imperialist adventure in Vietnam, which resulted in a qualitatively changed attitude of the American people to any moves by Washington to utilize troops against the world revolution. The second was the recession itself, which dealt heavy blows to the capitalist system and to confidence in it.

The impact of both these factors has led to a shift in the relationship of forces to the advantage of the workers. That is, the attacks on the working class that are taking place—and they are real and have led to many initial successes for the rulers—are attacks that are launched by the capitalist class from a position of increasing weakness, not increasing strength.

The resolution further notes the continuing increase in the weight, the importance, and the impact of the class struggle in the biggest imperialist countries, where the world's mightiest class contestants face each other in increasingly open confrontation—in the United States, in West Germany, in Japan, France, Italy, Britain, Canada, and other countries. The revolutionary upheaval in Portugal demonstrated that the big battles that are going to be fought in the imperialist centers will have a growing impact and importance on a world scale.

The third major trend the resolution recognizes is the growing predominance of the working class in the struggles in all areas of the world, not only in the imperialist countries, but in many of the semicolonial countries themselves and even in the bureaucratized workers states in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and China—as the recent events in Poland have most graphically illustrated.

cally heterogeneous layers of militant workers have not yet been able to organize a class-struggle left wing of the labor movement that can fight to transform the labor movement into a new kind of movement—a movement that can use union power to lead the workers struggles and champion the battles of all the oppressed. Assembling the forces for such a class-struggle left wing of the labor movement is inseparable from the building of revolutionary Marxist parties.

These general trends on a world scale have convinced the leadership of the Fourth International to make this turn. The anti-working-class offensive is a “one-sided class war,” all right, as United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser says. It’s “one-sided” because of years of misleadership from people like Fraser. We are not the only ones who face a forced march. Objectively, the workers themselves face a forced march to develop a new leadership to organize our side for the big battles to be fought ahead.

More on the Fourth International and the SWP

The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution

By Leon Trotsky with introductory essays by Joseph Hansen and George Novack. 250 pp. cloth, \$14; \$3.95.

The World Political Situation and the Tasks of the Fourth International

Draft resolution for the Fifth World Congress Since Reunification (Eleventh World Congress) submitted by a majority of the United Secretariat. 8½x11 format, \$1.00.

Socialist Revolution and the Struggle for Women's Liberation

Draft resolution submitted by the United Secretariat. 8½x11 format, \$1.00.

Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Resolution adopted by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. 8½x11 format, \$.75.

Socialist Workers Party documents

“Leading the Party Into Industry”

Report by Jack Barnes to the February 1978 Plenum of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee. 8½x11 format, \$1.00.

“Party Goals in the Unions”

By Frank Lovell and Joel Britton. 8½x11 format, \$1.50.

Order from Socialist Workers Party, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014.

taken together with the battles waged for years and years by Black Africans, who have paid with their blood, means that a new step forward has taken place. In reaction to this, the American ruling class has launched a new offensive and escalated its threats against Cuba.

While this has been happening in Africa, there have been disappointments in Southeast Asia. The Stalinist misleaders of the Communist parties in Southeast Asia and China have carried out policies that have minimized the worldwide positive impact of the mighty victory of the Vietnamese people. The continuing armed clashes between Cambodia and Vietnam and the grotesquely reactionary character of the Peking Stalinists' foreign policy are the clearest examples of this.

In countries such as Iran and Israel, whose regimes Washington is counting on to maintain internal stability and help in policing the Middle East, there have been big demonstrations and mobilizations—especially in Iran but also beginning with the peace movement in Israel.

In Latin America, suffering under brutal repression, first of all in the key countries of Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico, we also see a new rise of struggles. The greater capacity of the Argentine workers to defend themselves under the military dictatorship—compared to the Brazilian workers after 1964 and the Chilean workers after 1972—is the best example of this shift. We have read a lot about the upsurge in Peru. In Nicaragua and Colombia we have also seen new struggles, strikes, and demonstrations. And the proletariat has been at the very center of each of these developments.

The stepped-up struggles in these parts of the colonial world take place in the context of developing radicalization in the imperialist centers. The working class in the advanced industrial countries is strong. It is organized in powerful unions, and it remains undefeated. There have been losses, for example in Portugal, and previous gains have been taken away. Living standards have been cut. But no showdown battles have yet taken place, and no decisive defeats have occurred.

The resolution points out that this situation cannot last indefinitely. Bigger battles will occur. There will be polarizations, with a right wing developing, as well as a left wing. The key to the future victory of the working class is building mass revolutionary parties in time. We are in a race with time to build revolutionary leaderships of the working class that can replace the class-collaborationist leaderships that now hold sway, and can prepare for victories instead of organizing defeats.

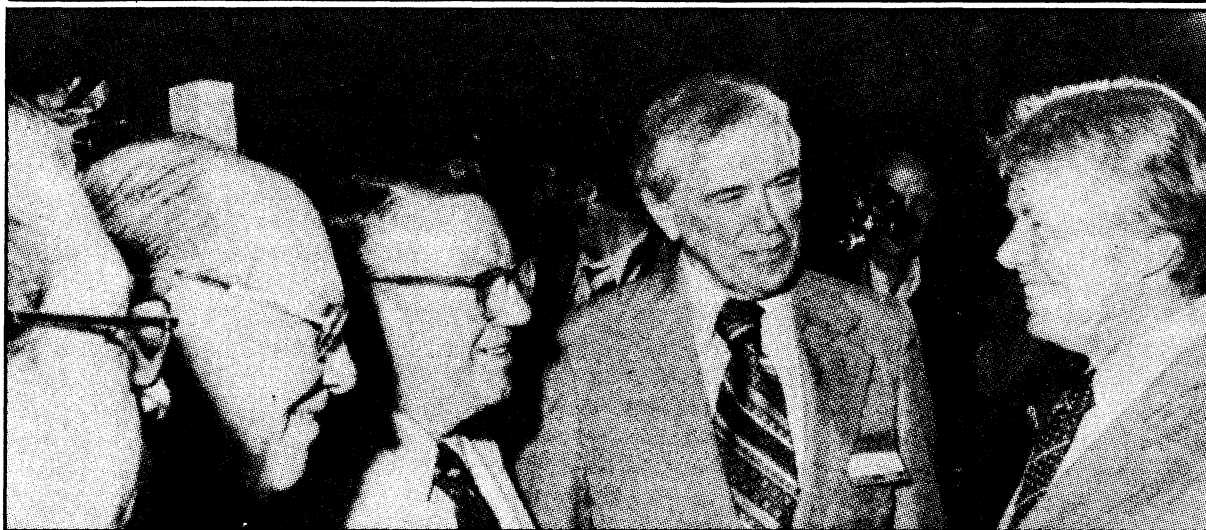
The American Scene

What is our job in the United States as far as this resolution is concerned? First of all, we must discuss it and come to a decision on it. But I think it is safe to say there will be virtually unanimous agreement on the general line of this resolution in the Socialist Workers Party. Our job, above all, is to apply the resolution here in the United States, here in the country that will be decisive in the coming battles on a world scale. Until the American workers defeat and disarm the ruling class in this country, no revolution anywhere is safe; indeed, the world itself will remain an unsafe place for humanity.

What is the present state of American politics? Let's look at the evolution of American politics for the past six months, since the meeting of the SWP National Committee at the end of February, which decided on our turn into industry. Just one-half year. Does it confirm our estimate and decision at that time? Does it jibe with the world political resolution's analysis and perspectives?

The first thing we should note is the continuing offensive by the employers, the ongoing drive to take back concessions won earlier by the struggles of workers, the Black and Chicano populations, women, and others. We have seen something we were always aware of reconfirmed: The greed and brutality of the American ruling class has no intrinsic limits. They will take back as much as they can, coldly and cruelly, without regard for how this affects the lives of the masses. The only limits they recognize are those imposed by the relation of forces in the class war. Their response to every union negotiating position, every strike, every demand of the oppressed and the exploited, confirms this fact.

On the international scale we have seen this in Zaïre, in the ominous threats against Cuba, in the escalating production of ever more fiendish



Union bureaucrats tell workers that foreign imports and foreign workers are cause of unemployment. They want to keep the heat off their Democratic Party allies. Above, United Auto Workers leaders hail Carter.

weapons of mass annihilation, and in the ever-present threat of nuclear war. We should never forget the lesson of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. The rulers of this country dragged the world to the brink of nuclear war then, and they are willing to do so again whenever it serves their purposes. Nuclear war remains a permanent threat as long as imperialism is not disarmed.

Carter and the heads of states of the other big imperialist powers recently met in Bonn to "solve" the world's economic problems. One thing is for sure, they didn't solve any of the economic problems of our class. They decided that if the prices of gas and oil in the United States went up, that would be a big help for their problems. Every single one of them remains convinced that total unemployment is going to go up in the imperialist countries as a whole. Prices have once again begun to rise at what they call double-digit rates, which means way too fast for real wages to keep up. The war budgets continue to rise.

In California we saw how the right wing could seize an opening, as they did by initiating Proposition 13, and how, in the absence of any organized response by the workers, the ruling class utilized this to slash even more than they have done elsewhere, health care, education, child care, mass transportation. The desperate need of the workers and middle classes to get at least some of the growing burden of taxes off their backs was played off against their own social needs. The fears of a creeping total economic breakdown of capitalist society were played on to get a "popular mandate" to slash social spending and cut back on essential services. And the rulers are now testing to see if they can repeat this malicious operation throughout the country.

The Supreme Court, that supremely reactionary institution of American capitalism, continues its work of chipping away at the democratic rights of the American people in every arena, from increased powers of government censorship to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure. Most important was the infamous *Bakke* decision, striking at the hopes of Blacks and women for affirmative action, backed by law and the power of the government, to help overcome discrimination.

The Congress has played its part as well, whittling away at abortion rights and pregnancy

benefits, boosting war spending to unheard-of levels, and refusing to do anything about the massive youth unemployment.

The editors of the *New York Times* are usually very careful. They try to write headlines, for example, that the employers understand but that do not let the cat out of the bag for the rest of us. But even they have begun slipping a little, writing headlines about the "oversupply" of young workers. It makes you a little nervous, as you recall what they think should be done when there's an "oversupply" of grain or cattle. They approach the "oversupply" of young workers in the same way—except that young workers fight back better than grain or cattle.

For the past six months the capitalist politicians have continued to talk about fighting inflation. But the more they talk about fighting inflation, the more prices go up, and the less we have.

Carter got into the act last week, explaining that one of his major campaign promises—the development of a comprehensive medical plan for everyone—was actually going to be a medical plan for no one. It will guarantee nothing except that medical costs are going to continue to rise. This was just after the House of Representatives dropped any attempts to put mandatory curbs on the rise of hospital costs. As the *New York Times* said, "the organized medical profession was distinctly pleased" with this gift.

Carter Gang in Trouble

But the continuing offensive by the employing class has not been the only thing happening. The polls show a continuing decline in public confidence in the Carter administration. He can't even hire a dependable closed-mouthed drug adviser. They now tell us that the whole White House is snorting coke and smoking pot. I was relieved to hear this, personally. I can just see Carter sitting there, and one of his advisers says, "Let's start the big war." And Jimmy's in a fog, can't find the button, "Hey, man, where's the button?" There are parallels in the last days of the Russian tsarist court. Every declining ruling class exhibits such features at a certain point.

And Carter's got other problems. Not only did Washington threaten the Cubans, but the Cubans responded. Fidel Castro and the leadership of the Cuban revolution told Carter where to get

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Ferment in the Steel Industry



Part of U.S. Steel's South Works in Chicago

A steelworker discusses some issues that are radicalizing his co-workers today, including affirmative action, South Africa, and the right of union members to ratify contracts. The steelworkers' mood increasingly contrasts with the pro-employer stance of McBride and other top union leaders.

By Andrew Pulley

Last night, in the report on party expansion, it was announced that we plan in the next few months to establish new branches in three important areas. These are: the Mesabi Iron Range, site of the militant, 138-day steelworkers' strike; Birmingham, Alabama, a key city in the Black liberation movement where the first modern ghetto rebellion occurred in 1963, and a center of the steel industry in the South; and third, Gary, Indiana.

Gary is where I work. In a steel mill.

I am one of the Socialist Workers Party members in Gary and the northwestern Indiana area, Lake County.

This is one of the most important industrial sections in the country. East Chicago, Indiana, boasts of being the industrial capital of the world. Much industry and wealth are concentrated in Gary proper. Even though that's not apparent by looking at the dilapidated and abandoned stores in downtown Gary.

Every time I drive through Gary, or find myself in Gary at night, I recall how one of my junior high school teachers tried to explain the difference between "communist" countries and capitalist countries, which she called the "democracies." She said there are plenty of beautiful cars and glittering neon lights in the cities of the "democracies." But in Russia, she said, and other "communist" countries, there's very few cars. The cities are drab, unlit, dismal. In Gary, you know, there are many cars, but there are very few

neon lights. And Gary is hardly a socialist city. Many of the downtown stores just have plain old signs like they used to have before electricity. Many stores are vacant. The big department stores have left the city.

But the SWP is not moving to Gary because we like the way the place looks. We don't like the way New York City looks, or Chicago or Cleveland or any of them. We are attracted to Gary because we like the colossal power possessed by the working class in Lake County, chiefly by the steelworkers. That potential power has been dormant for a long time, but we know that is beginning to change.

More than 24,000 workers are employed in the U.S. Steel Company plant in Gary. This plant is one of the chief sources of Gary's wealth—wealth that goes out of Gary for investments elsewhere to further the capitalist goal of unlimited profit. The capitalists have allowed the city itself to deteriorate. They lack interest in its redevelopment. Not enough profit is involved for them. So housing and social services crumble.

Problems typical of any Black community can be found in Gary, where the overwhelming majority of people are Black. Unemployment and underemployment haunt the Black community, despite the fact that many Blacks work in the mills and in the surrounding industrial plants. U.S. Steel not only controls the key mill in Gary, but it also controls many of the smaller factories. And it controls the city itself, financially and politically. Mayor Richard Hatcher, one of the first Black mayors of a major city, has admitted as much. He has tried to explain his failure to improve living conditions in Gary by pointing

out that he, the mayor, doesn't have the power. U.S. Steel has the power, he says. It makes the decisions to determine the quality of life in Gary.

District 31: Steel Powerhouse

The U.S. Steel mill in Gary is a huge operation. It covers some nine miles along the shore of Lake Michigan. The employees are spread over two major United Steelworkers locals (1014 and 1066). That division is not necessary, but it nevertheless exists.

In addition to U.S. Steel, there are other big mills in the area. District 31 of the United Steelworkers includes Chicago and Gary and the surrounding area. There are 18,000 workers employed in Inland Steel in East Chicago, Indiana. The local there, 1010, is the largest steel local in the country. There are about 8,000 employed at Youngstown Sheet and Tube, also in East Chicago. Around 6-8,000 employed at U.S. Steel's South Works in Chicago. Another 8-10,000 employed at the Republic Steel plant in Chicago, and 5-6,000 at the Bethlehem Steel plant near Gary at Burns Harbor, Indiana. And of course there are other plants and facilities organized by the Steelworkers. In all, the United Steelworkers organizes some 120,000 workers in the Chicago-Gary area.

Many of these workers are Black and Chicano. There are some 5,000 Chicanos working at Inland Steel. Blacks constitute an even bigger part of the working population in the mills as well. The president of Local 1010 at Inland is a Black, Bill Andrews. The president of Local 65 at South

Works is a Chicano, John Chico.

Politically, District 31 is at the center of the United Steelworkers union, a union of some 1.4 million workers. This is because District 31 was, and still remains, the base of the movement for union democracy and class-conscious use of union power in steel. Ed Sadlowski, in his campaign for USWA president in 1976-77, gave voice to these ideas and sentiments. Those ideas continue to be expressed by Jim Balanoff, who is the District 31 director. Ideas that reflect the increasingly radical thinking and moods in the work force—not only in that area but nationally and in other unions.

We are beginning to see this ferment expressed in activity, in action, in protest. The 110-day coal miners' strike and the even longer Mesabi Iron Range strike went beyond the Steelworkers Fight Back election campaign and are examples of what lies ahead.

Those two militant strikes gave a glimpse of the vast power of labor and the new moods of struggle in face of the employers' ruthless take-back offensive.

The rulers fear any unleashing of this power. For twenty-five years after the close of World War II, the American capitalists were able to allow a gradual rise in workers' living standards. In that whole period the American working class was in many ways a drugged, sleeping giant. Now—having been walked on, kicked around, punched, and sat upon in recent years, as the rulers beat down our standard of living in order to compete with the European and Japanese capitalists—this American giant is sobering up and beginning to open its eyes, preparing to stir and do battle.

The rulers are well aware that they alone cannot keep the workers down, especially the industrial workers. Even with their awesome weapons, their cops, their courts, and their jive-talking presidents and other capitalist politicians. This tiny parasitic minority of superrich rulers must rely on their agents in the labor movement, the union bureaucracy. They demand and get these misleaders of the labor movement to police and discipline the workers through the union organization itself.

Contract for Class Collaboration

Jack [Barnes] pointed out yesterday that in this period of deepening capitalist crisis the unions can play one of two roles—they can either become revolutionary organizations of struggle for the working class and its allies, or they can become increasingly integrated into the capitalist state and play the role of disciplining and keeping the workers in line. In the United Steelworkers union, the role of disciplining and keeping the workers in line has been codified in the contract under which we're now working. This contract was signed in April 1977. I want to read part of it to you.

Under Section 1 it says:

The purpose of the Company and the Union in entering into this labor Agreement is to set forth their agreement on rates of pay, hours of work, and other conditions of employment so as to promote orderly and peaceful relations with the employees, to achieve uninterrupted operations in the plants, and to achieve the highest level of employee performance consistent with safety, good health, and sustained effort.

It goes on to say:

The Company and the Union encourage the highest possible degree of friendly, cooperative relationships between their respective representatives at all levels and with and between all employees. The officers of the Company and the Union realize that this goal depends on more than words in a labor agreement, that it depends primarily on attitudes between people in their respective organizations and at all levels of responsibility. They believe that proper attitudes must be based on full understanding of and regard for the respective rights and responsibilities of both the Company and the Union. They believe also that proper attitudes are of major importance in the plants where day-to-day operations and administration of this Agreement demand fairness and understanding. They believe that these attitudes can be encouraged best when it is made clear that Company and Union officials, whose duties involved negotiation of this Agreement, are not anti-union or anticompany but are sincerely concerned with the best interests and well-being of the business and all employees.

You get the drift of what they're talking about.

The parties recognize that for their joint benefit, increases in wages and benefits should be consistent with the long-term prosperity and efficiency of the steel industry.

The parties are concerned that the future for the industry in terms of employment security and return



On April 9, 1977, United Steelworkers Union Industry conference of local presidents met to vote on contract that included concessions to employers on work rules and fringe benefits. Earlier contract had surrendered right to strike. Unpopularity of these agreements has spurred demands for the right of union members to ratify contracts.

on substantial capital expenditures will rest heavily upon the ability of the parties to work cooperatively to achieve significantly higher productivity trends than have occurred in the recent past. The parties are acutely aware of the impact upon the industry and its employees of the sizable penetration of the domestic steel market by foreign producers. The parties have joined their efforts in seeking relief from the problem of massive importation of foreign steel manufactured in low-wage countries. Thus, it is incumbent upon the parties to work cooperatively to meet the challenge posed by principal foreign competitors in recent years. It is also important that the parties cooperate in promoting the use of American-made steel.

In order to implement this expression of purpose, a joint advisory Committee on Employment Security and Plant Productivity shall be established at each plant. . . . The function of the Committee shall be to advise with plant management concerning ways and means of improving productivity and developing recommendations for stimulating its growth so as to promote the purpose of the parties as set forth above and also promote orderly and peaceful relations with the employees, to achieve uninterrupted operations in the plants, to promote the use of domestic steel and to achieve the desired prosperity and progress of the Company and its employees. . . .

They conclude:

By such arrangement the parties believe that they, as men [they were all men, you can bet on that] of good will with sound purpose, may best protect private enterprise and its efficiency in the interests of all, as well as the legitimate interest of their respective organizations within the framework of a democratic society in which regard for fact and fairness is essential.

This is their little red book. Moreover, the contract goes on to say: "There shall be no strikes, work stoppages, or interruption or impeding of work. No officer or representative of the Union shall authorize, instigate, aid, or condone any such activities. No employee shall participate in any such activities." This is very crass and brazen. You can't strike, you've got to cooperate, you don't even have a choice in the matter. And remember, steelworkers are not allowed to vote on this contract. We can't vote to strike, and we can't even vote on the agreement

that prohibits us from striking!

The latest issue of *Steel Labor*, our union news paper, has an article that shows the mentality of class collaboration very clearly. It begins: "Saying 'the days of screaming, shouting, finger-pointing and table-thumping' are in the past, District 7 Director Jim McGeehan kicked off a unique effort to foster improved labor-management relations by hosting a dinner for local unions and companies in southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware."

The article continues: "The dinner had two high spots: the establishment of an award for the company and local union that have made the greatest improvements in labor relations and a gift of \$6,000 to the American Cancer Society representing proceeds from the dinner." District Director McGeehan told the dinner guests that labor and management are "more partners than adversaries."

At the company that won the award, the article proudly reported, grievances have dropped 55 percent, there have been no arbitration cases for two years, and—most important—the company is "more profitable."

Well, at least these people are up front about this thing. Perhaps the \$6,000 donation is intended to thank the American Cancer Society for not declaring the policy of class collaboration to be a terminal sickness of the current leadership. A more plausible explanation is that they think \$6,000 is sufficient compensation for the lives of workers who have died as a result of the cancer-causing poisons that plague the steel mills. They wash their hands and salve their conscience with this contribution.

Class Collaboration at Pullman

The whole policy of class collaboration, of compromise, of union cooperation with management, flows from the false notion that workers and bosses are part of one great big happy family. This perspective subordinates the inter-



Steelworkers march for ERA in July 9 demonstration in Washington, D.C.

Militant/Lou Howort

ests and needs of working people to those of the rulers. It saps the strength of the labor movement. More exactly, it refuses to utilize the immense power of the unions. This policy is not limited to the international leadership of the United Steelworkers. Rather, it is a uniform policy of the whole stratum, the whole privileged stratum, of labor misleaders.

I just want to give you an idea of what it's like to work in a union run by such craven collaborators with the employers. I used to work at Pullman Standard in Chicago. That local has now been put under receivership because the officers were caught red-handed stealing some \$100,000 from our strike fund. We were on strike for six months, from October to April, out in the cold picketing, and these people were living it up. They didn't want to give up enough money for one bus of steelworkers to go from Chicago to New York to picket on Wall Street when Wall Street was named "Pullman Street" for a day. They didn't want to cough up the small amount of money necessary to do that, yet they were rolling in dollars. This is typical.

As important as the strike was, instead of mobilizing every single worker from the job to come out to picket, people had to sign up for permission to picket! There was a certain incentive to sign up—if you didn't picket, you didn't get the thirty dollars a week designed to aid you in your battle against inflation while on strike. But in order for you to picket, there had to be an opening.

So people would go into the union office and say, "I want to picket next week. I didn't get any strike benefits."

The officers would say, "Well, you've got to picket if you want strike benefits."

The workers say, "I want to picket, when can I picket?"

"Well, the 6 a.m. to noon shift is filled, there's no opening there. And the shift from noon to 6 p.m. is filled. You can picket from 6 p.m. to midnight or you can picket from midnight to 6 a.m."

You applied for an opening, you see. Picket lines were very small. I can tell you, this was a depressing experience for all the workers. It is hardly surprising that when the strike finally ended, the workers did not win what they went out for.

This is one of the few locals in the Chicago area whose president supported McBride against Sadlowski in the 1977 elections. The ranks voted for Sadlowski.

The officers would tell us when we came to union meetings last summer in the blazing hot weather, "What the hell are you doing at this union meeting?" They would say that not just to me but to everyone. "Let's hurry and get this meeting over so we can go out." People wanted to have a discussion about whatever problems they faced. But the vice-president and the president would say, "Let's get the hell out of here."

Sadlowski Campaign and Beyond

In stark contrast to this whole perspective—not only of the Pullman local leadership but also of the McBride national leadership and the leadership of the other labor unions—is the perspective raised by Ed Sadlowski in the campaign for president of the Steelworkers union last year. The ideas raised by Sadlowski pointed in the direction of class-struggle politics, a class-struggle strategy for labor. He said that there are bosses and there are workers and that the interests of the two groups are antagonistic. It's a class question, Sadlowski said. And the only way to break from the crippling class-collaborationist practices is to democratize the unions. That's the key today to the future of American labor—union democracy.

Sadlowski proclaimed that we, the members, should have the right to utilize the union to protect our interests. We should have the right to strike, the right to vote on our contracts. He said that racism is incompatible with unionism. He raised the idea of supporting women's rights. These ideas reflected the mood and the needs not only of steelworkers but of all the workers throughout the country.

We said that whether victorious or not in the election, the ideas raised in that campaign would continue to be at the center of class-struggle developments in the steelworkers and other unions. This has been the case, for example, in the strike on the Mesabi Iron Range that lasted 138 days last summer and fall. It was led by young, militant steelworkers.

When I first met these people I was reminded of students in the late 1960s and early 1970s—long hair, young, militant. They were completely different from your typical union leader. They looked to Sadlowski for leadership and agreed completely with him that union democracy is essential if we are to be able to really fight the companies. These militants on the Range led the first major basic steel strike since 1959—and they won an important victory.

During that strike most of the big locals in the Chicago-Gary area made regular contributions and had other solidarity activities. Thousands of dollars were collected at the plant gates. Committees were established in a couple of the locals to support these workers.

During the nationwide coal strike that followed, similar activities were organized throughout District 31 and other parts of the country. Big solidarity rallies were held in Pittsburgh, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Indianapolis, Toledo, and other cities. Steelworkers helped organize a car caravan, with hundreds of vehicles filled with food that the miners needed. Lots of food was collected from Black families. It was a very inspiring thing to see.

Power of Union Democracy

The strength that the miners displayed showed in practice the power of union democracy. The miners inspired a whole layer of the American labor movement. The nation and the world listened to President Carter's speech, appealing to the patriotism of the miners, appealing to their having died for their country time and time again, telling them to go back to work. When Carter had finished, the miners said they hadn't changed their minds. They weren't going back to work, that Carter can go back and pick peanuts. This was a bold, defiant political act that inspired millions.

The miners read a contract offer, they didn't like it, and they tore it up—despite all the threats, all the propaganda about the energy crisis. They read other proposals their leaders recommended to them. They took their time—no hurry, they wanted the best deal. They took their time, read the new proposals, tore them up too, and threw them away. Until they got a contract that they thought was the best their gutless elected officials could get for them. Then they finally reluctantly agreed to accept that and go back to work.

'One Steelworker, One Vote'

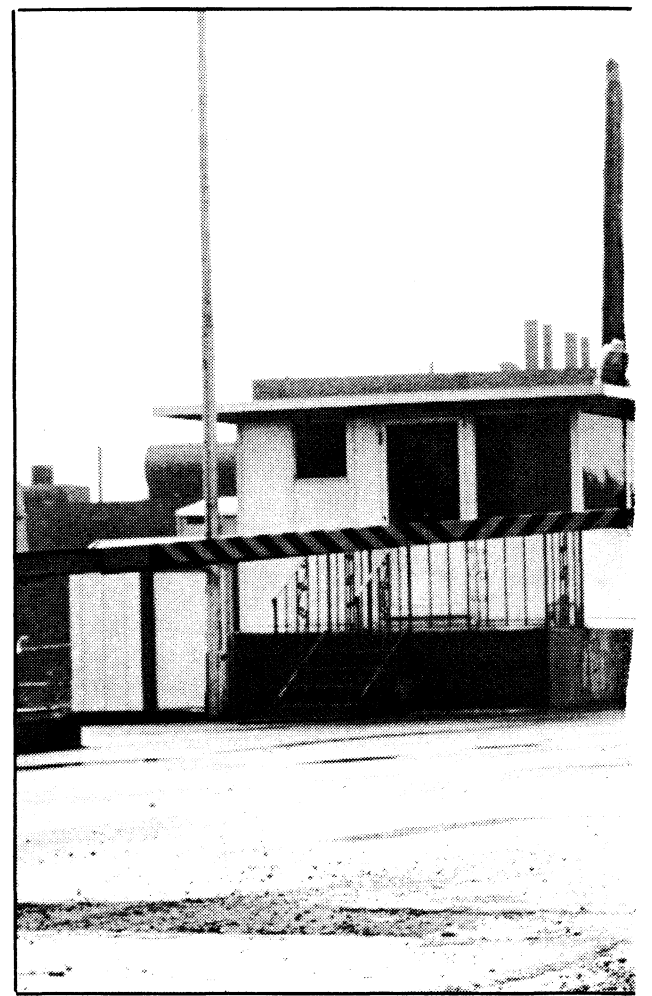
This example of the power of union democracy will be reflected more in the future. Other workers want to get such democratic rights in their own unions. We see the beginnings of a campaign around this question in the Steelworkers union itself—a campaign for the right to ratify the union contract.

This campaign was launched at the District 31 conference in June. Some twenty local presidents at that time signed a statement calling for a movement to achieve the right to vote on contracts. Petitions are now being circulated. Candidates for delegates to the upcoming international convention have been urged to run on the position of support for the right to ratify. Today the right to ratify the contract is denied outright to workers in the basic steel, aluminum, can, and nonferrous metals industries. Only local presidents have a vote on the contract. Steelworkers in some of the small shops do vote on contracts, but their vote can be vetoed by the international officers at any time. There is nothing codified in the USWA constitution that allows people to democratically decide on their contract.

When the conference of basic steel local presidents sits down to decide the terms that will rule the working lives of some 350,000 workers, each president has the same vote. A president representing 18,000 workers, like Bill Andrews at Inland Steel, carries no more weight than the president representing a local of 500 workers. This is why steelworkers have raised the slogan, "One steelworker, one vote."

The right to have the contract voted on by the membership, not by the union officials, is necessary to strengthen the labor movement. It is necessary to protect the labor movement against the rulers' offensive. We need this right in order to beat back union-busting contracts like the ones the coal miners rejected.

Now, you know, the right to vote is an elementary democratic concept, one brought in hundreds of years ago by the bourgeois revolution in the political field. Other classes have the



Strike by iron miners on Minnesota's Mesabi Iron Range

'Steelworkers have the right to have the strength to strengthen the labor union-busting contracts'

right to vote, they have the right to say no. Businessmen have the right to say no to some proposed contract.

John Wayne has the right to say no. Can you imagine his agent coming to him with a lousy movie contract deal, telling him he's got to accept it? That he can't reject it? Can you imagine "the Duke" accepting that? Well, anything and everything the working class produces is much more important than anything John Wayne has ever done or will ever do!

Yet we don't have the right to say no. We don't have the right to tell our agents, our union leaders, our union misleaders, our union Toms, where to get off, when they come before us with a lousy deal.

Regardless of the outcome of the fight for membership ratification at the international convention in September, the struggle for union democracy—and specifically for the right to ratify the contract—will continue in some form until it's won.

The fight for the rank and file to control the unions, so that we can use union power to fight the employers, is central to the strategy of the Socialist Workers Party in the labor movement. It is a key part of the struggle to transform the unions into class-struggle instruments for the workers' interests. We can and must educate, agitate, and organize around concrete manifestations of the fight for union democracy. And millions will agree. We'll have to run to keep up with them!

Unions and Fight for Women's Rights

The struggle of women has also begun to make itself felt as a more and more important component of the fight to strengthen and transform the labor movement. The determination of women to fight for their rights has added a new dimension to the Steelworkers union. It has strengthened our union. And their radicalism has begun to give a new flavor to union activity. They are helping in a big way to change the union.

In District 31, women are organized in a district-wide caucus and into local women's committees. They led union participation in the July 9 march on Washington for the ERA. They were in the front ranks of this effort. They view the fight for the ERA as an immediate, urgent question for them personally. It is the fight for their right to have their job, to work. A fight for their rights not only in society as a whole, but a fight for their rights on the job.



Militant/Andy Rose

je indicated a growing steelworker resistance to employer attacks

used the slogan, "One steelworker, one vote." membership vote on the contract is needed to movement. We need it in order to beat back ts like the ones the coal miners rejected.'

On April 29 sixty steelworkers, mostly women, marched in a contingent in a Chicago demonstration for the ERA. In the big July 9 ERA march on Washington, many more steelworkers participated from districts all across the United States.

District 31 sent a bus. The women played a key role in getting it organized and filling the bus. Some locals in District 31 also sent women by plane to the action. Other union organizations throughout the Chicago area sent people to the demonstration, as did unions throughout the country. Socialists were able to help organize a contingent from the Brooklyn Navy Yard—workers wearing their hard hats marching for the ERA, a powerful sign of the changing character of the American labor movement. This gave a view of the future, the not-too-distant future, when labor unions with women as part of the leadership will become a powerful ally of the struggle for women's rights.

There is much to be done today. One thing is certain; the Socialist Workers Party has found in District 31 that we are limited only by the size of our forces, especially the number of socialist women in the industry.

There were at least two important district-wide women's conferences held this year. In February, some 300 women steelworkers met in Chicago. They adopted a resolution supporting ERA ratification. They opposed the *Bakke* decision. They supported the consent decree, an affirmative action measure in basic steel. Then, in May, 150 women met in District 29, which covers Michigan and northwestern Ohio. This is a trend we want to help, that we want to move forward in other parts of the country.

Women: Force for Change in Union

For many of the women involved in this fight—in the ERA march, the women's committees, and women's caucuses—this represents their first political activity. These women are very serious and determined. In my own local in Gary, there's a young Black woman who works in my shop area. She is active in the district women's caucus and in the women's committee at the local. She helped organize women in our effort to build the July 9 march. She came back with an enthusiastic report on the scope and size of the march, and the amount of labor participation.

This young Black feminist got involved in the struggle for women's rights and got involved in

the union committee after having been fired from her job. The women's committee helped her get the job back. I worked with her husband, and her attitude, according to him, is quite different from his. He jokingly talks about "my wife always going to those damn women's meetings, these damn union meetings. I'm not interested in all of this, you know," and so on and so forth.

This young woman and others indicated their seriousness at one recent union meeting, where, for one thing, she was trying to give a report on the ERA march. There was a little commotion in the meeting. What happened was that the president, whose son happens to be editor of the local newspaper, was accused by the vice-president of the local of refusing to print an article written by him. The reason was because the vice-president was planning to run against the president. They actually got into a fistfight in front of the meeting. Throughout the meeting the two bickering groups were arguing and attacking each other.

It was these women who tried to calm the meeting and bring the meeting back to order. Such incidents turn people off from the union meetings, make people stay away from the union meetings. They show how worthless those kinds of union meetings are to discuss how to solve the burning problems workers face. In order to attract people, the union meetings must be more serious and devoid of these petty squabbles.

These women view the union in a very serious fashion. They view it as their only organization for self-defense. Sometimes we socialists might not appreciate the significance of the unions on a practical level. We have the party. The party's our main thing. We know that only a mass revolutionary workers party can successfully lead the fight to establish a workers government and end capitalism with all its horrors. We want to change the unions so they can really use union power to defend the interests of the workers and their allies.

But for people who are just beginning their political activity, like some of these women, the big thing is the women's committee and its fight to put union power on their side. That's their thing. That's all they've got—until they join us.

Against Apartheid, Against 'Bakke'

I want to tell you about some other political activities that have occurred in District 31. In February some 250 steelworkers rallied in support of the fight for Black majority rule in South

Africa. This meeting was organized by Local 65. The movie *Last Grave at Dimbaza* was shown. A leader of the South African union movement addressed the meeting and received tremendous applause when he talked of the need for armed revolution to overthrow minority rule. That union meeting contributed some \$1,000 to the South African speaker.

I remember thinking with some amazement that this is an American union in the middle of Chicago having such a meeting. It was a sign of how much change has already occurred in the labor movement.

This fall we will have the opportunity nationally to emulate this example, with the tour being organized by a broad spectrum of Black and trade-union figures for South African union leader Drake Koka. We want to help get meetings organized to hear Koka, including getting him before union meetings to address them and to ask for American labor support for the struggle for Black majority rule in South Africa.

Another important political event occurred at the District 31 conference in June. On the recommendation of the women's caucus, after some debate, delegates to the conference voted to oppose the *Bakke* decision. This was before the Supreme Court decision upholding *Bakke*. A thousand or so people attended most of the conference. They discussed the issue of affirmative action, debated it through, and took a positive stand for the rights of the oppressed.

Despite the Supreme Court's antiworker, anti-Black, antiwoman, anti-Chicano ruling on *Bakke*, the fight for affirmative action in industry continues. In the steel industry, this has two main focuses. First, an affirmative-action program in basic steel, called the consent decree. And second, the steel industry has its own "Bakke"—Brian Weber—whom we must oppose and organize against.

We have an important educational campaign to carry out to counter these "reverse discrimination" arguments that are beginning to infect white workers. We also have to educate a good number of the Blacks and women and Chicanos about the real meaning and implications of this "reverse discrimination" fraud.

Defend the Consent Decree

What is the consent decree? The consent decree is an affirmative-action program agreed to in 1974 by the steel companies, the union, and the government. It was designed to bail out the steel companies, which were being sued left and right by Black organizations, civil rights organizations, for their years of discrimination.

But the settlement contained a number of important measures that are progressive and must be defended and implemented. It includes quotas to increase the number of Blacks, women, and Latinos, in steel jobs—in overall employment and also in training for skilled jobs. It allows Blacks, who have been segregated into the worst jobs in the steel industry, to bid into better ones—by providing for plant-wide seniority rather than departmental or unit seniority, and by allowing you to keep your same rate of pay for two years even if you move to another department and start at the bottom of the scale.

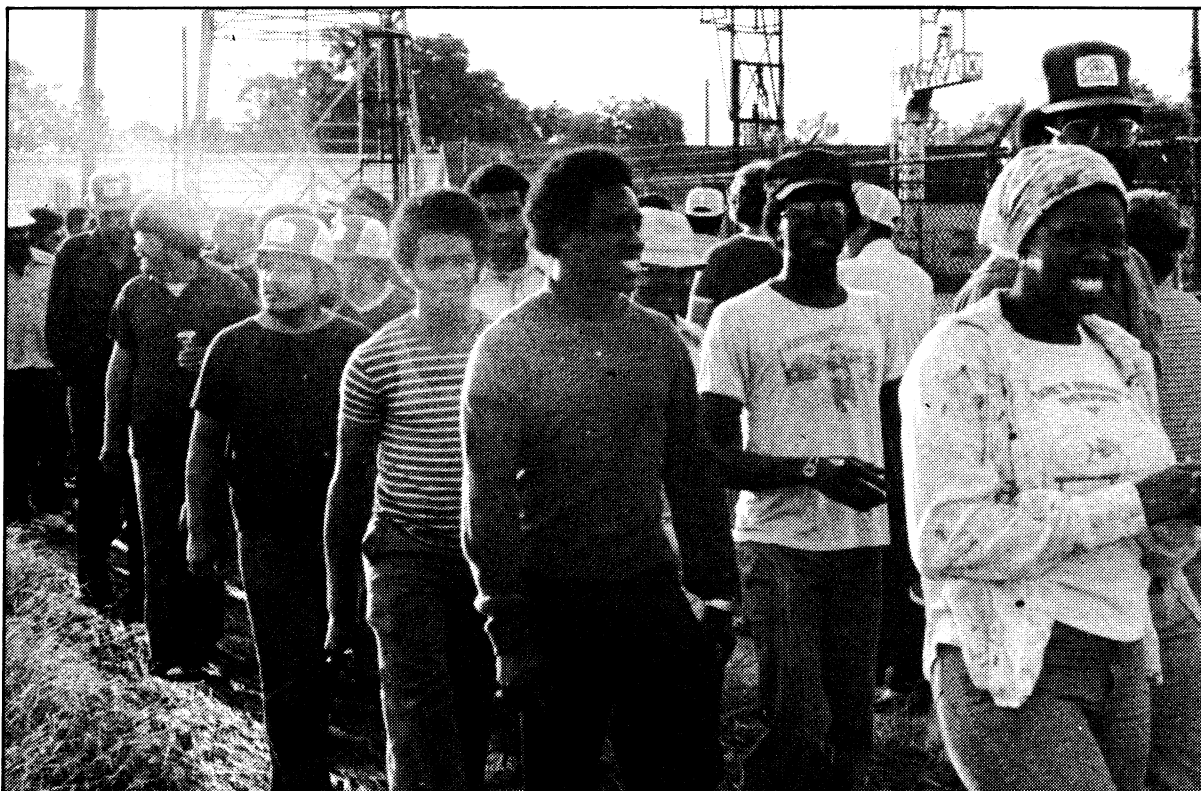
The immediate problem is that the consent decree expires in April 1979. If even one party to the agreement claims they have "done enough" to compensate for past discrimination, the program can be annulled—ripped to shreds. Supporters of the rights of oppressed minorities and women need to mount a campaign for extension of the consent decree and for implementation of all its provisions. We must demand that it be improved and extended.

We also demand that the facts of how the steel companies have complied with the consent decree be disclosed. Today this is a top secret. Neither the union leaders nor the companies will disclose it. In fact, U.S. Steel has gone to court to block release of information on their compliance.

This is something that may become a bigger issue. Women's committees and Black formations within the union could join in an effort to force disclosure as to how these companies have performed as part of forcing implementation of the consent decree.

Weber Case: Anti-Union Decision

The Allan Bakke of the steel industry is Brian Weber, a white worker from the Kaiser Aluminum plant in Gramercy, Louisiana. He is being built up as the "great white hope" against affirmative action in industry. He's filed suit



Steelworkers picket Hughes Tool in Houston

Militant/Stu Singer

against Kaiser Aluminum and the USWA because the union won a contract in 1974 with affirmative-action quotas to increase the number of Blacks in skilled jobs. Blacks were only some 2 percent in the skilled trades, while 40 percent of the population in the immediate area is Black.

The contract set up a training program for skilled jobs for the first time—a gain for both white and Black workers. Equal numbers of Blacks and whites were to be accepted for training until the percentage of Blacks in these positions equaled the percentage in the area population. There were two seniority lists—Black and white—so Blacks could bid fairly on these jobs without being handicapped by past discrimination.

Weber sued, calling this “reverse discrimination.” A federal district court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Weber and struck down the program. This decision is *worse* than the *Bakke* ruling. It outlaws any “voluntary” affirmative action. Quotas are allowed only when a court orders them on the basis of past discrimination. Yet the court said the tiny proportion of Blacks in skilled jobs at Kaiser did not show past discrimination!

If upheld by the Supreme Court, this ruling would make it illegal for unions to negotiate affirmative-action programs. It would prohibit the union from fighting for the rights of its members. This case is a dagger aimed at Black rights, women's rights, and union rights.

Our union is officially on the right side of this case. It supports the affirmative-action plan, and it is a defendant in Weber's suit. The fight to defend the union and defend this affirmative action plan is one the entire labor movement has a stake in. We plan a big educational campaign starting this fall to get out the truth about the Weber case and mobilize opposition to Weber from the unions, Blacks, Chicanos, and women.

We all saw the importance of labor solidarity in the coal strike. But we should not forget that labor solidarity begins within the particular union you're in. That is, if you're not concerned about the well-being of the woman worker next to you or the Black worker or the Chicano worker next to you or the white worker next to you, if you're not concerned about their rights, then how can you be concerned about supporting a strike 1,000 miles away? Solidarity begins with the union itself. The fight for affirmative action is a question of union solidarity. The more we can point this out, the more we can explain this, the better we'll be able to help strengthen the labor movement and help change the labor movement. So educating about the Weber case and the threat it poses to union solidarity is something the whole party to do through the *Militant* and forums—and especially through the national steel fraction and the other industrial fractions.

Talking Socialism

Another sign of the times in the union movement is the type of discussions you have in the workplace. In most situations you can talk socialism. If you can't talk it on the job, you can talk it

while going to the job, from the job, at lunch or at breaks, or at the bars. More workers than ever are interested in political ideas, the issues of the day—and we can bring them our positions on these issues. You can talk about inflation, unemployment, union democracy, quotas and affirmative action, the trials of Soviet dissidents and socialist democracy, the fight for women's rights.

You can talk about the Socialist Workers Party suit against the FBI. This is very easy when it is on the front page of all the newspapers or on the radio. One of our members at Inland Steel reports that his co-workers thought he was the baddest dude on the job when they read about how the SWP suit had Griffin Bell on the run. Anyone who can put the tsar of justice in the United States on the spot has got to be tough.

So you can talk about many things in the mills in most situations. You're more likely to be limited by the level of noise on the job rather than by the level of political consciousness of the workers. The best aid in talking socialist ideas on the job is the *Militant*. It can communicate what would take you many hours of discussion. It can communicate when and where you can't. It can elaborate on subjects you may only have time to touch on while at work. By selling and distributing the *Militant*, you begin to build a real base of support for your ideas. Over time, some of these workers will be won to the SWP.

Both the sales on the job and at the plant gates have to be organized. Members of the SWP in Houston have demonstrated in practice how this can be done well. During the spring sales drive they regularly sold between 75 and 100 *Militants* at different plant gates, and another dozen or so a week on the job. Last fall the Houston steel fraction sold nearly forty subscriptions to co-workers.

This is in an open-shop, “right to work”—for less—state. Those who were in the party in the early 1970s will remember how when we opened up a party branch down there we were shot at, our headquarters was shot at. Our comrades fought back, politically defeated the Klan, ran election campaigns, signed up new members, and built a well-established branch. You also know that during the Sadlowski campaign, some of the Sadlowski people—not socialists—were attacked and shot at. Yet the campaign continued.

Some of our members in Houston faced threats because they were selling the *Militant* to steelworkers. They kept on despite that and carried on a campaign to expose and defeat the threats. They set a very inspiring example. They organized a press conference at one of the plant gates after they had been physically attacked by a union bureaucrat for selling our paper outside a union meeting. Our candidate for mayor, Diane Sarge, a Hughes Tool worker and USWA member, went to the plant gate, spoke, campaigned along with her supporters.

The Houston socialists functioned like real revolutionaries in that situation. In face of those threats, they didn't just bow their heads and walk slowly away, as if they didn't belong. When they walked away it was not to put down the *Militants*, but rather to sit down with the steel

fraction and the party branch and devise a strategy and tactics for going back and winning. And they went back, and they won.

In Baltimore, the steel fraction has just recently completed a shift from the small shops to the big mills. They sold *Militants* both on and off the job, regularly throughout the sales drive. They got some fifteen subscriptions this spring.

Building the Revolutionary Party

All of these examples confirm what we've been talking about over the last few days. That is, more and more American workers are interested in socialist politics, and the unions are more and more central to American politics today.

One thing we want to be mindful of is that the more these forces that we are working with are introduced to our program, the more we'll be able to win them to our party, the more they will stand up and win others to our party. This includes the people that we worked with to support the mine strike. It includes the workers fighting for the right to ratify. The workers fighting to win the ERA.

The party has operated in this fashion in all kinds of mass-action coalitions—the anti-Vietnam War movement, the struggle against segregation in Boston, and the women's liberation movement. We combine the building of the coalition or the mass action with explaining our socialist ideas and winning people to the party. This is what we will do in the labor movement. We'll be able to do it more successfully as we go on.

Sometimes it's necessary even for socialists to pause and rededicate ourselves to our goals, our objectives. Doing this, we may better see why we are what we are, why we exist as a group, why we are in the same party, why we are all committed to the socialist perspective and to making the revolution in this country and throughout the world.

You know, you come to a national party gathering like this, you always expect to get a shot in the arm, to go out and build the party. That's the way I feel. You get more energy, more fuel to go out and do it.

Meeting and discussing together here helps all of us better understand the necessity of the party. We need this kind of party to knock down the rulers who constantly threaten the annihilation of humanity either through nuclear destruction or through environmental destruction. We know that changing this society to a more humane society, to a socialist order free of all the violence and misery and oppression of capitalism will come about only when a revolutionary party has been built that leads the masses of workers in action.

This will occur only when the Socialist Workers Party wins the allegiance of masses of workers in a struggle to transform the unions into revolutionary, fighting instruments. Only then will the workers organizations—the unions with their vast unused power—fulfill the role described in the great labor song “Solidarity Forever.” The song proclaims:

*When the union's inspiration
through the workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater
anywhere beneath the sun.
Yet what force on earth is weaker
than the feeble strength of one?
But the union makes us strong.*

*They have taken untold millions
that they never toiled to earn,
But without our brain and muscle
not a single wheel can turn.
We can break their haughty power,
gain our freedom when we learn
That the union makes us strong.*

*In our hands is placed a power
greater than their hoarded gold,
Greater than the might of armies,
magnified a thousand fold.
We can bring to birth a new world
from the ashes of the old,
For the union makes us strong.*

With the leadership of the party, that is what the unions will become.

...labor movement

Continued from page ISR/5

off, that they will use their troops wherever they want to and whenever they want to—including in Zimbabwe if they're asked.

The rulers found out—when they sent up trial balloons and probed the response of the American people to their war threats—that the antiwar sentiment in this country is deeper than ever before in history. The American people are in no mood to see GIs sent to die anywhere in the world to prop up reactionary regimes—although Washington will have no choice but to see if they can get away with it one of these days. They will constantly test and probe, they will barrage us with propaganda about the need for “international peace-keeping forces” in this or that “trouble spot,” and as soon as they think they can get away with it they will drag us into another foreign adventure.

While Washington and the other imperialist powers have tightened their vise-grip on the semicolonial countries, by raising interest rates and raising prices, they have seen the workers, students, and oppressed nationalities from Iran to Peru begin to fight back.

Washington is having trouble with its image, too. The FBI doesn't look too good. The attorney general finds himself in contempt of court. Revolutionary socialists are defying the Bill of Rights, while the attorney general is the nation's number-one lawbreaker.

Carter promises the Chicano people that the attorney general will investigate the cop murder of twelve-year-old Santos Rodríguez in Dallas. Soon after, the attorney general announces that there is nothing to investigate.

I am convinced that the exposure of the role of FBI agent provocateur Gary Rowe has had a big impact on the entire Black population in this country. While he was working in this capacity during the upsurge of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, Rowe helped the Klan organize untold numbers of murders of Blacks and their supporters. He was directly involved in the killing of four little Black girls in a Birmingham church, the shooting of Viola Liuzzo, and what the cops now admit were many other killings of Blacks that did not receive the publicity those murders did. And the FBI covered for him. In fact, he was J. Edgar Hoover's favorite operative. This is the role of the “law,” the real role of the FBI and the Justice Department in the civil rights movement.

The American people are less convinced than ever that they know the full truth about the role of “the intelligence community” in the murders of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King and even John Kennedy.

Carter can't even control his own people. He brought Andrew Young in. You can hear the debates they must have had about the appointment of Young. Carter says, “It'll be useful for us, a cover in Africa.” “Yeah,” replies one of his advisers, “but you can't trust any of 'em.” Even this usually faithful servant of the ruling class, Andrew Young, one day blurts out that there are thousands of political prisoners in the United States—and they don't know what to do about it. They don't know whether to fire him or not—it's a loser for them either way.

They could not even tolerate a woman, a token woman, in the inner White House circle. Midge Costanza is certainly no revolutionist. She simply decided to say a few words for women, which she thought was her job. The first thing they did was bury her in the White House basement, and then shipped her out altogether.

But people notice these things, and they draw conclusions from them. Even ruling-class victories like the passage of Proposition 13 have another side to them. More and more people who voted for it are openly saying, “But I didn't vote for these cutbacks, that's not what I thought it meant.”

New Moods and Militant Actions

Most important, we have seen in the past six months new moods developing in the Black community, among young people, among many Americans—not only in the labor movement, which I'll take up separately. We have seen a series of protest demonstrations, which have been relatively few and far between in recent years. In just a few short months, we have seen the action by the farmers, which linked up with the coal miners' strike.

We have also witnessed:



Militant/Harris Freeman

Martin Luther King memorial demonstration in Atlanta on January 14, 1976, demanded jobs.

- On March 18, 8,000 demonstrating in Washington for the Wilmington Ten. And that same day thousands in Nashville protesting South African participation in the Davis Cup tennis matches.

- On April 8, 4,000 marching on Washington for jobs for youth.

- April 15, more than 10,000 marching in Washington against the *Bakke* decision.

- On May 20, thousands marching in solidarity with Africa, the high point of many actions on campuses during the spring term on the same theme. In fact, at the same time, solidarity with the Black majority of southern Africa penetrated the unions more and more, too.

All these actions springing from the Black movement and led by Blacks occurred in a two-month period. They represent a new mood and attitude in the Black community.

Then on May 27, some 20,000 people demonstrated in New York City against the threat of war, nuclear destruction, and the dangers from nuclear waste. It was the biggest antiwar action since the January 20, 1973, anti-Vietnam War demonstration.

There have also been demonstrations of thousands in places like Barnwell, South Carolina; Rocky Flats, Colorado; and Bangor, Washington, against nuclear power plants, wastes, and weapons systems. There were 20,000 in the June 25 demonstration in Seabrook, New Hampshire, against the construction of a nuclear plant there.

And the same weekend, a quarter of a million Americans expressed their support for full human rights of gays.

Then on July 9, 100,000 women and men marched in Washington for the ERA—the biggest demonstration ever for women's rights. Hardly were the women out of town when tepees were going up all over the nation's capital, the culmination of The Longest Walk in defense of Native American rights.

Smaller but important actions also occurred. Against attempts by the Nazis and the Klan to raise their heads, counterdemonstrations occurred in Tupelo and Okolona, Mississippi; Chicago; Detroit; Oxnard, California. Usually they were led by Blacks or Chicanos. There were explosions of protest against killer cops in Crown Heights, Brooklyn; and demanding justice for Joe Campos Torres in Texas. Prisoners have continued to demand humane living conditions and elementary rights. The Black community has continued to press for busing to achieve desegregation of the schools.

We have had what we might call mini-job-actions, when some employer announces there are twenty-five openings and 2,000 show up to apply, and begin to express their anger.

And even this conference belongs in the list of events. We had planned on having 1,200 people here at the most, but more than 1,500 have

shown up to learn about socialism and to participate in the discussions and planning about our work for the coming year. This conference is not a demonstration in the usual sense, but it is a demonstration of the growing interest and willingness to act of a whole layer of people—it is an encouraging sign of the times.

Changes in the Labor Movement

What about the labor movement itself? In the past six months we have seen further developments there too. The conference for a shorter workweek called by UAW officials—regardless of its limitations—reflected a growing conviction by many workers that something must be done to create more jobs and to ease the crushing burden of forced overtime. The forty-hour week was long ago given up by the UAW in practice—because of compulsory overtime it exists today only as a fiction in the auto industry.

Within the Teamsters, growing numbers of rank-and-file members are pressing for union democracy.

We should take note of what happened when Héctor Marroquín took his case to the convention of the National Education Association in Dallas last month. It was not the Trotskyist teachers in the main who championed his cause there, but hundreds of teachers who thought a revolutionary socialist should have the right to political asylum in the United States and who convinced the majority of convention delegates to support Héctor's fight. This resolution, passed with a standing ovation by thousands of NEA delegates, was for a member of the Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party and a supporter of the Fourth International!

There has been a rash of public employee strikes, primarily against the devastating effects of continuing inflation.

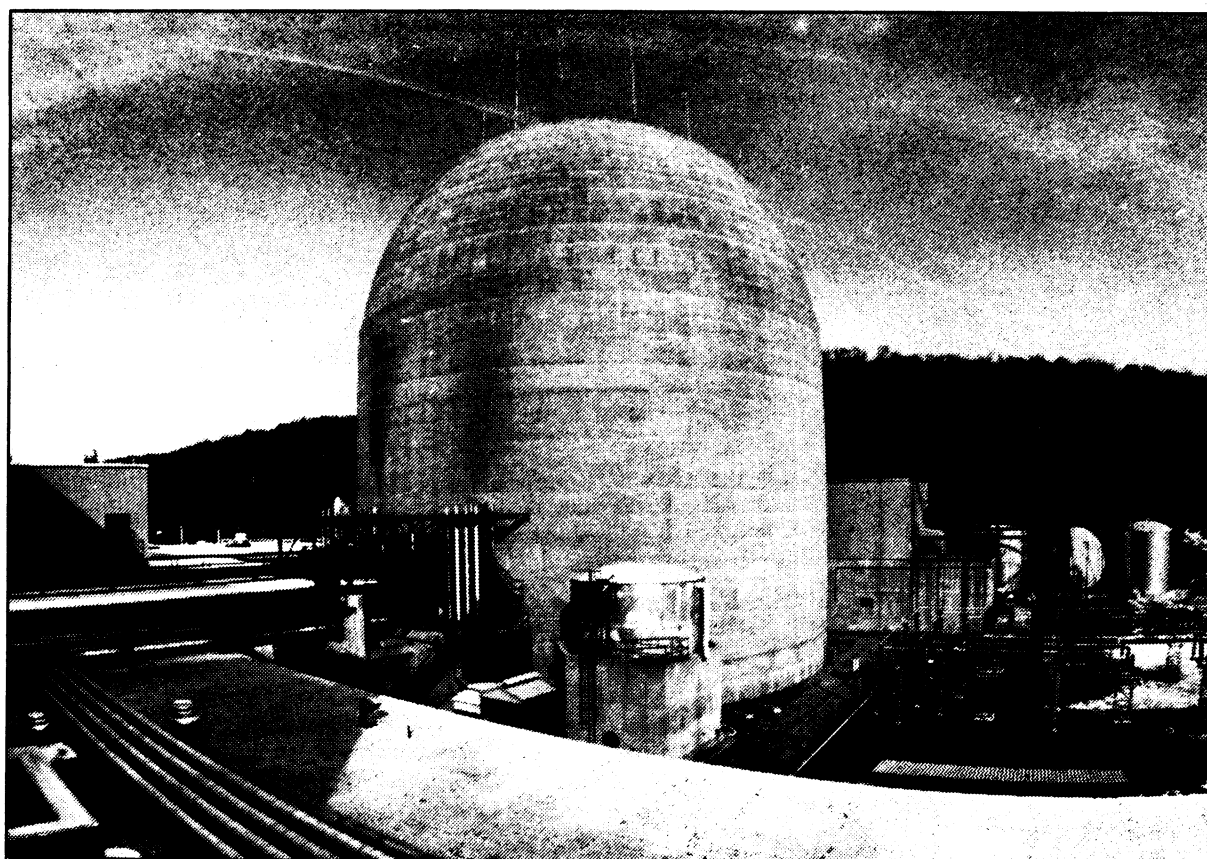
Of course, there was the showdown in the big coal miners' strike. The miners' strike showed the weakness of the government in the face of a united and determined response by the workers. The wave of solidarity for the miners, expressed in part in organized solidarity actions, also demonstrated the depth of the changes occurring in the working class of this country. If we contrast this solidarity to what occurred during the General Electric strike in 1969-70, the change is dramatic. In the GE strike, solidarity actions were largely limited to the radicalized antiwar students. In the miners' strike we saw, on the contrary, workers all over the country identifying with the miners, knowing that this was their fight too.

They knew that what the miners won or lost would have a lot to do with other battles to come.



Militant/David Nudel

Thousands across the country have protested the racist 'Bakke' decision.



Nuclear power plant in Haddam Neck, Connecticut

The fight put up by the miners gave an impetus to all the oppressed, all the exploited. It is not just a coincidence that we have seen such a wave of demonstrations following the example set by the fighting mine workers.

In the past weeks, the government and the bureaucrats have done everything they can to cram a contract down the postal workers' throats. They won't let the postal workers vote on their contract, won't even let them see it, won't let them vote on whether they want to strike or not.

We're in a period of preparing for much bigger struggles. It's a period in which we have to explain patiently, *but in which socialists are increasingly listened to if they say the correct things*. These events of the last six months prove that we can take our newspaper, our ideas, our 1980 presidential campaign, to the American working people and receive the kind of response we have not seen for decades.

Workers are considering radical ideas and alternative perspectives. They're trying to think out where to go. It's not a period like the witch-hunt. We will see government repression, but this by itself cannot stop or even slow down the radicalization. Unlike the McCarthy era, we are not entering a period of prosperity, of the conservatism of political life that the postwar boom brought about. Just the opposite. This is not a period of decline of radicalization.

Nor are we entering a period in which organizations like the Communist Party dominate the radicalization and run their own witch-hunts against revolutionary Marxists in the labor movement. It's a situation where the workers are still mainly considering new ideas—but more and more, in increasing numbers, they are also willing to consider taking action. Our entire perspective is based on the conviction that we've entered the initial stage of this kind of period.

We should always remember, when we think about our strategy inside the labor movement, that we talk to three different audiences.

One, we talk to the working class as a whole. We have to explain to the workers, "You must govern. You must govern this country. Because those who currently govern it are your enemies and are running everything into the ground. You must form a workers government." That's the goal of the working class as a whole.

Two, we talk to the labor movement, a smaller but organized and more conscious audience. We say some additional things to the labor movement. It must defend itself against the attacks that are coming. To do this the labor movement must be transformed. It must become a social movement using union power to fight for its own interests and for the interests of all the exploited and oppressed. It must end its collaboration with the enemy class, which has nothing in store for it but attacks, or it cannot repel the attacks.

Third, we talk to the radical-minded workers, the radical-minded individuals, those who consider themselves socialists or political radicals. To them we explain over and over again that the key to everything is to build a revolutionary socialist party that can organize and lead to a

successful conclusion the massive class battles ahead—battles that will pose the question of which class is going to rule the United States.

Class-struggle Left Wing

This is where our fight to build a class-struggle left wing of the labor movement comes in. This orientation is stressed in the world political resolution and is key to our work in many countries. It is certainly key for us.

The resolution points out that under pressure of the ruling-class attack, the great mass of workers are beginning to turn to their unions. They try to use the unions to defend themselves and fight for a new perspective and to link up with others struggling for the same things. Our strategic goal is to end the "one-sided" class war and organize the power of these unions to lead the workers' side of the class struggle.

There are big stakes for the employers in seeking to prevent the unions from becoming class-struggle instruments. They need the buffer of the labor bureaucracy, this layer of so-called leaders who collaborate with them against the interests of the workers. The labor bureaucracy is like a giant protective screen guarding a handful of people, 60 or 100 ruling-class families the workers could just flick off like a cigarette ash. The American ruling class, those who live off the toils of the American working people, is minute compared to the tens of millions of workers. It's only this buffer standing between workers and the bosses, this layer of bureaucrats who presently mislead the labor movement and the allies of labor, that protects the rule of these 60 or 100 families. That's why the question of the transformation of the unions is so important to the ruling class and why it's so important to us.

The resolution points to a very good example of what we mean by a class-struggle left wing in the unions: the Minneapolis-North Central States Teamsters movement in the 1930s. What we believe must happen, as Trotsky explained, is that the unions must be transformed into revolutionary instruments of the oppressed. As the crisis of capitalism deepens, they can move in only one of two directions. They can become declining, weakening organizations with a huge bureaucratic layer that suppresses and polices the workers. Or they can be transformed into fighting, revolutionary instruments, that take up the banner of all the oppressed, fight for the workers against the class enemy. Our goal is to transform the unions into this kind of revolutionary instrument. But to do this the workers must be convinced of a class-struggle political perspective. A wing of the labor movement has to be assembled to fight for this goal. The rank and file of the labor movement is where the power is, and that is where the forces of the class-struggle left wing will come from.

A class-struggle left wing will be much, much bigger than the Socialist Workers Party, its friends, and those who work with us. It will be a mass formation of those who more and more will be ready to use class-struggle methods instead of relying on the class collaborationism of the bureaucracy. It must be an organized formation

built around a class-struggle program.

Spontaneously layer after layer of young workers will come forward and fight militant struggles that divide and outflank the current leaders. But a class-struggle left wing will not come into being spontaneously. It has to be built.

Of course, our tactics will vary in different unions and over time. An excellent summary of our goals and tactics right now is presented in the article by Joel Britton and Frank Lovell in the July 1978 *Party Organizer*.

Our strategic goal is the construction of an organized wing of literally millions of workers, who will fight for a program in the interests of the workers against the employers, and in the interests of all the oppressed against their oppressors. A wing that will see its adherents as the replacement for the current class-collaborationist misleaders.

Today *millions* of unionists are beginning to look for a perspective, for a program like this, even if they haven't yet thought it out. We begin to see such workers in the supporters of the Steelworkers Fight Back campaign, in the long strike on the Mesabi Iron Range, in the coal miners' strike. We see them among the postal workers, auto workers, and teamsters. Beginning from concerns about different issues, many workers are coming to the realization that big confrontations, with gigantic stakes for their own lives, are in the offing. Our job is to give a program and a perspective to these millions of workers looking for a new, militant union movement. We want to emulate what the revolutionary leaders of the Teamsters did in the mid-1930s.

The goal is simple. We have to use union power to defend the unions, to fight the employers, and to link up with and champion the struggles of all the oppressed. The union members themselves have to accomplish the modest feat of taking over their unions and running them themselves. If they do that, the unions will become the most powerful—and progressive—mass organizations in the United States.

This perspective is not something we've sucked out of our thumbs. Fighting for a shorter workweek to combat unemployment, a sliding scale of wages to protect against inflation, support for the oppressed, and other aspects of our program—this is what the workers must do because of the harsh realities capitalism presents. We must patiently explain the internal logic of the fight labor and the oppressed must carry out if the offensive of capital is to be defeated.

Independent Working-Class Political Action

To be effective, the working class must fight independently of the employers and all who benefit from racism, sexual discrimination, and exploitation. The workers must take independent political action. Forms of this can be seen in the demonstrations of the antiwar movement, in actions by Blacks, in marches by women, in strikes by workers. Actions that are not dependent on or controlled by the rulers, and are not subordinated to getting this or that candidate of the employers elected to office. Actions that mobilize workers and the oppressed in struggle against the policies and institutions of the capitalists.

Through the Democrats and Republicans, the employers control the government, make the laws, hire the judges, then handpick the people to enforce the law. The ruling class's total control of the three branches of government means that the workers and their allies are without power, without even a voice to make their point of view known to the entire country. Parties are instruments of classes, of class rule. To support a party of the employers runs counter to the goals of everything the oppressed and exploited demonstrate and picket for. That's the lesson that must be learned, that is going to be learned by the working people.

All objectives and gains of working people are threatened so long as the political parties of the enemy have a monopoly on politics and run the government. The workers and their allies cannot politically depend on or vote for their enemies, whom they fight every day.

We have to explain this in every way we can, and expose the two capitalist parties for what they are. This means exposing Black Democrats, Chicano Democrats, the "friends of women," the "friends of labor," and other so-called progressive elements in the Democratic Party and in the Republican Party. They must be exposed. The

working class as a whole must be convinced that they can't support these people, because they are simply the political representatives of the enemy class responsible for all their problems. In addition to explaining the need for the Blacks and the Chicanos *not* to vote for the Black and Chicano Democrats, we must explain the need to *run against them* on independent tickets.

Class Politics in a New Period

The organized labor movement has a special responsibility along these lines, which is an essential part of the fight for a class-struggle left wing. During periods of long-term prosperity, it's not apparent to union members that there's a big problem in being tied to the Democratic Party. Concessions are won. Wage increases are extracted from a grudging employing class. Certain fringe benefits are secured. This tends to obscure the fact that the government is still being run by the enemies of the workers. The labor bureaucracy and other misleaders go so far as to present whatever concessions and gains the workers and their allies win in struggle as actually resulting from having our "friends" in government.

But in the period that we have entered, new rules come into play. First, every struggle by the workers and the oppressed threatens to become a *political* showdown—the miners versus Taft-Hartley, women's rights fighters versus the capitalist politicians who are strangling the ERA, the unemployed versus a Congress that refuses to provide jobs, the Black and Chicano communities versus killer cops, the antinuke activists versus government agencies determined to press ahead with nuclear power.

Second, it becomes evident how much the labor movement has been *weakened* by the institutionalization of class collaboration during the earlier period of prosperity. The very institutions the union leaders had portrayed as the easy way, the painless way, the strikeless way to make gains—mediation, "impartial" arbitration, the National Labor Relations Board, no-strike clauses in contracts like the Experimental Negotiating Agreement in steel, joint productivity committees, reliance on government agencies and "friendly" capitalist politicians—turn out to be straitjackets that block the exercise of union power at every turn.

And third, the employers set out to undermine



Militant/Lou Howort

Thousands protested the police murder of Arthur Miller in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn July 16

and take back the "fringe benefits" for the few that the class-collaborationist leadership substituted for winning health care, genuine social security, and other gains for the entire working class. We see how vulnerable those gains are while the employers maintain their political monopoly.

In this new situation, being tied to the Democratic Party means that every struggle—no matter how courageous or how well organized—is severely handicapped. It means the labor movement and the entire working class fight with their hands tied behind their backs. That is why a central part of our perspective of transforming the unions is that the labor movement itself must take the political field in its own name and its own interests—it must form its own political party.

The Unions and the Labor Party

We can't call on the workers in general to form a labor party. Only the union movement can form a workers party based on the union movement. It is the obligation of the union movement to do so, first of all to defend itself from destruction. All the struggles that take place are political, and all the defeats that are administered to the working class are political defeats. The power

of the government is added to the power of the employer to fight the unions, every time.

Part and parcel of explaining the need for a labor party, a party independent of the Democrats and Republicans, a party based on the unions, is to explain that the labor movement is not the same as the current leadership of the labor movement. Not at all. And the new class-struggle leadership of the labor movement that is coming into being will show what the labor movement itself really is and what its potential is.

This new leadership is going to represent a new kind of program, the opposite of the procapitalist program of the current leadership. To carry out the current leadership's real program, there is no need for a labor party of any kind. To carry out the current leadership's program, the Democratic Party suffices, since the current leadership's program is to accept the necessity for "fair" profits, to accept the necessity for the workers to sacrifice, to accept the phony "trade-offs" such as jobs versus the environment, to accept the racial and sexual oppression of vast sections of the working class—that is, to accept the crumbs left by our Democratic "friends" and hope things get better.

The only time they even talk about a labor

What Are Worker-Bolsheviks?

In the talk reprinted above, Jack Barnes discusses the importance of worker-Bolsheviks. He described them in a February 1978 report to the SWP National Committee, "Leading the Party into Industry":

"The individual worker-Bolshevik is somebody who is in a revolutionary party of workers, a party known by the workers, a party that knows the workers. A party trusted by and trusting in the workers. A party made up, in its ranks and leadership, of workers. . . .

"A worker-Bolshevik is a worker for whom the party comes first. . . . We're in industry, in the unions, for one reason: to build the party. This will be the arena of battle where the party will either win the leadership and lead the oppressed and exploited in the battle for power, or lose leadership to one of the petty-bourgeois currents and see the counter-revolution triumph.

"Worker-Bolsheviks are professional revolutionists. . . . A professional revolutionist is the revolutionist whose real profession—regardless of how she or he makes their money—is being a political worker-Bolshevik. A worker-Bolshevik is someone who at all times takes on major responsibility as part of a party team, in whatever way is necessary. . . .

The worker-Bolsheviks see themselves as socialist propagandists on the job and off. They sell the *Militant*. They raise ideas about leading the class struggle [forward], opposed to the class-collaborationist policies of the current leadership. They are talking continually to workers about politics . . . about supporting social struggles that must have the support of labor. Last, but most important—they talk about joining the party."

The term "worker-Bolshevik" was used by Leon Trotsky in *The History of the Russian Revolution* to describe the industrial workers who provided the main organizers, propagandists, agitators, and mass base of the Bolshevik Party.

Over the years these working-class revolutionists educated their co-workers about how tsarism, landlordism, and imperialist war could be successfully opposed.

Within the party the role of these working-class fighters was decisive. When the Bolsheviks were hard hit by repression at the opening of World War I, Lenin called for the party to educate "thousands of class-conscious workers, from whom in spite of all difficulties a new staff of leaders will arise." He added, "Let the war, jails, Siberia, hard labour shatter them twice, ten times, you cannot destroy that stratum. It is imbued with revolutionism. . . ."

Lenin was right about that. The worker-Bolsheviks maintained and strengthened the activity, influence, and class-struggle program of the party, even though most party leaders were in exile and party units were often disrupted by tsarist cops.

In the uprising of February 1917 that toppled the tsar, these workers organized the factories and working-class neighborhoods of Petrograd, Moscow, and other cities. They won respect as cool-headed, practical organizers and irreconcilable opponents of oppression.

These working-class activists proved decisive in keeping the party policy on the correct course at turning points. The first reaction of many Bolshevik leaders (such as Kamenev and Stalin) after the February 1917 uprising

was to support the capitalist provisional government that had been formed. When Lenin returned to Russia from exile in April, he opposed granting any support to this government. He argued instead that the Bolsheviks should fight for the transfer of power to the workers and peasants councils (soviets) that had taken shape.

But Lenin was not alone in this stand. The working-class fighters who made up the core of the party also opposed its progovernment policy—a result in part of their closer contact with the revolutionary mood of the working class as a whole. Trotsky wrote:

"In the February revolution . . . the worker-Bolsheviks played the decisive role. They thought it self-evident that the class which had won the victory should seize the power. These same workers protested stormily" when Bolshevik leaders such as Kamenev and Stalin followed a different course. "It was on this stratum of workers . . . that Lenin was now banking."

With their support, Lenin quickly won overwhelming support for his position, and the Bolsheviks went on to lead a successful socialist revolution. Without the political firmness and day-to-day activity of worker-Bolsheviks, however, the October 1917 revolution would never have taken place.

The Fourth International and the Socialist Workers Party have set their sights on building parties of workers like these as the key to achieving working-class victories in the coming showdowns with the employers.

Like Lenin, they aim to educate "thousands of class-conscious workers, from among whom in spite of all difficulties a new staff of leaders will arise."

—Fred Feldman



Militant/Nancy Cole

Rally of miners calling for rejection of contract February 28. Right to ratify or reject contract was key to miners' success in forcing bosses to retreat.

party is when they fear the advocates of one are getting a sympathetic hearing among the ranks of labor. Part of getting the unions *into* the hands of the members is breaking from the parties that do everything possible to help keep the unions *out* of the hands of the members—to prevent any real forms of workers democracy.

A Party of the Workers, Not the Bureaucrats

This kind of party would be a party of the workers, not a party of the bureaucracy. It would be a popular party, talking to and representing the masses of people. It would be seen as a workers party by the entire working class. It would have clubs in the Black community, in the Chicano community. It would collaborate with and encourage independent Black and Chicano candidates. It would fight to change the capitalist laws and replace the judges. More than anything else, it would explain over and over again what is really happening, what has to be done, and offer a new political perspective.

Such a labor party would mobilize mass support for strikes and for demonstrations by the oppressed. It would help unify in struggle the organized workers with the unorganized and unemployed. It would fight to get out the *truth* about capitalist profits, taxes, discriminatory practices—all the hidden rip-offs and frauds that the capitalist politicians cover up. That is, it would fight to open the books, in the broadest sense, of the employers and the capitalist government.

It would run workers and working farmers for office—not the lawyers, business executives, and other criminal elements put forward by the Democrats and Republicans.

The very existence of such a party would pose the question of who should run the government. It would offer the prospect of a new kind of government, a workers government, as the only way forward for workers, Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and women.

Building such a party is a special responsibility of the labor movement. The labor movement is the one massively organized section of the working class. It is upon that existing organization that a political instrument can be formed and must be formed.

We have no fatalistic view of when or how independent labor political action will arise. We explain the need for it in many ways right now—even when there is no sign of forces in motion toward actual formation of a labor party. For example, we propose that union members have the right to examine the platforms and records of all candidates for public office—and to thoroughly question the candidates—before any union endorsement or aid is given. We promote the idea that the workers, not just the union officials, should become directly involved in discussing and deciding the political strategy of the unions.

And the moment any significant forces move toward an actual break with capitalist politics,

we will support and champion them— independent labor candidates, independent Black or Chicano candidates, campaigns that challenge the capitalist parties and set an example for mass independent political action. Such candidates could shift the whole framework of political discussion in the unions with lightning speed.

We can see how the capitalist crisis already is fostering class polarization that strains and weakens the two-party system. This is not only a question of working-class disillusionment with the Democrats. Republican National Chairman William Brock recently complained, according to the *New York Times*, that ultraright fund-raising efforts—which include Proposition 13, union-busting “right to work” campaigns, and other “causes”—are siphoning off Republican money and undermining the party. He warned the ruling class that “single-issue political activism by right-wing committees was creating financial problems for his party and governmental problems for the nation.” And the main governmental problem Brock is warning about is the stability of the two-party fraud, which has kept American politics away from the direct influence of the working people for so many decades.

The appearance of independent labor candidates, of any serious move toward a labor party, would heighten this polarization, further fracturing the two-party system and opening a whole new political period.

Without fighting for the labor party as a part of its program, there can be no class-struggle left wing. And without a class-struggle left wing, the unions will never be transformed into fighting instruments of the workers. That is why, even if the stage of a labor party turns out to be bypassed, even if independent labor political action takes the form of massive growth of the revolutionary party, the *fight* for the labor party is indispensable to a revolutionary strategy and to building the SWP.

Trade-Union Democracy

However, an important distinction must be made. The fight for the class-struggle left wing does not *begin* with the fight for the labor party. And if we *waited* for that, the class-struggle left wing would never come into existence. The fight for the class-struggle left wing has already begun in many different ways. Today this centers on the fight for trade-union democracy. And this is what we center our attention on. This is an elementary prerequisite to meet the head-on attacks on the unions carried out by the employers and their government. Let's look at some examples.

The question of democracy was the underlying issue of the miners' strike. As far as the employers were concerned, the miners had too much say over closing down unsafe mines. They had too many rights concerning the contract, which gave them too much power to overturn what their leaders decided to try to force down their throats. They even had the right to see their contract before they had to vote on it. This was the major complaint of the employers. The great danger

was that the miners had too much democracy. Because when a union starts getting too much democracy, it can turn out that the so-called leaders sitting on top of it can't control the workers.

This is also the real issue inside the Teamsters, where dissident forces are fighting to democratize the union in order to use the power of the Teamsters for themselves. This is the opposite of the government's and newspapers' talk about Teamster corruption, the goal of which is to *weaken* the union.

Democracy is what's really involved in the postal workers' struggle right now. The postal workers don't have the simple, democratic right to strike. The courts have even tried to deprive them of the right to vote on their contract, which they're supposed to have, because the government is terrified of what might happen.

There was a wonderful article you may have seen a week ago. The national convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers, which represents about 175,000 workers, was meeting, and the president, the honorable J. Joseph Vacca, tried to defend the contract that had been negotiated with the United States Postal Service. The article says, “Mr. Vacca, in effect, repudiated a vote by a majority of the nearly 5,000 delegates yesterday to recommend that the membership reject the proposed pact.”

“Despite the overwhelming voice vote in favor of rejection, Mr. Vacca, who was booed on several occasions by delegates yesterday as he outlined the terms of the contract, declared:

“While I respect the recommendation of the convention, I remain committed to ratification of the contract.” He respects his collaborative relation with the employers more than the vote of the members! This shows the revolutionary character of trade-union democracy—and why the bosses cannot tolerate it. If the convention had passed the right to decide on the contract, it would have decided right then to reject it and probably to do something about it.

In the Steelworkers union, the question of the democratic rights of the membership has been at the center of the fight to transform the union. This struggle has been the vanguard fight in the new situation opening in the labor movement. The fight for the right of the members to vote on their contract in basic steel is one of the most important campaigns going on in the unions at the present time.

There is a very simple slogan being employed in this struggle at Hughes Tool in Houston, “One steelworker, one vote.” But the employers fear this simple slogan and goal. If the workers get the right to ratify their contracts, they will begin using this power. This will lead to using union power in all kinds of other ways; for example, to settle grievances the way they should be settled, not through some arbitration procedure, but right on the job. They will start to use their power to take what they're big enough to take at every level.

The same is true in the United Auto Workers. The UAW puts out a magazine called *Solidarity*.

It takes a lot of good positions on South Africa, on big social questions. Douglas Fraser even officially supports Hugo Blanco's rights—in Argentina. But when you go home after a day on the line and read *Solidarity*, you can't believe it's the magazine of the union you're a member of. They're very heavy on verbal support for Black workers in South Africa, but very light on real democracy for Black workers in those hellholes called auto plants in Detroit.

The real problem for the rulers was captured recently by the *New York Times* in an editorial. The editors became very disturbed when Douglas Fraser walked out of the Labor-Management Group set up by Carter. They explained that they were especially upset because Douglas Fraser is "not [a] class warrior." That's a safe characterization. But now Fraser is talking about "a 'class war' allegedly directed against the big unions by big business." They say that's very dangerous because if Fraser talks like that, a growing number of people will believe it, and of course it's not true. They say that if people like Fraser are "driven to the barricades," or feel like they are, a "breakdown in respect between our major business and labor organizations" will take place. Then they end with this warning to the entire ruling class: "There can be no effective campaign against inflation without the collaboration of moderate business and labor leaders. Their failure to cooperate will be failure for the nation. . . ." By "nation" they mean *their* nation, not *your* nation.

This is the issue of issues to them: to keep the unions out of the hands of the members so they cannot fight the employers and the government of the employers. Our strategy is exactly the opposite: to support any group of workers who are fighting to get more democracy so that they can use union power. The unions today *seem* weak. The unions, especially if they're seen as identical with their current leaders, *are* weak. But the unions can be the most powerful organizations in the United States.

We should remember that the fight for democracy goes beyond the unions. As workers win more and more democracy, they soon discover that they can take what they're big enough to take. They'll discover that not only can they find out what's going on, they can decide what to do about it, and implement it right on the spot. They'll discover the simple fact that they can run industry, that they do run industry. If they can run industry, they can run the country.

'Workers Keep the Country Running, Workers Should Run the Country'

I love the slogan of Mark Zola, who's a steelworker in Pittsburgh and the SWP's candidate for governor of Pennsylvania. His slogan is: "The working class keeps the country running—the working class should run the country."

The employers cannot keep the country running without unemployment, inflation, racism, sexual discrimination, poverty, the threat of nuclear war, and the declining quality of life for the great majority of humanity. Above all else, the employers do everything they can to prevent the workers from discovering the simple basic

truth that they can run the country.

We should remember that Mark Zola is no different from other workers, except for one thing. He's thought these problems out to the end. That's all. He is simply raising the logical conclusion that any steelworker, in thinking the problem through to the end, will come to on the basis of the facts if he or she has access to them.

Fighting for union democracy also leads to greater class solidarity and to the understanding that the power of the unions can't be realized unless the unions fight for all working people and all the oppressed. Then the whole striking power of the class can be concentrated. Building women's committees and building civil rights committees are examples of extending democracy in the unions, but they are also examples of how to advance the women's and Black struggle, bring forward new leaders for those struggles, and connect them with the union movement and vice versa. We can educate, we can agitate, and we can call for action around all kinds of fights for democracy that are going on in the unions. Our goal is that the members of the unions should take them over and use the union power to fight for the class as a whole.

Looking back at the experiences of the past six months emphasizes the correctness and the importance of two key points we made at the February meeting of the national committee of the Socialist Workers Party.

The first point was that the unions are the center of politics today. We are still in a preparatory period, not a period in which we are leading mass class-struggle actions. We must make no mistake about that. But it is a preparatory period in which the center of American politics has shifted to the industrial working class. Everything we have seen in the past six months confirms this judgment.

The rulers are on a consciously thought-out collision course with the unions. They are determined to "take back" the last drop of blood they can. This course is not one they can avoid, but one they *have* to carry out because of the problems they face. This week's *Militant* has an accurate headline: "Unions Under Siege." That's exactly right. The end of the long detour has occurred in the United States also. The attack is directed against the entire working class and the entire union movement—including its strongest components. If the industrial unions can be brought to heel, a significant shift in the relationship of forces would have occurred. And every worker and every oppressed American would feel the hammerblows of this shift.

There will be a growing tendency for any simple strike, any conflict, to escalate into a political confrontation—like the postal workers' negotiations. The postal workers are simply trying to get a decent contract to protect themselves. What are they really after? The postal workers' demands are modest. They want some protection against inflation, which is tearing into their standard of living. And they want some protection against the new machines that tear them apart at work. That's all. The government objects and is fighting tooth and nail against them. It will be a political fight, with the power

of the government, judges, courts, and everything else being thrown against the workers. Any economic struggle can escalate into political confrontation and will tend to do so more and more.

There is another aspect of the industrial unions moving to the center of politics. The direct needs of the union itself, the necessity of defending the immediate interests of the workers, more and more merges with the social and political struggles taking place in the country. It's becoming clearer that the fight for democratic rights, the fight for Black rights, the fight for women's rights, the fight for decent health care for everyone, coincides with the fight to defend the unions.

Experience in the past six months confirms that interest in and discussions about the big social and political issues are increasing in the labor movement, and we see a new willingness to begin acting on these issues. The gap that was so large five or ten years ago between the state of the radicalization inside the labor movement on the one hand, and in the Black, Chicano, women's, and antiwar movements on the other, has narrowed significantly and will continue to narrow. As it narrows, these movements mutually reinforce each other.

Many of us were on the Washington ERA march with fellow unionists; some of us were at Seabrook. We all noted that simply the sight of a union banner on demonstrations like these gets an enthusiastic ovation because it is a tremendously encouraging thing. It tells people fighting in such actions that there's a powerful force that's beginning to move toward their side, the power of organized workers. This also has a tremendous effect on those who are there with the union delegations. There is a mutual reinforcement which will become stronger as experiences multiply.

Proletarian Leadership for Labor and Its Allies

The second point we stressed at the national committee meeting was that the key to transforming the Black movement, the Chicano movement, the women's movement, was to be found in new leaders coming out of the labor movement who will be drawn to the fore by the radicalization in the trade-union movement. Not that the independent struggles of Blacks, women, and others are going to decline, or the movements around specific issues such as nuclear power and nuclear weapons. I think the list of the demonstrations that have occurred during the past six months shows just the opposite is the tendency. And they should not wait for anyone.

But we must remember one thing: These struggles are not independent of the class struggle. All these movements eventually have to face up to whether or not their goals can be met under capitalism, and who their allies are and who they should try to link up with. The allies they seek, their programs, and their class composition will change as this process deepens. More and more Black, Chicano, and women workers will lead the struggles of their movements. They will become increasingly part of the leadership of the union movement and vice versa. The workers are the only consistent fighters for the rights of the oppressed. Every other class eventually has to and will oppose them. A workers government is the realistic perspective of everyone fighting discrimination and oppression.

Thus, trade-union work, properly understood, is the central responsibility of every single committee, every single unit of the revolutionary party today, the heart of the fight to build a proletarian, multinational combat party to prepare for the struggles to come.

* * *

The turn being made by the Socialist Workers Party and by the entire Fourth International today is a historic decision. Implementing it means that revolutionary workers parties will be built in time. What the rulers have begun, the workers will end.

We say to all our comrades around the world, in every single party in the Fourth International: Nothing will stand in our way of setting the best example we can. And nothing will prevent us from being part and parcel of the turn of the Fourth International into building a fighting world party of worker-Bolsheviks.

Fight for Union Democracy

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The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1923-25)

By Leon Trotsky. New York. Pathfinder Press. 1975. 432 pages.

This is the first in a planned series of several volumes containing Trotsky's writings from 1923, when he launched a battle against the growing bureaucratization of the Soviet state, to 1929, when he was exiled from the USSR by Stalin.

The terrible years of civil war (1918-21) had created famines and widespread suffering. Thousands of the most class-conscious and combative Soviet workers had been killed.

The Bolsheviks had hoped for successful revolutions in the West, which could come to the aid of the beleaguered Russian workers. But the revolutionary upsurges that followed the end of the war were defeated, in many cases because of the inexperience and weakness of the young Communist parties.

Under these circumstances a bureaucratic layer arose in the Soviet Union, which sought to carve out a privileged niche for itself.

Leon Trotsky's fight against the bureaucratization of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet workers state was one of his greatest political actions. In it lie the historical roots of the Fourth International—the world Trotskyist movement. Although at first glance some of Trotsky's polemics in this book may seem obscure or merely of historical interest, they are of absolutely central importance to anyone grappling with the problem of the degeneration of the world's first workers state.

The centerpiece of this volume is "Lessons of October," an article written by Trotsky as an introduction to a collection of his writings from 1917. The article and collection were published in 1924.

The previous year, a revolutionary opportunity in Germany had

'Challenge of the Left Opposition' Pathfinder's Choice for September

been missed by the German Communist Party. In a situation in which decisive political leadership was needed, the German Communists wavered and backtracked. The situation might still have been saved had the leadership of the Communist International urged a revolutionary course of action upon the German Communists. But Zinoviev, the head of the Comintern, balked at the idea of calling for an insurrection until it was too late.

For Trotsky, the implications of the German defeat were ominous. It meant that the most favorable possibility for revolution in an advanced capitalist country had been lost. Now the Soviet Union would have to solve its problems for some time without help from a socialist Europe. This required stepped-up activity by the Left Opposition, formed earlier in 1923, against the growing bureaucratization of the party and state.

A vicious slander campaign was conducted against Trotsky by the "triumvirate," an unprincipled combination formed by Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev to control the party's political bureau.

Rather than further inflame factional tensions by a direct polemic with the three, Trotsky discussed the lessons of Germany by appealing to the lessons of the October revolution. In "Lessons of October" he points out, "We ourselves may never have to repeat the experience of the October Revolution, but this does not at all imply that we have nothing to learn from that experience. We are a part of the International, and the workers in all other countries are still faced with the solution of the problem of their own 'October.'"

Anticipating many of the themes

he would later draw together in his masterwork *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky outlined the political forces that had combined to create the October insurrection. He also pointed out that Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev, at key points in 1917 had capitulated to petty-bourgeois pressures, trying to effect some sort of reconciliation between the Bolsheviks and the provisional government. In October, Zinoviev and Kamenev had opposed Lenin's call for an insurrection.

Trotsky pointed out that such waverings within the revolutionary movement are inevitable in any revolutionary situation, which brings class tensions to their highest point. In Russia these waverings had been opposed by Lenin and an aroused party membership, and the revolution was victorious.

In Germany there were no leaders of Lenin's outlook and tempering. The waverers prevailed, and the revolutionary party showed a lack of decisiveness, interpreted by

the masses as a sign of weakness. Thus the revolutionary opportunity was lost, and the ruling class regained the offensive.

The most important lesson for revolutionaries, according to Trotsky, was the need to construct parties that could offer a clear-cut path for the revolutionary workers to follow.

Within this context, Trotsky stressed the centrality of the training and preparation of party leadership: "The question of selecting the leading staff is of exceptional importance to the parties of Western Europe. The experience of the abortive German October is shocking proof of this."

There are many other valuable articles in this book, including Trotsky's discussion on the need to industrialize the Soviet economy according to a national economic plan, the symptoms of bureaucratization within the party, and disputes over party history.

—Peter Archer

25% Discount Offer

The Challenge of the Left Opposition is available at a special discount price of \$4.10. The regular price is \$5.45. Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014. Send check or money order, or return this coupon to one of the socialist bookstores listed on page 31. Offer expires October 31, 1978.

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Amid mass upsurge in Iran

Hua tries to help shah hang on to throne

By Steve Clark

A friend in need is a friend indeed. That seems to have been the guiding principle of Chinese Communist Party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng's three-day official visit to Iran beginning August 29.

Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi is indeed a friend in need.

Ever since the turn of the year, this bloody tyrant has seen his dictatorial rule come under ever more powerful challenges, as mass demonstrations have spread throughout the country. Most recently the shah's regime has been rocked by the largest outbreak of protests in its history, following the Abadan theater disaster (see article on back page).

Typically, the shah has tried to drown this upsurge in blood; scores of protesters have been gunned down by government troops and police. But each week has brought a new outbreak of demonstrations demanding, "We want an end to fifty years of Pahlavi tyranny!"

It was at the height of this tumultuous popular uprising that Chairman Hua flew in for a cordial three days with the shah.

Writing in the *Christian Science Monitor*, correspondent Geoffrey Godsell commented:

"At this moment, Chairman Hua's arrival must in many ways be a blessing for the Shah, as much for domestic as for international reasons.

"He has just installed a new Prime Minister, Jaafar Sharif-Emami, to try to restore calm after months of protest and intermittent violence against his modernizing and authoritarian policies. The presence on Iranian soil of no less a personage than the Chairman of the Chinese People's Republic is likely to so appeal to the pride of all Iranians as to be an influence on all of them to be on their best behavior."

Unfortunately for the shah, things didn't quite work out that way. The demonstrations continued to mount despite Hua's visit, and both the shah



Hua Kuo-feng (right) exchanged niceties with shah while mass demonstrations throughout Iran demanded end to dictatorial rule.

and his guest seem to have gone out of their way to stay out of the way.

"The overriding concern of Hua's entourage seemed to be his security," William Branigan reported in the *Washington Post*. "Security around Hua's Golestan Palace guest residence . . . was drum-tight to prevent the approach of any demonstrators."

Nonetheless, according to Branigan, "A Chinese informant said . . . that Chairman Hua and Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi had got on well together and had been in agreement on several vital issues."

At a royal banquet the first day of his visit, Hua toasted the shah for standing up to "the policy of expansionism and hegemonism by the big powers."

In the Chinese Stalinist dictionary, "hegemonism" refers to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

It is the anti-Soviet policies of the Iranian monarchy that have won it

such high marks from the Chinese regime. As far back as 1971, Hua's predecessors in Peking rolled out the red carpet for the shah's sister, Princess Ashraf—and the following year for the shah's wife, Empress Farah.

So Hua is undoubtedly not happy that the Iranian masses are impertinently challenging this government that he views as a bastion against the Soviet Union. Of course, the shah's anticommunist fervor also accounts for his brutal suppression of any political group claiming to be socialist, including the Iranian followers of Chairman Hua.

But the Chinese Stalinists have shown time and again that they don't let little things like torture, murder, or counterrevolution stand in the way of friendly diplomatic deals with capitalist governments that are particularly hostile to the Soviet Union. (Ironically, before the Sino-Soviet rift the Peking bureaucrats learned many of their

counterrevolutionary tricks at the feet of their Stalinist teachers in the Kremlin.)

- The Chinese regime hailed the joint French-Belgium-U.S. intervention in Zaïre earlier this year, and chimed in behind Carter and Zaïrian President Mobutu in blaming the fighting in Shaba province on a Cuban- and Soviet-backed invasion.

- When Cuban troops came to the assistance of Angolan liberation fighters in their 1975 war against South African invaders, Peking labeled the Cubans "pawns of Soviet social imperialism."

- When the rightist Pinochet junta overthrew the Allende government in Chile five years ago, the Chinese Stalinists were the first government in the world to offer diplomatic recognition to the butchers of the Chilean masses.

- Hua and his cohorts openly support the NATO military alliance between U.S. and Western European imperialism. When Carter announced his decision earlier this year to defer production of the neutron bomb, the New China News Agency berated him for capitulating to "Soviet threats and blackmail."

And the list could go on.

The Stalinist rulers in Peking are willing and eager to betray the interests of the oppressed and exploited in return for diplomatic advantages that bolster their bureaucratic privileges and high living at home.

Branigan of the *Washington Post* wrote naively from Tehran, "There also were indications that the Chinese leader might have been a bit bothered by the royal luxury and the undemocratic atmosphere in which he found himself."

Branigan's editor has clearly never assigned him to cover one of the lavish banquets hosted at Peking's "Great Hall of the People" for luminaries such as Nixon, Kissinger, and Brzezinski.

Branigan can rest assured: Hua felt quite at home.

Los Angeles cops attack Iranian student picket line

By Joanie Quinn

LOS ANGELES—Club wielding cops brutally attacked a demonstration of Iranians here on September 1, arresting 171 of the 400 participants. The demonstrators, members of the Iranian Student Association (ISA), were protesting biased coverage by the *Los Angeles Times* of the recent theater fire in Iran and demanding that Washington keep out of the affairs of the Iranian people.

The protest was nearing the *Times* building when cops started harassing the crowd, making individual arrests for "noise" and traffic violations.

Without warning, more than fifty

cops then charged, beating people to the ground. As the protesters fell, their hands were tied behind them and they were lined up, row upon row, some of them bleeding profusely.

Of the 171 arrested, 13 were booked on felony charges. Bail came to a total of \$450,000. Many demonstrators had to be hospitalized for injuries, including a broken leg and fractured skull.

Those who want to protest this brutal police attack are urged to send telegrams demanding that the charges be dropped to: Burt Pines, City Attorney, 200 North Main, Los Angeles, California 90013.



Club-wielding cops brutalize Iranian pickets

...Iran

Continued from back page

of their massive suppressed strength—the strength of millions of toilers. The need for a political manifestation of this strength has already expressed itself in the demand for the right to a universal and free vote.

"A unitary assembly based on universal, equal and secret elections must be convened—a constituent assembly

combining both the legislative and executive power within a single body."

Despite severe repression, cabinet reshuffling, and some limited concessions, the Iranian masses are still pressing forward with their demand for an end to the monarchy. From the very beginning of the upsurge, "Down with the shah!" has been the most popular slogan.

The Iranian masses realize that their

democratic aspirations cannot be won and secured as long as the shah's regime still stands. The toughness and determination of these fighters worries not only the shah, but also the imperialist powers that prop him up, especially Washington.

Their concerns are heightened by the growing popularity of the demand for the ouster of 30,000 U.S. military advisers from Iran and the nationaliza-

tion of all imperialist holdings there.

But the ability of Washington or its allies to intervene directly to help rescue the shah has been made difficult by the wide public exposure in recent years of the brutality of the Iranian despot.

Students and working people in the United States should join with Iranian students in this country in opposing any moves by Washington against the struggles of the Iranian masses.

Ethiopian regime intensifies drive against

By Ernest Harsch

For the first time since it came to power four years ago, the Ethiopian junta, known as the Dergue, has made significant military advances against the Eritrean independence struggle. In recent weeks Ethiopian forces have retaken a series of towns and cities that had previously been liberated by the Eritrean freedom fighters.

Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, the head of the Dergue, launched this large-scale offensive despite offers by the main Eritrean liberation groups to open negotiations and despite pleas from several West European Communist parties, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and other forces on the left urging the Dergue to seek a negotiated settlement.

Cubans not fighting

Mengistu also acted despite the failure of his attempts to draw Cuban military forces into the war against the Eritreans. Cuban officials such as Fidel Castro and Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez have repeatedly stated that they favor a negotiated settlement to the conflict, not a military one. As recently as July 29, when Mengistu's offensive was already under way, Rodríguez declared that "we reject accusations that Cuba is involved in that situation [Eritrea]. We are not involved. . . ."

The Cuban affirmations have been confirmed by the Eritreans themselves. In an interview in the August issue of the London monthly *Middle East*, Ahmad Nasser, the chairman of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), stated:

Of course, given the good relations between Ethiopia and Cuba, there are [Cuban] soldiers and experts. But, up to this time, while fighting the enemy and taking prisoners we have never found one identity card to prove that Cuban soldiers are involved. And we have reason to believe that the Cubans will not intervene against our fighters. Cuba's leaders have said that the solution of the Eritrean question must be found through peaceful negotiations, and until now we have had good relations with Cuba and its ambassadors, and we know that Cuba doesn't support violence against Eritrea.

The Cubans never called us reactionaries, in spite of Mengistu's accusations about our links with NATO. We have fought for 17 years, we are building a democratic society, we have the support of all the progressives in the world. For us there is only one solution—a fully independent Eritrea to assure progress both in Ethiopia and in Eritrea.

According to a report by correspondent Fulvio Grimaldi in the same issue of *Middle East*, Moscow has also tried

to take its political distance from Mengistu's offensive, despite the massive arms aid it has given to the Dergue. Grimaldi attributed this partly to pressures from some of the Arab regimes in the area, such as those in Iraq, Syria, Algeria, and Libya, and from the Italian Communist Party, which has openly declared its support for the Eritrean struggle.

Key towns retaken

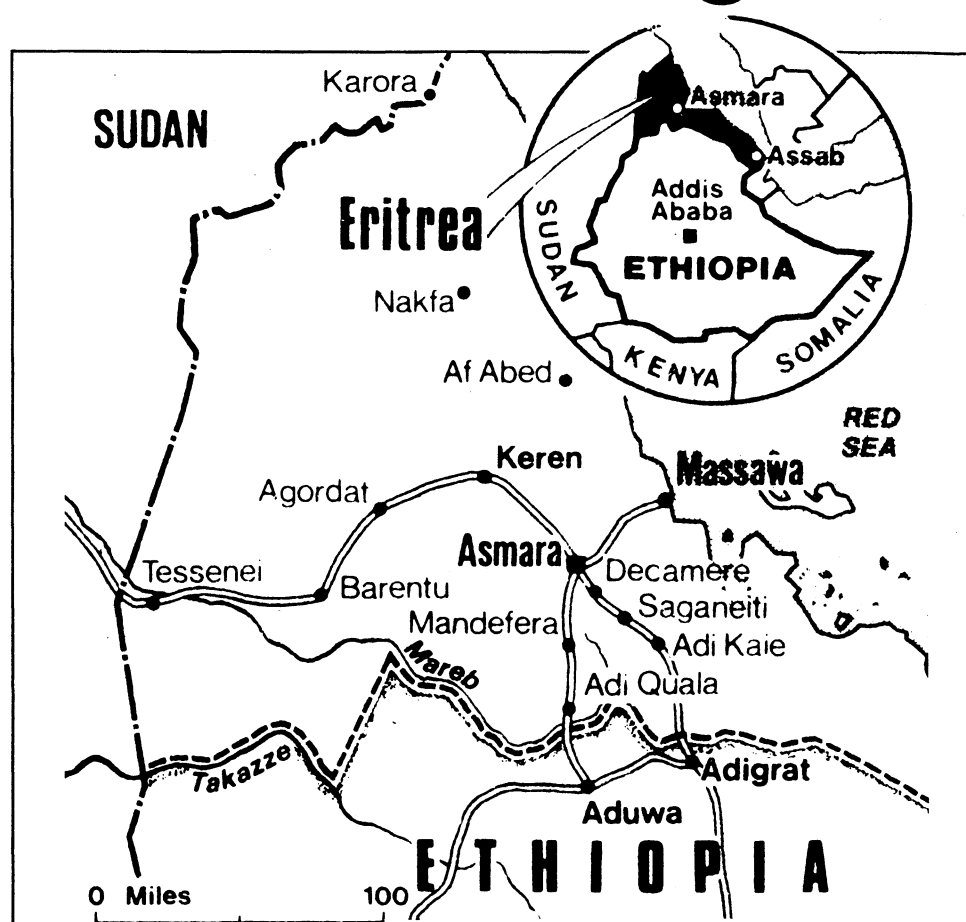
Mengistu's political isolation on the question of Eritrea notwithstanding, his regime formally decided in late June to launch the offensive, after several months of preparation. According to varying estimates, between 100,000 and 200,000 Ethiopian regular troops and militiamen were sent into Eritrea from bases in the northern Ethiopian provinces of Tigre and Gondar.

The offensive did not show any marked signs of success until mid-July, when the Dergue started to claim a series of advances, beginning with the recapture on July 18 of the town of Adi Quala, south of Asmara, the Eritrean capital. Within a few days the Ethiopian forces took nearby Mendefera and managed to break through the Eritrean siege of Asmara.

In western Eritrea, the Ethiopian troops captured the major towns of Tessenei and Agordat in late July and early August. Both had been held by the ELF. Tessenei's several thousand inhabitants fled before the Ethiopian advance, and many refugees crossed the border into neighboring Sudan, where between 200,000 and 300,000 Eritreans are already living in exile. According to a government radio broadcast, the Ethiopian army made "a considerable sacrifice" at Tessenei, indicating that it had suffered heavy casualties.

Also in the west, the Ethiopians claimed to have broken the siege of Barentu, which had been maintained by a combined force of the ELF and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the other main independence organization.

The EPLF initially denied that it had lost any significant ground to the Dergue, but on August 2 it acknowledged that it had "voluntarily" conducted a "tactical withdrawal," pulling its forces out of the town of Decamere and the port city of Massawa, much of which had been under EPLF control for several months. The EPLF later declared, however, that it would resist any Ethiopian attempts to retake Keren, which, with a population of 50,000, is the largest city under the control of



The Economist

the liberation fighters.

Despite the Dergue's recent advances, the ELF and EPLF are still in a strong position, both militarily and politically. They have carried out a seventeen-year-long struggle against Ethiopian domination and for Eritrea's independence, in the process winning the active support of virtually the entire Eritrean population.

It was the Eritrean struggle, in fact, that provided an important inspiration to the Ethiopian masses themselves, who rose up in a popular revolution to overthrow Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 and destroy the feudal system that he represented. If the Dergue also fails to crush or derail the struggles of the Eritrean masses, it could provide an additional spur to the Ethiopian revolution, a prospect that Mengistu is seeking to avoid.

Eritreans dig in

Though the Dergue's superior firepower may enable it to regain nominal control of many of Eritrea's urban centers, the widespread hostility of the Eritrean population to Ethiopian oppression will make a military "reconquest" of the territory extremely difficult. The ELF still holds sway in the rural areas of western Eritrea and has

already begun carrying out guerrilla operations behind Ethiopian lines. And the EPLF has claimed successes in two battles near Asmara, in which it said that it had killed 700 Ethiopian troops August 15 at Embadarno and captured one Ethiopian tank and destroyed three others at Adi Yakob.

Mengistu may already realize the futility of trying to completely crush the Eritrean struggle. According to a report by correspondent J. Regan Kereny in the July 29 *Washington Post*, "Observers say the current Ethiopian successes may reflect a strategy of retaking key Eritrean towns and leaving the countryside to the rebels, in an effort to give Ethiopia some bargaining chips during any future negotiations on the province."

So far, however, Mengistu has shown no apparent willingness to negotiate. And a report in the August 12 issue of the London *Economist* commented that "after its recent string of victories the Ethiopian government may well be interested in nothing short of clear military victory."

If Mengistu continues to pursue a course of trying to crush the Eritrean struggle, the prospect could be one of a war in which the real losers will be the Eritrean and Ethiopian populations.

Cuba defends its role in Africa

As part of the American-led propaganda campaign against Cuba, a number of pro-Western regimes launched attacks against Cuba's internationalist policies during the July 25-30 conference in Belgrade of "non-aligned" countries. Citing American news reports, Fidel Castro charged in a July 26 speech in Santiago de Cuba that Washington "has approached 15 nonaligned countries with a view to contesting Cuba's role in that Movement."

The day after Castro's speech, the delegates of a number of regimes, including those in Morocco, Somalia, Senegal, Ghana, and several Middle Eastern countries, accused Cuba of "aggression" in Africa. The attacks continued into the following day.

Somalian Foreign Minister Abdirahman Jama Barre claimed that Cuba "has allowed itself to be used as proxy for . . . the Soviet Union, in the promotion of the latter's designs and ambitions within the context of superpower rivalry and competition." This was especially hypocritical in the light of

his own regime's close alliance with American imperialism, and of the American-backed Somali invasion of eastern Ethiopia last year, which was eventually turned back by the Ethiopians in February and March 1978 with Cuban assistance. The Somali representative endorsed a call made by the Egyptian regime that next year's conference of "nonaligned" states, scheduled to be held in Havana, be either moved or postponed.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar Kusumaatmadja told reporters that the Cubans were "Soviet stooges." He then lamented, "It is a pity that American policy is so passive."

Other delegates made more veiled jibes at Cuba. On the opening day of the conference, Yugoslav President Josef Broz Tito declared, "We are witness to attempts to establish in the vitally important regions of the non-aligned world, primarily in Africa, new forms of colonial presence or of bloc dependence, foreign influence and domination." He then condemned "hegemony," a term commonly used by Peking and other political opponents

of Moscow to describe its foreign influence, with which the Cubans are said to be identified.

The Cuban representative at the conference, Foreign Minister Isidoro Octavio Malmierca Peoli, defended Cuba's role in Africa:

Cubans came back to the continent of Africa, which their forefathers had left as slaves centuries ago, to support the struggle against the underdevelopment inherited from colonial oppression and in response to appeals from the peoples and legitimate governments faced with aggression by racists, annexationists and servants of imperialism, and in order to make a modest contribution to the national liberation struggle against racism and apartheid.

During his July 26 speech, Castro himself responded to those like Tito who stress avoidance of political debates within the "nonaligned" movement and maintenance of its unity at all costs:

We have always thought and will continue to think that the Non-Aligned Movement should not be an amorphous, opportunistic, weak-kneed current but should be an

anti-imperialist, anticolonialist and progressive force that can have a positive influence on world policy.

Castro also blasted Washington's campaign against Havana's leading role within the "nonaligned" movement:

Why is the United States so interested now in the 6th Summit Conference, to be held in Havana? Why is it trying to sabotage it? Who is going along with this maneuver? What objectives do they seek in our Movement? It is clear that the United States, the traitors, the opportunists, the neocolonized, the fence-sitters and those whose principles are negotiable are worried by the militant, firm, staunch and honest role of Cuba.

At the close of the conference itself, those regimes that had pushed for a condemnation of the Cuban role in Africa suffered a setback. Cuba and its supporters succeeded in thwarting any denunciation of the Cuban military involvement in Africa in the final resolutions of the conference. The delegates also agreed to hold next year's conference in Havana.

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

Eritrea

Not only would it inflict even more suffering on the Eritreans, but it would seriously jeopardize the tremendous gains made by the Ethiopian masses themselves since their overthrow of Selassie. Like Mengistu's repressive and anti-working-class policies, his war drive in Eritrea can weaken the Ethiopian revolution and make it easier for imperialism to renew its attacks.

Urged to negotiate

Partly in response to the Dergue's current offensive in Eritrea, prominent supporters of the Eritrean struggle have stepped up their pressure on the Dergue to abandon its military drive and to adopt a policy of negotiation.

On July 27, some sixty French leftist figures, including members of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and the French Democratic Confederation of Labor, issued a statement in support of the Eritreans' right to self-determination and independence. It urged the Dergue to accept the offer of



MENGISTU: seeks to crush Eritrean struggle.

negotiations made by the ELF and EPLF.

Yassir Arafat, the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, declared at a July 30 news conference in Havana that the PLO would again try to act as a mediator between the Dergue and the Eritrean organizations.

A day earlier, Cuban Vice-president Rafael Rodríguez said during a meeting of "nonaligned" states in Belgrade that "Cuba favors a political settlement" of the Eritrea conflict.

Whether Mengistu responds to these pressures for negotiation or continues to press for a military defeat of the Eritrean fighters could seriously affect the course of political developments throughout the Horn of Africa.

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

The Freedom Struggle in South Africa

by Tony Thomas



By Tony Thomas
24 pp., 35 cents

Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014

New Orleans, Phila. teachers strike

By Andy Rose

NEW ORLEANS—Chanting, "No dough, no show," and singing, "Solidarity Forever" and "We Shall Not be Moved," some 4,000 striking teachers and their supporters marched through downtown New Orleans September 4.

At a rally in Lafayette Square after the march, teachers cheered pledges of solidarity from the Longshoremen, Meat Cutters, Louisiana AFL-CIO, other teacher locals, Youth Council of the NAACP, parents, and Black community leaders.

The United Teachers of New Orleans (UTNO) is demanding at least an 8 percent raise in teacher salaries, which now start at \$10,000 a year, among the lowest in the country. The school board's top offer is 4 percent. Since the strike began August 30, the board has refused to negotiate at all.

The strike has grown steadily in effectiveness, with more than 80 percent of the city's 5,300 teachers honoring picket lines and no more than 30 percent of the students going into the schools.

School bus drivers, organized by the Teamsters union, have joined the strike. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which represents school cafeteria and custodial workers, signed an agreement to continue working. This sweetheart deal has already led to the victimization of AFSCME members who refused to cross picket lines.

Student and parent solidarity with the teachers has been impressive. At Lusher Elementary, parents joined the picketing. At Benjamin Franklin High School, students issued a leaflet explaining why teachers need higher pay.

Teachers have held mass rallies, 2,500-3,000 strong, nearly every day of the strike to hear reports from the UTNO leadership. A flying squadron of pickets is sent to each school in need of reinforcement.

At the September 4 demonstration, UTNO President Nat LaCour warned teachers to expect both intimidation



New Orleans striker talks to students

and divide-and-conquer tactics from the school board. He assured teachers that any settlement will include a "no reprisals" clause for every participant. He pledged that the strike will not end until teachers have a decent contract offer in front of them in writing and vote democratically to accept it.

By Haskell Berman

PHILADELPHIA—More than 1,000 teachers launched their strike with mass picketing here September 1. Marching in front of the board of education offices, they chanted, "No contract, no work."

The predawn picketing began just hours after the contract between the city and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers expired.

In a meeting marked by a spirit of militancy and determination August 30, 7,000 union members voted unanimously to strike after rejecting the final offer by the board of education.

The board's proposal would gut previous gains won by the teachers by

increasing class size and eliminating most in-school teacher preparation time. It would also defer token wage increases for more than a year.

Among the most militant teachers at the strike authorization meeting were many of the 1,700 teachers laid off this summer by the board. These teachers' jobs were the price of a "balanced budget" demanded by a group of banks in return for loans to "bail out" the crisis-ridden city.

The teachers also overwhelmingly rejected the union leadership's proposal for accepting a "day by day" contract to facilitate negotiations. But after nearly half the membership left the meeting, the defeated motion was reintroduced and passed.

The question became moot, however, when the board refused to relent on its "take back" contract offer.

The spirit displayed in the first day's mass picketing prompted a local judge to ban any further such actions. In addition to strikebreaking court orders, the PFT also faces Democratic Mayor Frank Rizzo who has promised the teachers they won't "get a dime."

AFT delegates debate Cuba, Vietnam

By Jon Hillson

WASHINGTON—Vietnam. For most Americans, the name of that country raises the image of a senseless, immoral, illegal slaughter waged by a series of U.S. presidents who promised peace but practiced war.

Africa. For growing numbers, the name of that continent is linked to President Carter's sabre rattling and the threat of a new Vietnam-type intervention by U.S. military forces.

At the August convention of the American Federation of Teachers, the old Vietnam and the possible new Vietnam were focuses of heated debate.

Under the cover of alleged concern for Indochinese refugees, a resolution submitted by the AFT Executive Council sought unconditional justification for U.S. war policy in Southeast Asia. The resolution read, "The very existence of these refugees demonstrates that whatever errors the United States made in Indochina, we were not wrong in trying to help the people of that region avoid dictatorship and slavery."

It was a backhanded attempt to reverse the union's stand against the Vietnam War, a position adopted at the 1972 convention, despite opposition from AFT President Albert Shanker.

The West Haven [Connecticut] Federation of Teachers circulated an eye-opening leaflet here, called,

"Should the AFT Endorse the Vietnam War?"

"Are we out of our minds?" the statement read. "Does anyone still believe the Vietnam War was just a simple battle between freedom and slavery? Have we forgotten so soon that the forces we backed were viciously dictatorial?"

The exchange between antiwar and prowar delegates was reminiscent of debates between similar sides during the rise of the anti-Vietnam War movement.

The obvious sentiment against this effort to sanitize U.S. aggression in Indochina compelled a Shanker lieutenant to allow members of the Progressive Caucus, who are supposed to vote in a bloc, to "vote their conscience."

They did. And the prowar passages of the resolution were soundly defeated.

It made the AFT officials that much more determined on the question of Cuban troops in Africa.

In a resolution blasting the Cuban and Soviet presence in Africa, the AFT Executive Council proposed backing Carter's anti-Cuba hysteria campaign.

What followed was an educational discussion unusual at AFT conventions: a defense of Cuba against attacks by the U.S. government.

"Nowhere in this resolution," Washington, D.C., delegate Erich Martel said, "is there mention of the French and Belgian invasion of

[Zaire's] Shaba province. Why? Cuba, on the other hand, was invited into Africa."

William Gurley, president of the AFT Black caucus and a leader of the United Action Caucus, solidarized with Martel. The anti-Cuban resolution, he said, "is nothing less than an instrument of U.S. foreign policy in Africa."

St. Louis delegate Helen Savio noted that "American corporations prop up white minority rule. In South Africa alone, this means more than \$41,000 an hour every day of the year in profits. There is not one Cuban corporation anywhere in Africa."

"It is a fact," Boston delegate Bob Pearlman said, "that the United States backed the South African invasion of Angola, a racist invasion. That was when Cuban troops were invited in. The Cuban troops were decisive in defeating that racist invasion, and that's something we should be glad about."

Using anticommunist demagoguery, one pro-Shanker floor leader shouted that the AFT should demand "Cuba out of Africa." Another condemned "Soviet imperialism." They failed to inspire applause.

The anti-Cuba resolution did pass. But it couldn't have been much comfort to the Shankerites, who had to notice how stale and hackneyed their prowar clichés sound against the arguments of those who support Cuba's aid to the African revolution.

Quote unquote

Politics "represents the art of calculated cheating—or more precisely, how to cheat without really being caught."

—From an article written ten years ago by Energy Secretary James Schlesinger.

PHILLY PROTEST HITS POLICE BRUTALITY

More than 1,500 people, most of them young and Black, demonstrated in Philadelphia August 25 against police brutality and other racist policies of Mayor Frank Rizzo.

It was the second such demonstration in the city that month. On August 17, 3,000 people marched on city hall to protest a brutal police assault on MOVE, a Black collective.

The assault on MOVE followed a series of incidents of police brutality in the Black community.

The August 25 action was publicized on the radio and by word of mouth. Hundreds of people joined in as the march passed by.

Ben Bailey, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, issued a statement at the protest calling for the arrest and prosecution of the cops responsible for the violent attack on MOVE members.

'THE UNION SPEAKS'

The Union Speaks is a monthly publication from United Steelworkers Local 7528 in Bridgeport, Connecticut, carrying news and comment.

A column called "Voice for steelworkers," open to readers

of the newsletter, carries in the July issue a feature called "No Nukes."

The article, written by a union activist, explains that nuclear power is a serious health hazard, and notes the growing number of protests against it. "Their purpose is to make the public aware of the health risks associated with the deadly radioactive, cancer-causing discharges occurring in 'nukes' throughout the nation," the article says.

The author urges working people to get involved in the fight to stop nuclear power.

GOV'T PROTECTS ITS 'RIGHT' TO EAVESDROP

The National Security Agency, the most secret of the government's spy outfits, has put the kibosh on an invention that could make listening in on phone conversations virtually impossible.

Four inventors on their own came up with a device that apparently would make conversations unintelligible to anyone listening without a corresponding decoder. Although such devices already exist, they are quite expensive. The new invention could sell for as little as \$100.

The NSA claims the device threatens national security, has held up a patent, and has forbidden the inventors to discuss their invention—all of which the agency has the legal right to do!

UN OPENS HEARINGS ON PUERTO RICO

The United Nations Commission on Decolonization opened hearings on Puerto Rico August 28. The hearings have provided a forum for proindependence forces to denounce the continued exploitation of Puerto Rico by the United States.

The hearings have also forced the politicians who favor Puerto Rico's colonial status to appear. Gov. Carlos Romero Barceló, for example, came before the commission and declared it had no right to discuss what he said was an internal matter. He invited the commission to visit Puerto Rico to see firsthand how happy everyone is.

However, Rubén Berríos, head of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, gently reminded Barceló that as governor of a colony, he had no power to invite anyone. That power, Berríos noted, remains solely in the hands of the U.S. government.

Also testifying before the committee was Juan Mari Brás, general secretary of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

A series of proindependence demonstrations took place outside the U.N. during the first week of hearings, and many proindependence speakers addressed meetings around New York City.

GROWERS THREATEN STRIKING FARM WORKERS

Armed growers have confronted striking Ohio farm workers to keep them from trying to convince more workers to join their strike in the tomato fields.

About 1,500 farm workers walked out of the fields last month to win better pay and decent housing. All the workers are migrants. They are represented by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC).

Many workers were evicted from their temporary homes when they struck, and FLOC set up a tent city in Belmore, Ohio, to house them. Early in the morning on September 1, a cross was burned nearby. On September 5, the mayor of Belmore—himself a grower—evicted the workers from the tent city.

The strikers have undertaken a hundred-mile march to Columbus, the state capital, where they will seek to meet with Gov. James Rhodes.

NEW YORK NEWSPAPER STRIKE STILL ON

New York publishers made striking press operators an offer at the end of August—which turned out to be little more than a restatement of the original plan that sparked the strike on August 9. All three major dailies have been shut down since then.

The strike was deliberately provoked to coincide with the annual August advertising slump. But now the publishers are losing an estimated \$4 million a day. And it looks as though they may be probing for ways to get a back-to-work movement started.

700 hit L.A. cop terror

About 700 people marched and rallied in Los Angeles August 26 to protest a wave of killings by police. So far this year, cops have gunned down thirty-eight people. Another thirty-eight people—thirty-three of them Black or Chicano—were killed in 1977.

Marchers along the four and a half mile route chanted "LAPD you can't hide—we charge you with genocide." As the protesters circled the county jail, they chanted, "Steven Biko, Ferdinand Bell—both were murdered in the cell."

Ferdinand Bell was an NAACP youth worker choked and beaten to death

in the county jail earlier this year.

Speakers at the rally included American Indian activists Paul Skyhorse and Richard Mohawk; Yvonne Wanrow, a Native American woman framed up on murder charges for defending herself; and representatives of Black and Chicano community organizations.

The protest was sponsored by a coalition of about twenty groups, including Coalition Against Police Abuse, Frank Shuford Defense Committee, Carlos Montez Defense Committee, National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Socialist Workers Party, and Guardian Club.



Militant/Della Rossa

The aim of the newspaper owners is to reduce the number of press operators. The publishers' new offer was rejected by the Pressmen's union August 28. Union President William Kennedy explained that the "compromise" would eliminate 500 of 1,600 press operators' jobs.

Four other unions have struck the papers since the press operators walked out.

Cincinnati. It will unquestionably hinder the ability of rank-and-file members to attend in large numbers.

According to the West Virginia *Charleston Gazette*, Miller says he plans to seek more "authority" at the convention "so that I can run the union." Referring to dissident members of the UMW, he added, "If they don't want to be a part of the union, I need the authority to throw them out."

Meanwhile, dissidents filed suit in West Virginia state court last month to try to force UMW Secretary-treasurer Willard Esselstyn to begin recall procedures against Miller. More than 30,000 signatures on recall petitions were submitted to the UMW International Executive Board in July—as required by the union's constitution—but the IEB simply tossed them out the window.

NOW SUES FOR \$60 MILLION

Stung by the boycott of states that have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment, the states of Missouri and Nevada and a tourist group in Louisiana sued the National Organization for Women. NOW had called the boycott; more than 230 organizations, cities, and counties agreed not to hold conventions in unratified states.

NOW has filed counterclaim lawsuits against the two states and the tourist group, charging violations of its civil rights. NOW seeks \$60 million in damages and injunctions against further harassment of the ERA campaign.

NOW has also sent a protest to President Carter and other government officials because Missouri is using federal funds to pay for its lawsuit against the ERA boycott.

MIAMI PICKED AS UMW CONVENTION SITE

United Mine Workers President Arnold Miller has announced that the next UMW constitutional convention will be held in September 1979 in Miami, Florida.

This convention site is a far cry from the coalfield cities picked for the last two conventions—Pittsburgh and

FBI spied for Klan

Civil rights freedom riders who were beaten up by the Ku Klux Klan in Birmingham in 1961 were actually set up by the FBI, according to recently released FBI documents.

The 3,000 documents show the FBI knew that a Birmingham cop, Sgt. Thomas Cook, was in the Klan. The FBI used Cook to pass on information about the freedom riders directly to the Klan's top leadership.

With the collaboration of the Birmingham cops and the FBI, the Klansmen savagely attacked the freedom riders. Two victims, Jim Peck and Walter Bergman, have sued the FBI for its role.



Freedom rider, victim of brutal beating by KKK.

What's Going On

GEORGIA ATLANTA

REBELLION AT REIDSVILLE: THE PRISONERS' SIDE. Speakers: Rick Reid, Ga. Clearinghouse on Jails and Prisons; Don Davis, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Georgia; others. Fri., Sept. 15, 8 p.m. 509 Peachtree St. NE. Donation: \$1. Aup: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 872-7229.

NEW MEXICO ALBUQUERQUE

CHILE: FIVE YEARS AFTER THE COUP. Speakers: Oscar Campos, news announcer for Channel 23 TV; Joel Hoffmann, Socialist Workers Party; others. Fri., Sept. 15, 7:30 p.m. 108 Morningside Dr. NE. Aup: Militant Forum. For more information call (505) 255-6869.

NEW YORK NEW YORK CITY

PERSPECTIVES ON THE LIBERATION OF THE PEOPLE OF LATIN AMERICA AFTER THE CHILEAN EXPERIENCE. Speaker: Pedro Vuskovic, economist and leader of Chilean Socialist Party. Folk music, food. Sat., Sept. 16, 7:30 p.m. Washington Irving High School Auditorium, 40 Irving Pl. Donation: \$2. Aup: Comité Chileno Antifascista. For more information call (212) 768-4246.

THE 'MILITANT' GETS AROUND

Para la Gente, a bilingual Chicano paper published in Texas by activists associated with the Raza Unida Party, reprinted in its July/August issue major excerpts from "Did Bakke ruling uphold affirmative action?" The article, by John Hawkins, first appeared in the July 21 *Militant*.

SETBACKS FOR D.C. REPRESENTATION

Two states have refused to take quick action on a constitutional amendment that would grant the District of Columbia two U.S. senators and representation in the House.

Both the California and Delaware legislatures turned down proposals to vote on the amendment right away. The

amendment, which must be ratified by thirty-eight states, will come up soon in New Jersey and Michigan.

The setbacks in California and Delaware underscore the need for a major campaign to win representation for D.C., whose population is 70 percent Black.

BLACKS DISSATISFIED WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The annual Gallup education poll, the results of which were released early this month, found that 43 percent of Blacks living in the North rated public schools D or F, and only 27 percent A or B. Two-thirds of northern Blacks said they do not believe minority children have the same educational opportunities as white children.

RCMP

The Real Subversives

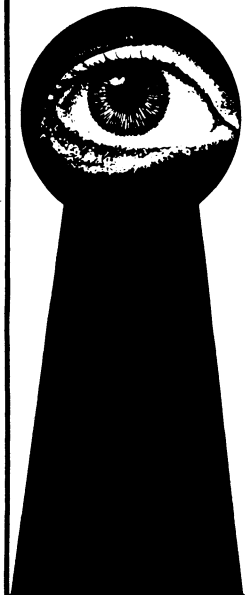
by Richard Fidler

There are striking similarities between the illegal harassment by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the FBI's Counterintelligence Program activities in the U.S. *RCMP: The Real Subversives* exposes the hidden role of Canada's political police and has valuable lessons for defenders of democratic rights everywhere.

The Mounties' victims are shown to be Québec nationalists, trade unionists, Native militants, the New Democratic Party, farmers organizations, socialists, and other political dissidents.

A Vanguard Publications book, 95 pages, \$2.95 paperback.

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OUT NOW!

A Participant's Account of the American Movement Against the Vietnam War
by Fred Halstead

The first comprehensive history of the antiwar movement is now available! Fred Halstead traces the movement from its roots in the early ban-the-bomb movement, through the huge demonstrations of 1969-71, to the end of the war in 1975.

Halstead, a longtime socialist and trade unionist, was a leading figure in the antiwar movement. In addition to his own experience, Halstead draws on extensive correspondence, minutes, and documents of antiwar committees and coalitions. A thirty-two-page photo section is included.

A Monad Press book, 789 pages, \$8.95 paperback.
Order from Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014. Please include \$.75 for postage and handling.

The Great Society

Harry Ring



Lesser-evil politics?—Running against a dead man in the Democratic primary for justice of the peace, Joe Zambano of Rockport, Texas, was defeated nearly three to one. "You can't imagine how hard it is to campaign against an opponent with that kind of public sympathy," he said of his rival, who had checked out after his name was on the ballot.

Debt power shrinks—Remember when they used to talk about "purchasing power"? Now, apparently, it's debt power. And business interests are now concerned that people are so deep in hock that they won't be able to finance new purchases. As Philadelphia banker Lacey Hunt explains it, "This high level of debt to income suggests that the consumer will be hard pressed to add on substantial amounts of new debts in order to finance new purchases."

Out of the hole—Richard ("I'm no crook") Nixon advised his financial boosters that it's no longer necessary to hustle bread for him. The Nixon Trust Fund announced that while the pardoned ex-president still has legal debts, these can

be met by income from the David Frost TV interviews and royalties from the book of memoirs (Total take from the two is estimated at \$3 million.)

Vacation tip—Why pay motel bills? Nelson Rockefeller's summer home on Mount Desert Island in Seal Harbor is up for sale. Twenty-two rooms and a flying balcony cantilevered over the sea. \$1 million.

Better than cow dung—An official of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico says fears about a glut of nuclear waste endangering the world are "exaggerated." In fact, he says, it will turn into a boon just as soon as they figure out how to use the waste as a source of energy.

Does your garden glow?—What with many of its early records misfiled or destroyed, the U.S. Energy Department is asking the public to help identify possible sites where radioactive materials were processed in the early days of the atomic age.

Union Talk

A censure for Carter

This week's column is by Tom Til-itz, who was a delegate to the American Federation of Government Employees convention from Local 2431 in New York City.

CHICAGO—Delegates to the American Federation of Government Employees convention here August 7-11 voiced their outrage at being used as ammunition in Carter's "war on inflation."

AFGE, the largest union of federal employees, is a central victim of Carter's drive to make an example of government workers by capping their wage increases at 5.5 percent and "reforming" the civil service system.

This is in spite of the fact that Carter's own government study found an 8.4 percent increase necessary for federal workers to keep pace with nongovernment workers with comparable jobs. Even that 8.4 percent would not begin to make up for the official inflation rate of more than 10 percent.

Carter's civil service "reform" package, which he claims is aimed at streamlining the federal government and cutting bureaucratic inefficiency, is a blatant attack on the rights of federal workers.

What this so-called reform does is to make it easier to fire federal workers and cut their wages by denying certain pay raises.

The convention here offered an opportunity to assess the union's activity in the face of these attacks. That assessment was pretty dim. Carter's pay cap pronouncement has gone virtually unanswered. AFGE President Kenneth Blaylock claimed during one of the preconvention union candidates' debates that "the membership isn't too concerned with the pay cap."

Delegates responded to such an outrageous statement when they were joined by local federal workers here for a 2,500-strong protest of the pay cap during the convention.

As for the phony civil service reform, Blaylock actually credits himself with helping Carter draw it up! Prior to the convention, AFGE was the only union supporting the "reform."

On the first day of the convention, delegates voted overwhelmingly to withdraw AFGE's support for the civil service legislation, over Blaylock's objections.

The resolution—forwarded to Carter—also "censured" the president for failing to keep campaign promises, including reform of the Hatch Act, collective bargaining legislation, and a pledge to adhere to a law granting federal workers pay comparable with that of their counterparts in the private sector.

Carter has clearly demonstrated, the resolution read, "that he has lied, not only to Federal workers but to the American people as a whole."

On succeeding days of the convention, delegates voted down a national office dues increase, fired the union's top lawyer (who was Blaylock's closest adviser), and nearly ousted Blaylock himself, who won reelection by a mere 1 percent margin.

Delegates also began to see the need for the union movement to solidarize with other social struggles. They passed a resolution demanding freedom for the Wilmington Ten.

A resolution reaffirming the union's support for the Equal Rights Amendment, extension of the ERA's deadline, and the economic boycott of unratified states did not reach the floor for discussion. But because it was passed by committee, it becomes AFGE policy.

Several Democratic and Republican politicians addressed the convention. A couple urged support for Carter's civil service "reform," which the delegates later repudiated. But the best response went to Black Missouri Congressperson William Clay. Sensitive to the political disenchantment of the delegates, he declared:

"I agonize each day of the week watching so-called Democratic members of the House of Representatives casting votes in favor of the rich and powerful; in favor of the corporate structure; in favor of the greedy as opposed to the needy; in favor of the classes, not the masses.

"Perhaps what we need is a labor party and to tell both the Democrats and Republicans to go to hell."

Clay failed to explain, however, why he remains a part of Carter's antilabor, anti-Black, antiwoman Democratic Party.

Our Revolutionary Heritage

Celebrating 50 years of the Militant, 1928-1978

Shanker's racist strike

This fall marks the tenth anniversary of the United Federation of Teachers' strike against the parents and students of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district in Brooklyn, New York. The UFT has yet to recover from the damage done by this racist strike.

In 1967, in response to the demands of Blacks and Puerto Ricans, five experimental school projects were set up in New York City. They aimed in the direction of community control of the schools by the Black and Puerto Rican communities.

Five communities won the right to elect local school boards, which then chose their own superintendents and principals and hired their own teachers.

Aghast at the prospect of dealing with Black and Puerto Rican boards—rather than continuing his comfortable relationship with the central board and its racist policies—UFT head Albert Shanker called a strike. City officials used the strike to pit teachers against the Black and Puerto Rican communities, weakening the union and the struggle for equal education.

Jeff Mackler, now an executive board member of the Hayward Unified Teachers Association in California, was chairperson of the New Coalition Caucus in the UFT at the time. This caucus defended Black and Puerto Rican community control of the schools and defied the 1968 UFT strike. Below are some excerpts from his account of the strike from the pamphlet 'Teachers Under Attack.'

Imagine a teachers' strike where the strikers received the full support of their employer, the police, white racist groups, all school administrators, and virtually every reactionary force in the city.

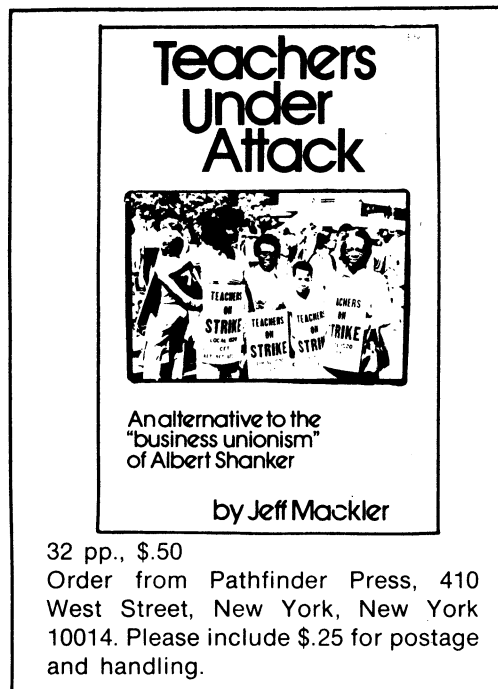
Imagine a teachers' strike in which "scabs" were arrested by police instead of escorted through the picket lines; in which school authorities chained the schools closed to keep "scabs" out.

This was the scene during the UFT's nine-week strike against the Black, Latino, and Asian-American communities of New York City in the fall of 1968.

On May 9, 1968, the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community board transferred thirteen teachers out of the local district to the central board for reassignment elsewhere.

In previous years thousands of others had been similarly transferred. Many were antiwar activists or teachers who rejected bureaucratic curbs on their teaching techniques. The UFT rarely raised an objection.

But this time the teachers were transferred by a Black, Latino, and Asian-American school board. The UFT imme-



diately invoked the "mini-strike" referendum and struck the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district. Most teachers in the district saw through the racist maneuver and opposed the strike. Only 68 out of about 700 teachers walked out.

The UFT propaganda machine, backed by the big-business press and the board of education, launched a massive, demagogic campaign claiming that the Ocean Hill-Brownsville teachers had been "fired" and that the strike was in defense of "due process."

When schools opened that fall, the UFT demanded reinstatement of the transferred teachers along with the other Shanker loyalists who had walked out in support of them. School authorities agreed, but parents and community activists did not. Thousands of them surrounded the district schools to keep the racists out.

In retaliation, Shanker struck the entire New York school system for nine weeks. Eleven thousand teachers—including the union's best activists and supporters of community control—correctly crossed the racist picket lines organized by the UFT leadership. We were proud to join with parents and students in opening the schools. The streets of New York became the scenes of daily mass rallies organized by Black and Latino community groups.

The central labor officialdom came under heavy pressure from New York City unions with large Black and Latino memberships—notably the hospital workers and municipal employees.

Eventually Shanker called off the strike.

The schools continued to deteriorate. And virtually all the Black and Latino teachers in the city quit the UFT. Teachers in New York and throughout the AFT were to lose heavily as a result of the strike and the racist policy it epitomized.

Letter to Fraser

Militant readers may be interested in a letter sent to United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser by the Tool & Die Unit of UAW Local 600 here in Detroit. It was sent after Fraser resigned from the Labor-Management Board in July, charging that big business was waging a "one-sided class war" against working people. The letter was reprinted in Local 600's newspaper, *Ford Facts*, which has a circulation of 50,000. It says in part:

"Your statement at the press conference outlining your reasons for the resignation, we believe, echoed the feelings of millions of working-class people who have gained little or nothing from either the Carter Administration or the Democratic Party, and who have never held any illusions concerning the attitudes of the business community towards working-class people.

"The membership of the Tool & Die Unit has long advocated, in resolutions to UAW Constitutional Conventions, the formation of an independent political party dedicated to the needs of working people, the unemployed, the poor, the minorities, the very young and the very old, and we again urge that formation."

Al Duncan
Detroit, Michigan

Women's history film

An important new film has just been completed on the role of women in the 1937 sit-down strike at General Motors. The film, *With Babies and Banners*, is premiering at the New York Film Festival September 26-27. As a press release describes it: "The film combines rare archival footage, photographs and union songs with the participants' own narrative: how they broke out of the isolation of their homes to organize themselves and most of the community behind the strike."

The setting of the film is the Flint, Michigan, sit-down strike of 1936-37. When General Motors refused to recognize the newly formed United Auto Workers union, a strike was declared, and a new tactic—a sit-down occupation of the plant—was begun. The Women's Emergency Brigade, led by Genora Johnson Dollinger, was formed to aid the strikers. The untold story of these courageous women is the subject of this documentary film.

Directed by Lorraine Gray and the Women's Labor History Film Project, the film took three years of exhaustive research to reconstruct the events.

With Babies and Banners is a welcome event for women everywhere. It has already been scheduled for showings at New York's Museum of Modern Art; the American Film Institute theater in Washington, D.C.; international film festivals in Scotland, West Germany, and

Letters

Switzerland; and will be scheduled for premieres in other cities around the United States.

A reader
New York, New York

Gay rights

California State Sen. John Briggs's lies about "homosexual child molesters" have been exposed. But in case anyone is still fooled by this antigay bigotry, another exposé appeared in a surprising place recently—the "Dear Abby" column in the *Los Angeles Times*:

"Dear Abby,
"Since statistics show that 98.3% of all child molesters are heterosexual, I'm organizing a crusade to prohibit heterosexual teachers from instructing children of the opposite sex.

"I don't want my daughter molested by a heterosexual male teacher, or my son seduced by a heterosexual female teacher. Signed, Concerned Parent."

Replied Abby: "Your statistics are correct, but banning all heterosexual teachers on the chance that one might molest a child is unfair. However, if you proceed with your crusade, be sure to enlist the help of Anita Bryant—since she wants so desperately to 'save' our children."

D. P.
New York, New York

'Faithful reader'

I would like to take up your new subscribers offer. Your paper presents issues from a realistic perspective, and for that reason I find it important to become one of your faithful readers.

Your coverage of events avoided by the conventional press has caught my attention. I learned of your paper through friends and hope that I can enlighten others.

Sherry Kariger
Buffalo Grove, Illinois

Jobs bill

I thought the *Militant* article entitled "Why Can't Everybody Have a Job?" was excellent. I have begun distributing it in my plant, and the response is phenomenal.

There is tremendous support for the idea of a massive public works program and the demand for a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. Workers in the plant have been circulating the reprint themselves and have been talking about it. Several asked me when they would be able to vote for this emergency bill. One co-worker at first just brushed off the article as being "communist propaganda" but after reading it came up to me and said: "This is fantastic. You know, what we really need is a democratic form of socialism, because capitalism just doesn't work."

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Learning About Socialism

Prospects for political revolution

Earlier this year Ernest Mandel, an internationally prominent Marxist economist and a leader of the world Trotskyist movement, spoke in New York. He was asked about recent developments in the struggle for workers democracy in Eastern Europe. His reply follows:

In these countries today there is a growing dissatisfaction with all the most oppressive signs of bureaucratic dictatorship—not only among intellectuals, but among sectors of the working class, of oppressed national minorities, of youth, and of women.

I will give three examples.

The first—and by far the most modest—is the birth of the very small, independent Trade Union Association in the Soviet Union. This is a pure working-class phenomenon. All of its members are industrial and service workers, wage earners.

They advance very modest and moderate demands. But one of these is absolutely explosive under the present circumstances in the Soviet Union: the demand for an independent trade union controlled by the workers themselves.

This is a small development—not more than 150 or 200 people. But the fact that they have spoken out, that they have put their signatures on a declaration, and that they have put out a call to the international labor movement asking for support is of enormous historical importance.

Some leaders of that movement have already been thrown into mental asylums and submitted to the same type of inhuman repression that the bureaucracy has applied again and again against any oppositional force.

We shouldn't have too many illusions in the immediate possibilities of a mass breakthrough of this group. But as the first form of a purely proletarian opposition arising in the Soviet Union, it merits our support.

We must do the utmost to make their case known among the world working class. We must harass the Soviet and East European bureaucrats wherever they go with the simple and elementary demand:

Grant trade-union freedom to your own workers! Grant the freedom to these workers to organize as they like and to elect their officers democratically.

The second breakthrough—more significant than the first—is the conquest of what we could call semilegal activity by opposition forces in at least two Eastern European workers states—Poland and Czechoslovakia. In these

two countries you have today united-front oppositional groupings that include revolutionary Marxists, Social Democrats, liberal bourgeois, conservatives, left Catholics.

They all fight for a common purpose: democratic rights for all the citizens of these countries—not to overthrow the government by force, not to reintroduce capitalism, not to start a civil war—but just a modest, limited, elementary democratic right not to be put in prison if you speak your mind or write what you believe.

I think that the revolutionary Marxists in these countries are 100 percent right to participate in this movement. Because if this movement is successful, the overwhelming probability—confirmed by the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and the 1968 Czechoslovak movement—is that the working class will profit a hundred times more than any small procapitalist forces.

We can be proud that some people in these countries associated with the world Trotskyist movement have taken the initiative in building up some of these movements. That shows a great political understanding of what is the next step forward in the direction of a political revolution.

These comrades know how to combine this common struggle for democratic freedoms with a strong defense of Marxism, of socialism, of communism, and of the economic basis of the new society that already exists in these countries.

The third important development—so far limited to Poland—is that an important sector of the working class, as a class, has thrown its weight behind the struggle against bureaucracy.

The Polish working class at three different stages—starting with the big strikes in the Baltic ports of 1970—has mobilized by the tens if not hundreds of thousands in big struggles for their just class demands.

And they have achieved important successes, not only of an economic nature but also in the political field. They have fought for the liberation of the striking workers who were in jail, and they have got their liberation. They have fought for the reinstatement of the fired strikers, and in many cases—though not all—they have conquered that too.

So if you take these three things together, you can say: “Well, we are not yet at the eve of the victory of the political revolution. But something is changing. This is a real movement, not just wishful thinking or a hope for the distant future.”

And that poses tremendous responsibilities for revolutionary Marxists not just inside these countries, but throughout the world.

All I can suggest to other *Militant* readers is that they distribute this as widely as possible. It has tremendous educational value and is something that is an excellent introduction to the ideas of the Socialist Workers Party.

M. F.
San Diego, California

[Copies of the “Emergency Jobs for All Bill”—reprinted from the *Militant*—can be ordered at two and a half cents each. Order from: Socialist Workers Party, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014.]

‘Population control’

I think *Militant* readers would be interested in a couple of quotations from the July 27 and August 3 *WIN Magazine*.

From an article, “Dying for Work: Occupational Safety and Health,” by Judy Butler, David Giovannitti, Marg Hainer, and Helen Shapiro: “Commenting on the fact that DBCP, a pesticide, causes sterility, a spokesperson for the National Peach Council said, ‘While involuntary sterility caused by a manufactured chemical may be bad, it is not necessarily so. After all, there are many people now paying to have themselves sterilized to assure they will no longer be able to become parents.’”

From an article, “The Politics of Health Feminism,” by Claudia Dreifus: “Dr. Frederick Robbins, a Nobel Laureate and the dean of Case Western Reserve Medical School, went one step further in a 1969 speech to the Association of American Medical Schools: ‘The dangers of over-population are so great that we may have to use certain techniques of conception control that may entail considerable risk to the individual woman.’”

Lois Remple
Pueblo, Colorado

Regular reader

Enclosed is a check toward a six-month subscription to your superb newspaper. Having enjoyed the past ten issues through your special offer to new readers, I find now that I cannot function without my regular perusal of the *Militant*—week after week.

And more power to you—in readership, in solidarity, and in promotion.

Deanna Dyke
Albuquerque, New Mexico

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

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Iranian masses demand: 'Down with the shah!'

By Noah Ellsworth

In the wake of the deadly theater fire in Abadan last month, mass antigovernment protests continue to rock Iran.

On September 4 hundreds of thousands of people in cities throughout the country demonstrated against the shah's tyrannical regime.

In Tehran, the capital, according to *Washington Post* correspondent William Branigin, 15,000 people demonstrated. "Residents said it was the largest opposition demonstration in the capital in 25 years," Branigin reports.

Confronted by truckloads of armed government troops, the Tehran demonstrators chanted, "Why do you kill your brothers?" They were referring to the massacre of scores of protesters by government forces during the last month.

The September 4 protests, which coincided with the last day of the Moslem holy month of Ramadan, demanded that religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini be allowed to return from exile. The demonstrations were only the latest in a mounting series that began more than a month ago and have escalated since the Abadan fire in mid-August.

The shah had attempted to diffuse the protests by pinning the blame for the estimated 600 deaths in that fire on opponents of his dictatorial rule. But this scheme backfired, as masses of Iranians placed the blame for the disaster on the shah and his secret police, the SAVAK.

The funeral ceremonies for victims of



August 28 demonstration in Yazd

the fires developed into huge antigovernment demonstrations, and other protests began to take place every day in major cities such as Tabriz, Qum, Hamadan, Meshed, Rasht, and others.

The shah sent tanks and armored cars into action to stop the upsurge. Many protesters were gunned down in cold blood. But the movement continued to grow.

So, on August 27, the shah was forced to try another tack to calm the situation and hang onto his power. He dismissed Prime Minister Jamshid

Amouzegar and replaced him with Jaafar Sharif-Emami. The new prime minister's most important qualification, according to the *Christian Science Monitor*, is his "membership in the inner group of 10 or a dozen people who have long constituted the select handful most trusted by the shah and most supportive of him."

Sharif-Emami formed what he called a "government of national reconciliation" and announced plans to negotiate with opposition leaders. In an overture to Moslem religious leaders, he restored the Islamic solar calendar

and closed down all gambling houses in the country.

But these moves will not quench the thirst of the Iranian masses for democratic and human rights. That was dramatically proven by the enormous nationwide demonstrations September 4.

Sharif-Emami, however, has also been forced to make several significant concessions. Press censorship has been loosened considerably, and newspapers are already running extensive interviews with opposition leaders and articles about the opposition movement. Activities by left-wing organizations are still not being covered, however.

The government has also backed down on its threat to close major Iranian universities, and it has granted workers three more vacation days.

In addition, Sharif-Emami has promised "free elections in the next parliamentary elections to be held in June 1979" and "freedom of activity for 'legitimate' political parties." So far, some thirty political parties have declared themselves publicly, most if not all of them ultrarightist or liberal capitalist parties.

Responding to this talk of free elections, the Iranian Trotskyists of the Sattar League have called for a constituent assembly. In their journal, *Barras Socialisti*, they write:

"Thousands upon thousands who have poured into the movement against autocracy are becoming aware

Continued on page 25

Socialist to Senate: Extend ERA deadline

The following is a statement released by Pat Grogan, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois. She is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 65.

The Senate will soon consider extending the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Unfortunately, there are no workers representatives to speak up for the interests of women and all working people in that debate.

If I were in the Senate this is what I would say:

Some of the senators here whine that extending the deadline for the ERA is "changing the rules in the middle of the game." Others claim that extension would tamper with sacred processes for amending the Constitution.

I say the question is very simple. Women demand equality before the law. We demand the ERA. Everything possible—including extension—must be done to make the ERA part of the Constitution.

Some of you threaten to filibuster. Do you think you can drown out the clamor of the rapidly growing movement for the ERA?

If equal rights for women stirs you to so much comment—why not listen to the real national debate going on outside this chamber?

Hundreds of thousands of people have recently entered that debate—on

the side of women. Black civil rights groups have voiced their support for the amendment. Labor unions have taken up the cause. Women who never before spoke up are now demanding the ERA.

Listen! We are demanding the ERA now!

We want equal pay for the jobs we do. Women make up 41 percent of the work force; yet we take home only 25 percent of the wages.

We want equal access to better jobs. Seven out of ten women have clerical, service, and operative jobs—low-paying work.

We want equal treatment under the law. Just last year the Commission for Civil Rights found 800 provisions in the U.S. Federal Code that force women into an inferior role.

We want an end to the attack on the rights we have fought for. Take the *Weber* lawsuit, which attacks my union, the United Steelworkers of America, and its right to negotiate contracts with affirmative-action clauses for our members. The *Weber* suit is an attempt to drive women and Blacks out of the work force.

Listen to what the 100,000 people said when they came here for the national march for the ERA on July 9.

I was here, marching with my union. Our thousands spoke for the majority in this country. If the senators here really represented the country, as you claim, you would listen to what was



Pat Grogan (front) with steelworkers on Chicago march for ERA last April.

said July 9 and pass the extension for the ERA immediately.

But do you represent this country? Do you represent women, any more than you represent working people?

This is the same body that is leading the attack on labor's right to organize, on Blacks' right to equal education, on women's right to abortion.

No, as a steelworker, as a woman, and as a socialist, I have learned this much. The Democrats and Republicans do not represent this country's working people. We must fight for our own interests.

That is why today I not only vote yes on extending the deadline to ratify the ERA. I pledge all the resources of my office to building a strong women's movement to fight for the ERA.

That's why today I urge all women to join the National Organization for Women and to attend NOW's national conference October 6-9 in Washington, D.C.

I warn you. You haven't seen the end of July 9. If our rights are not won, feminists, Blacks, unionists—we will all return here in even greater numbers than on July 9 to answer you.

And, if necessary, we will march on my home state, Illinois, and on other unrattified states to demand ratification of the ERA.

I vote yes for extension, yes for women's rights. And I urge all my sisters and brothers to vote yes also—in the streets.