

# THE MILITANT

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

## Thousands march to halt nuclear threat



SHOREHAM, Long Island, June 3—Fifteen thousand protesters demand shutdown of all nuclear plants. See pages 3-5.

## Mine workers launch campaign: 'Coal is still the answer'

## Stop Carter's Indochina war drive!

The counterrevolutionary alliance forged by the Carter administration against the Indochinese revolution has been forced into the open. The revelations appeared in an interview with Ieng Sary, chief aide to ousted Kampuchean

in recent weeks. The Carter administration is convinced that if the anti-imperialist fighters are not pushed back, the Kriangsak dictatorship in Thailand is doomed. Carter also knows that the Thai army and Kampuchean rightists don't have the muscle to impose a proimperialist government in Kampuchea without massive U.S. help.

That's why Carter probes for openings to increase U.S. military intervention in the conflict. Plans are being weighed for escalating the war if Vietnamese and Kampuchean troops strike back in self-defense against the Thai army.

A U.S. naval task force, headed by an 80,000-ton attack carrier, has sailed to Thailand. And the June 1 *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that diplomats in the region don't rule out direct U.S. involvement—"either a massive airlift of some arms or even battle-field intervention by carrier-based fighter-bombers."

These events confirm the February 23 *Militant's* warning about U.S. imperialist goals in Kampuchea: "Washington reacted to the toppling of the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea by escalating its political, economic, and military campaign against the Vietnamese revolution. . . .

"The Japanese and Australian imperialists' decision to cut off the dribble of aid they had been giving to Vietnam; Carter's move to beef up Thai military forces; and the Thai regime's covert support to Pol Pot's reactionary forces in Kampuchea and to counterrevolutionary guerrillas in Laos—these are all aimed at containing and rolling back the Vietnamese revolution.

"The antiwar sentiment of the American people is a big obstacle to direct U.S. intervention. Nonetheless, the moves by Washington and its allies pose a real danger of new

*Continued on next page*

### An editorial

dictator Pol Pot, that was printed in the June 1 *New York Times*.

Ieng Sary called for a right-wing front and increased U.S. help to defeat the Kampuchean masses. He admitted that the U.S.-dominated military regime in Thailand and the CIA-controlled Khmer Serei guerrillas are helping Pol Pot's rightist terror gangs in the Kampuchean civil war (see story on page 7).

Kampuchean-government and Vietnamese troops have won victories over rightist forces

## ... U.S. war drive

Continued from front page

military assaults against the Indochinese peoples."

For the past months, U.S. imperialism has been pressing a propaganda drive aimed at undermining the popular opposition to new war moves.

A big victory in this reactionary campaign was scored May 30 with the appearance of a full-page "open letter" denouncing purported human rights violations in Vietnam. Among the signers were such prominent trade-union officials as Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers union (see article on page 6).

By aiming its fire at the Vietnamese revolution, the letter gives the cover of "moral" legitimacy to Washington's war moves in Indochina. It fosters the notion that the government that carpet-bombed Vietnam has humanitarian objectives.

Although union members, like the majority of American people, came to overwhelmingly oppose the war in Vietnam, few unions became directly active in the antiwar movement. But with the deepening economic crisis the political outlook of American workers has considerably changed. The unions will from the beginning be the center and the driving force of opposition to any new military aggressions by the U.S. rulers.

In signing the "open letter," Fraser and other top union officials are trying to head off a union-based antiwar struggle before it starts.

Some who once opposed U.S. aggression in Indochina also added their names. This is a further sign of the "disorientation, confusion, and gullibility in the face of an imperialist propaganda barrage" that the *Militant* pointed to on February 23 as characteristic of petty-bourgeois leftists since the fall of Pol Pot.

This political collapse was signaled by the eagerness with which "anti-imperialist" publications like the *Guardian* swallowed the imperialist demand for Vietnamese troops to withdraw from Kampuchea.

The *Militant* rejected this demand: "Not 'Vietnam out of Kampuchea!' but 'U.S. out of Southeast Asia now!' must be our slogan."

Events continue to make crystal clear the counterrevolutionary meaning of the demand

that Vietnam withdraw from Kampuchea. It means turning the Kampuchean workers and peasants over to the tender mercies of Pol Pot's right-wing murder gangs, the CIA's Khmer Serei and the Thai army.

Contrary to what the capitalist press and many in the radical movement claimed, the Vietnamese role in helping topple Pol Pot was not an act of "Vietnamese expansionism." It was an act of self-defense against imperialist expansionism—which was and is using Pol Pot and the Thai regime as its instruments, with the added backing of the Beijing Stalinists.

The Kampuchean masses welcomed the Vietnamese as liberators from the gruesome capitalist tyranny of Pol Pot.

Today the Kampuchean workers and peasants have dissolved the hated agricultural forced-labor camps that Pol Pot instituted. And they are being armed to oppose the rightists. They know full well that Vietnamese withdrawal, until the U.S.-Thai-Pol Pot alliance has been decisively defeated, would be a severe setback to their struggle.

Working people in the United States and in the countries of Indochina have a common interest in putting an end to Washington's war drive.

We should demand an end to the imperialist offensive against Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Laos, and recognition of the governments in Hanoi and Phnompenh.

We should call on the U.S. government to stop all aid—open or covert—to Kampuchean-rightist or Thai government forces.

Abolish U.S. bases and arms programs in Southeast Asia! Withdraw the Seventh Fleet from Southeast Asian waters!

For massive international aid to help the Kampuchean workers and peasants stop famine and rebuild their country!

## Coal, not nukes

The increased labor participation in the June 2-3 International Days of Protest against nuclear power marked an important step forward in the fight to shut down all nuclear facilities. Half a dozen Auto Workers locals endorsed an antinuclear demonstration in Michigan. Several Steelworker locals joined a protest in Indiana.

Most important, the United Mine Workers of America has launched its own campaign to educate on the deadly hazards of nuclear power and to explain the alternative: coal. The UMW is the first international union in this country to take this stand.

"It is time for the American people to wake up to the dangers," says UMW President Arnold Miller.

The UMW is backing up its words with action. UMW Local 6417 in Colorado supported a protest against the Fort St. Vrain plant. Union representatives spoke at protests in Indiana and Pennsylvania. District 12 COMPAC (Coal Miners Political Action Committee) has set up its own committee and speakers bureau on the nuclear issue. The May *UMWA Journal* features a big spread on the coal alternative, including favorable mention of the antinuclear demonstration in Washington May 6.

The UMW stand helps combat the government-industry lie that we "can't afford" to shut down the nuclear plants—that doing so would require a drastic cutback in energy use and in workers' living standards. As the miners explain, there is plenty of coal to supply our energy needs for hundreds of years to come.

The UMW's position is the opposite of the reactionary stance of the coal industry and utilities, which demand rollback of pollution controls and safety standards as a precondition for mining and burning more coal. The UMW is for mining coal safely and burning it cleanly.

UMWA membership showed its strength when it stood up to and defeated a combined government-industry assault during the 110-day coal strike last year. The groups and coalitions already organizing against nuclear power should welcome the entry of that kind of union power into the fight. And they should give full support to the UMW's proposal for coal as labor's alternative.

Antinuclear activists in other unions will also be inspired and helped by the UMW's campaign. The stand taken by the coal miners will make it easier to win more unions to the antinuclear fight. And that prospect points toward the kind of powerful movement that can force the rulers of this country to halt their nuclear drive.

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### New stage in Peru

Since government's brutal defeat of miners' strike (left), Peruvian masses have been forced on defensive. Trotskyists are charting road forward based on working-class independence. **Page 18.**

### Iran: Arab workers challenge regime

Strikes and mass demonstrations by thousands of Arabs have deepened Iranian revolution and been met with armed attacks by capitalist regime. At least nine members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party have been arrested in the oil center of Ahwaz. **Page 9.**



### Labor's answer to gas crisis

Angered by shortages and soaring prices, unionists are discussing need for public ownership of energy industry. **Pages 10-11.**



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Published weekly by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014. Telephone: Editorial Office, (212) 243-6392; Business Office, (212) 929-3486.

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Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Subscriptions: U.S. \$15.00 a year; outside U.S. \$20.50. By first-class mail U.S., Canada, and Mexico \$42.50. Write for surface and airmail rates to all other countries.

For subscriptions airfreighted to London then posted to Britain and Ireland £2.50 for ten issues, £5.50 for six months (twenty-four issues), £10 for one year (forty-eight issues). Posted from London to Continental Europe £4 for ten issues, £8 for six months (twenty-four issues), £13 for one year (forty-eight issues). Send checks or international money orders (payable to Intercontinental Press account) to Intercontinental Press (The Militant) P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, England.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.



# Thousands say: 'No nukes!'

## Unions join June 2-3 actions

By Arnold Weissberg

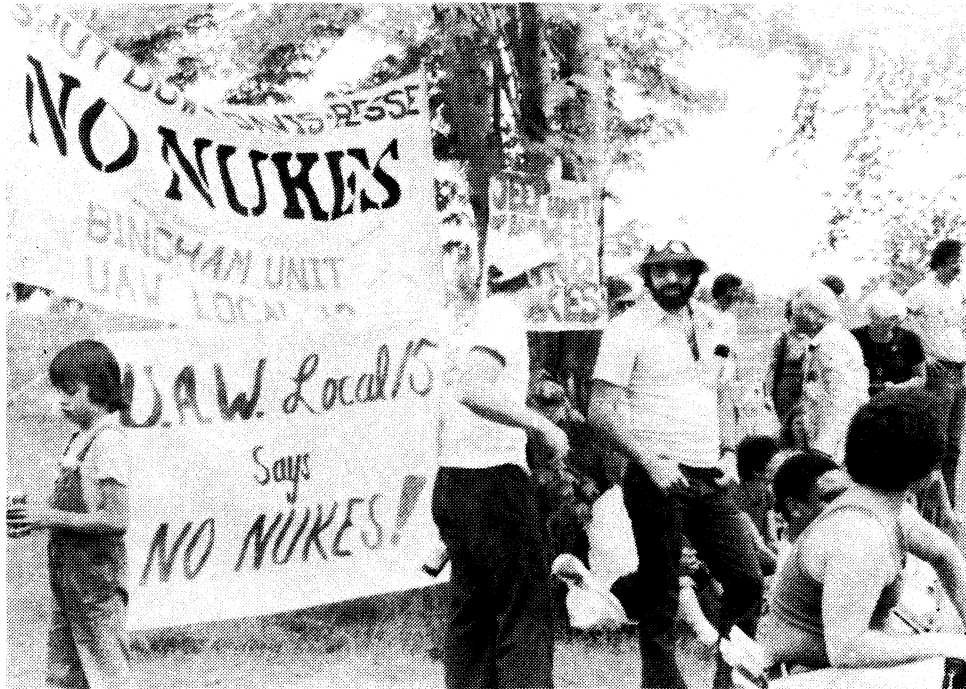
MONROE, Mich.—About 2,500 people rallied here, midway between Detroit and Toledo, against construction of the Fermi II nuclear power plant June 2. Organized chiefly by the Ann Arbor, Michigan-based Arbor Alliance, the rally drew significant labor support, as did other protests held June 2-3 as part of the International Days of Protest Against Nuclear Power.

Six locals of the United Auto Workers (UAW), both in Michigan and Ohio, endorsed the action here. Perhaps a hundred auto workers attended. Also present were steelworkers from at least two Michigan locals.

Speakers at the rally, which was held in a park that was once an anti-aircraft missile base, represented a broad range of activists and organizations opposed to nuclear power. These included students from the University of Michigan and members of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Grey Panthers, and Ann Arbor Ecology Center.

Mention from the stage of the banners carried by UAW members brought big cheers from the entire crowd. Twenty-five or more auto workers congregated around the banners from Local 15 in Detroit and the Jeep unit of Local 12 in Toledo.

Questions about Fermi II were "overdue," said Ernie Bushman, a longtime member of Local 12's Jeep unit and a steward. Bushman lives near Monroe. One generation of nuclear power plants, Bushman said, means increased cancer rates and "a



Contingents of auto workers came to June 2 antinuclear protest in Michigan

lot of malformed babies. I'm fearful of that."

Nuclear power is "a humanistic issue," a Black member of UAW Local 15 said. "The unions have to face the issue and do something about it."

Roy Scaife, a Black steelworker from Local 2341 in Detroit, said he thought the unions could begin doing educational work on the dangers of nuclear power. "We could have classes in the union meeting," he suggested.

All nuclear plants should be shut

down, said Jane Harris of UAW Local 140 in Detroit. Nuclear power is "too dangerous," she said, pointing to the unsolved problem of nuclear wastes. But, Harris said, the companies put "profits first despite the dangers."

Many unionists wanted their locals to step up educational activities about the dangers of nuclear power. "If people are more educated about the facts, they'd do more," said a Local 15 member.

Some workers spoke about the link

between the gasoline shortage and nukes. "We have to take over the entire energy industry and run it ourselves," said Harris.

Sue Skinner, a member of the Jeep unit of UAW Local 12 in Toledo and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, explained how auto workers organized to build the march.

Skinner's unit, along with another Local 12 unit, endorsed the demonstration. Before a local meeting took up the endorsement, a resolution was circulated in the plant. Fifty workers signed it. The resolution called for shutting down the Davis-Besse nuclear plant near Toledo as well as halting construction on Fermi II, and for making the utilities absorb all the losses.

Many of these ideas were echoed from the platform by Mike Parker, speaking on behalf of UAW Local 869 in Warren, Michigan. "We as workers have a right to a job, and that means a safe job," Parker said. "No more black lung, no more asbestosis, and no more nukes!"

SHEBOYGAN, Wisc.—About 750 people rallied here June 3 against construction of the Haven nuclear power plant. A featured speaker was Ray Majerus, director of United Auto Workers Region 10. "We in the labor movement have always had to struggle," Majerus said. "It used to be our slogan, and now we're going to share it with all the world: property rights or human rights."

The rally and a march were sponsored by the Rainbow Alliance.

# Miners open drive against nuclear power

By Nancy Cole

With the May issue of the *United Mine Workers Journal*, the UMWA is the first international union to come out squarely against the dangers of nuclear power, proposing that coal be used as its alternative.

Titled, "Three Mile Island: Coal is Still the Answer," the six-page article, featured on the cover, is a step toward placing the 270,000-member coal miners union in the forefront of the fight to shut down all nuclear plants.

"... the irony of the Three Mile Island accident is that this nuclear plant sits atop one of the nation's richest coal regions," said UMWA President Arnold Miller in a statement quoted in the *Journal*.

Reviewing the promises made by the nuclear industry, Miller's statement goes on, "In 1954, the plan was to reprocess nuclear waste. The reprocessing was done to provide additional electricity. But reprocessing never worked, and that leaves our countryside sitting on nuclear waste, which seeps into our water and food supplies and into our homes and work places."

"America—and the world—needs all the energy supplies that technology can today provide. Coal is

being ignored, while nuclear energy—without proper technology—is expanding to deadly proportions. They have us by the throat. It is time for the American people to wake up to the dangers."

The *Journal* article favorably highlights the May 6 antinuclear demonstration in Washington, with a picture of the crowd and a caption describing it as "the largest gathering ever in protest of the use of nuclear power."

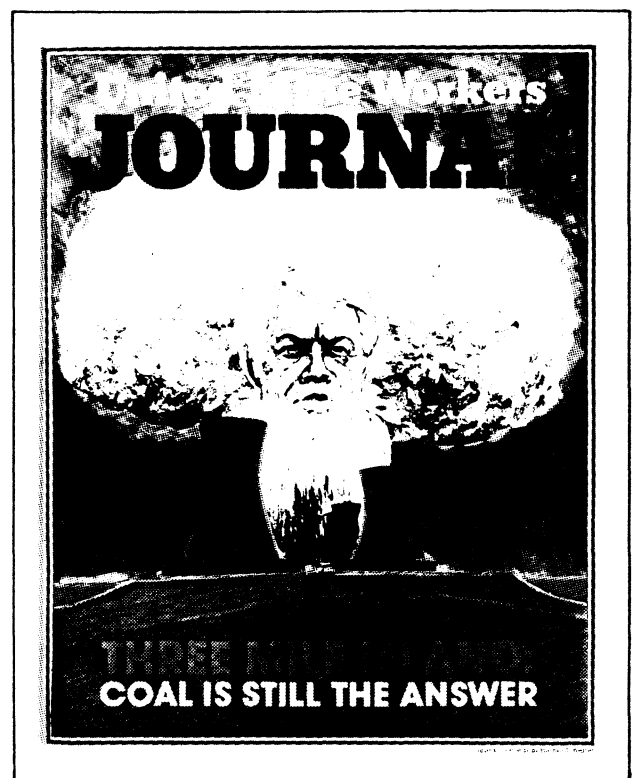
William Savitsky, UMWA International Executive Board member from District 25, told the *Journal* that production of anthracite coal in eastern Pennsylvania, his district, dropped from 100 million tons a year during World War I to the current 5 million tons.

Eastern Pennsylvania, he said, has 7.5 billion tons of accessible anthracite, "which is virtually sulfur-free and enough to fuel this nation for hundreds of years."

Compared with bituminous or soft coal, anthracite is more difficult to mine because it is in deep and irregular seams.

The *Journal* continues, "The technology exists for safely using more coal (both anthracite and bituminous), Savitsky said. He added that better mining

Continued on page 5



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# Widespread support for nuclear protests

## New York

By Michael Maggi

SHOREHAM, Long Island—More than 15,000 braved driving rain June 3 to rally against a nuclear power plant under construction here. While the rally took place, hundreds climbed fences and entered the construction site, which is half a mile away, in a peaceful effort to occupy the plant. Five hundred seventy-one were arrested on trespassing charges.

The actions were sponsored by the SHAD Alliance, a regional anti-nuclear power group with chapters in several cities.

The Shoreham plant is 80 percent complete and already obsolete, but Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO), the owner, and General Electric, the manufacturer, are pushing ahead with it anyway. The plant has drawn widespread opposition in Suffolk County, where it is located.

County resident Zig Smitt of Amagansett spoke for many when he declared, "We stopped the war. We stopped segregation. We will stop nuclear power!" The crowd roared its agreement.

Other speakers included Jack Meisel of the International Association of Machinists Lodge 1470; Nobel-prize winner George Wald; physicist Michio Kaku; writer Grace Paley; and antiwar activist David Dellinger.

Victor Gotbaum, president of District 37, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, denounced the LILCO reactor in a statement released at a May 29 SHAD news conference. "We have seen too much neglect, incompetence and sheer greed in planning, building, and maintaining a condition which can destroy us all," Gotbaum said. "Representing 115,000 working men and women, I join in demanding that this mindless process be stopped at once."

Local 7528 of the United Steelworkers of America, in Bridgeport, Connecticut, passed a resolution against nuclear power and sent a contingent to the rally. The local's resolution concluded, "Local 7528 . . . opposes the construction, manufacture, operation, exportation or proliferation of additional nuclear power plants, including Millstone 3 and Shoreham."

Jack Meisel, also joined SHAD at its press conference. "The Machinists Union endorses and supports the June 3rd demonstration against the Shoreham reactor," Meisel said. "We do so because our instincts choose human

values, safety, and health, and because the unparalleled transfer of wealth from the consumer to the utilities is unconscionable. . . . Indeed, we believe profits, dividends, and executive compensations are the only true motives of the corporate utilities.

Growing cooperation between SHAD and unions and union activists produced the first labor outreach leaflet by SHAD.

The 571 people arrested were mostly young people. More than 200 of these activists camped out near Shoreham the night before the action and held a day of meetings, training sessions, and informal discussions.

## Massachusetts

By Jeanette Tracy

PLYMOUTH, Mass.—Nearly 5,000 people gathered June 3 outside the Pilgrim I nuclear power plant here. Organized by the Pilgrim Alliance, Boston Clamshell Coalition, and the Massachusetts Bay Coalition, the demonstration demanded the shutdown of Pilgrim I and the end of plans to construct a second Pilgrim plant.

The action was endorsed by dozens of other groups, including Mobilization for Survival, the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, South Middlesex NOW, the Socialist Workers Party, and antinuke coalitions on various campuses in the New England area.

Hundreds of people came on buses from the Boston area. A group of twelve workers at the General Electric plant in Lynn, members of International Union of Electrical Workers Local 201, came on a bus they organized from the North Shore area. Demonstrators came from all over eastern Massachusetts.

Mel King, a Black Democratic state representative and candidate for mayor of Boston, spoke at the rally, calling on the demonstrators to organize and vote for state representatives who would stop nuclear power.

But Luis Castro, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Boston and a member of IUE Local 201, urged the activists there to turn to the real force that can stop nuclear power—the labor movement.

"Three Mile Island has awakened the consciousness of thousands of working people to the deception to which they have been subjected and to the dangers of nuclear power and nuclear weapons," Castro said. "We

have to take the antinuclear movement to the trade unions and we have to tell people the truth: that there are alternative energy sources immediately available if we put human needs before profit."

Discussing an anti-nuclear power resolution passed by District 2 of the Meatcutters union, Jerry Gordon, an international union representative, explained, "This resolution was not directed against construction workers. It is pro-health, pro-clean air and pro-alternative sources of energy. The only ones our resolution is against are the owners of the nuclear industry—the nuclear criminals."

Also speaking was Bill Abbott, a local resident, who spoke about the legal battle to stop Pilgrim II. Abbott declared that the fight would be won "in the battle for public rejection of nuclear power."

A day earlier, 250 had demonstrated against nuclear weapons in Cambridge, Massachusetts, outside the Draper Laboratory, a major defense contractor. Also, over 1,000 people rallied in Taunton, Massachusetts, against the proposal to build a chemical waste disposal dump in the area.

## Pennsylvania

By Ginny Hildebrand

BEAVER, Pa.—"Coal is a safe alternative to nuclear power," stated Joe Jurczak at a June 2 rally here.

The staff head of the local United Mine Workers Committee on Political Action was speaking to the 250 people protesting the scheduled reopening of the Beaver Valley No. 1 nuclear plant in nearby Shippingport. The plant was ordered closed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission on March 12 because its ability to withstand earthquakes could not be guaranteed.

Jurczak answered the claim that the many mining disasters prove that nuclear power is safer than coal. The energies of such hypocrites, he said, would be better spent supporting the UMWA's demand that the coal operators and government ensure safe working conditions and adequate health benefits for miners and their families.

"Coal can be mined safely and burnt cleanly," he emphasized.

A resident of Middletown, Pennsylvania, provided the rally with a firsthand account of the Three Mile Island disaster. She announced the Metropolitan Edison plans to reopen the damaged plant within six months.

Dr. Ernest Sternglass, an expert on the effects of low-level radiation, stressed that the government cannot be relied on to tell us the truth about nuclear power because it works in cooperation with the nuclear industry's profit drive.

Also speaking were representatives of anti-nuclear power groups, the Beaver County National Organization for Women, and Monsignor Charles Owen Rice.

Among the predominantly young demonstrators were a number of unionists. A group of United Electrical Workers from Local 610 in Pittsburgh carried signs stating "Electrical Workers Against Nuclear Power." Also present were members of United Steelworkers Local 7032 at the nearby Aliquippa plant of Jones and Laughlin. They were joined by members of USWA Locals 1843 and 1272, the locals at J&L's Pittsburgh Works.

The main sponsors of the demonstration were the Beaver Citizens Concerned about Nuclear Energy and the Pittsburgh Coalition for a Non-nuclear World.

## Indiana

By Arnold Weissberg

MICHIGAN CITY, Ind.—About 300 people, many of them steelworkers and their families, demonstrated against construction of the Bailly I nuclear

power plant here June 3. The march and rally, organized by the Bailly Alliance, were backed by several of the area's largest basic-steel locals.

The speakers reflected the deep concern about nuclear power among the tens of thousands of steel unionists and other workers in the Chicago-northern Indiana region.

"We must educate our members on the dangers of nuclear power and explain why we should go in the direction of solar, wind, and coal," declared James Balanoff, director of USWA District 31.

"We must start to alert as many people as we can, and I pledge that that's going to be one of my major jobs in the next few months," Balanoff continued, "to start to educate the members that I represent."

Also speaking was Dave Wilborn, president of USWA Local 6787, which represents 6,000 workers at the Bethlehem Steel mill right next to the Bailly site. Local 6787 has entered a court fight to stop Bailly.

"We don't want 'em, we don't need 'em, and we're not going to have them!" Wilborn said.

Alice Peurala, president of USWA Local 65 at U.S. Steel's South Works in Chicago, and Fred Duckworth, an international representative of the United Mine Workers, also spoke. Duckworth focused his speech on the UMWA's campaign against nukes and for expanding coal production. (Future issues of the *Militant* will carry major excerpts from these and other speeches).

The rally was chaired by Mike Olszanski, head of the environmental committee of USWA Local 1010.

Several local activists also spoke.

One of the speakers at the rally was Pat Clark, president of USWA Local 1026 at the Blau-Knox foundry in Chicago. Clark told the *Militant* he was concerned about the dangers of nuclear power because the members of his local live near Bailly.

Clark said he believed the country "ought to use coal" to generate electricity. "It would put men back to work," he said.

## Minnesota

By Susan La Mont

PRAIRIE ISLAND, Minn.—Nearly 800 protesters from Minnesota and parts of Wisconsin gathered here at the Prairie Island Indian Reservation on June 3. They demanded that Northern States Power's Prairie Island nuclear power plant be shut down. The plant sits on Indian land about forty-five miles from Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The march to the nuke site was headed by Wallace Wells of the Prairie Island Reservation and a contingent of the American Indian Movement from the Twin Cities. Wells was dressed in ceremonial clothes and wore a single feather in his braided hair. The feather was pointed down.

"When you're against the government, when you go to war, you put the feather down," he said. "The same thing could happen here as happened in Harrisburg. I live only a half mile from the plant. I'm looking out for my children and grandchildren."

A number of farmers and their families who live around the Prairie Island plant also attended the demonstration. Don Flynn, a local farmer, loaned his flatbed truck to serve as a speaker's platform and helped set up the rally site. Flynn once owned the land on which the plant sits. He is a vocal opponent of nuclear energy and Northern States Power, which told his family that the land would be used as a site for a coal-burning plant.

Farmers also came from Tyrone, Wisconsin, where the antinuclear movement has so far succeeded in preventing NSP from constructing another nuclear power plant.

The Antinuke Days Coalition, made up of some fifty groups, organized the protest.



Antinuclear protests June 2-3 took place all over the country. Above, a deputy sheriff leads protesters away from a plant construction site in Oklahoma, where 339 were arrested. Actions in the South included Miami, where 400 people attended a rally. Two hundred participated in a march and rally in New Orleans. A dozen out of a hundred protesters were arrested at a facility near Russellville, Arkansas. One hundred fifty rallied at the state capital in Atlanta. In Platteville, Colorado, 1,500 demonstrated at the Fort St. Vrain plant. Twelve hundred people marched and rallied against the Zimmer plant in Moscow, Ohio. A march and rally of 500 took place in Champaign, Illinois, and more than 2,000 people protested in North Perry, Ohio.



# Atomic workers strike over safety conditions

By Nancy Cole

The Department of Energy and the Goodyear Atomic Corporation are recklessly endangering the community surrounding a uranium plant near Portsmouth, Ohio, charges the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union.

The 1,551 members of OCAW Local 3-689 struck the nuclear facility on May 3 after their contract expired. Since then, the union contends, Goodyear has continued running the plant at close to full production with unqualified supervisory personnel.

In a telephone interview with the *Militant*, Local 3-689 President Dennis Bloomfield explained the strike and the general conditions that confront workers at the nuclear plant.

The facility enriches uranium for use in nuclear submarines and weapons. It is owned by the Department of Energy and operated by Goodyear Atomic, a subsidiary of Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company.

The contract issues center around Goodyear's takeaway demands, including layoff and overtime procedures and sick leave. The local is also seeking contract "clarification" on the question of federal regulation. In addition to owning the facility, the Department of Energy also regulates its safety!

According to Bloomfield, the Energy Department is "subsidizing" Goodyear during the strike, as well as relaxing safety regulations.

The plant normally employs some 370 operators, who have to go through a sixty-five-week training program to become certified. Since the strike be-

gan, "they've got people in there who have never even been in the building before, who have never seen the equipment. They're allowed to get by with it because the Department of Energy turns its head," says Bloomfield.

The dangers to the community include "high-level radiation escaping in a gaseous form to the atmosphere then becoming crystallized just like fallout," he says.

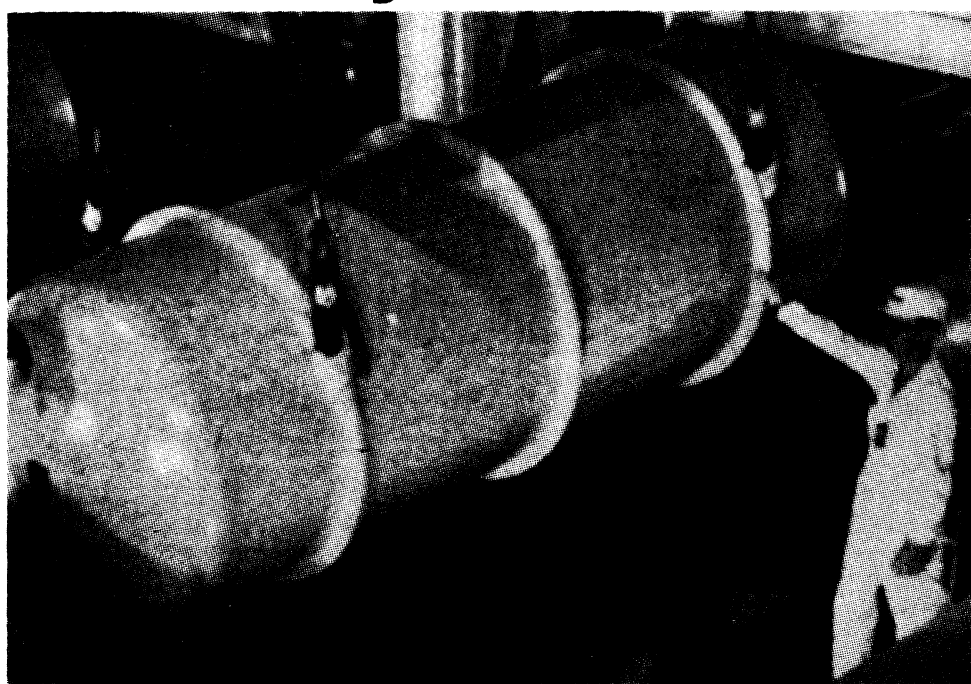
During the local's last strike, a 114-day walkout in 1976, 800 pounds of uranium hexafluoride were released into the atmosphere.

The company claimed to have contained the release within the boundaries of the plant, explains Bloomfield. "But the only thing that surrounds the facility is a chain-link fence. If you can contain gas in a chain-link fence, you're a miracle worker.

"Then they said, 'Well, we contained it within the building.' When we went on strike in 1976 there was a door missing from that building. And it was still missing when we went back to work."

When they're on the job, the OCAW president says, workers face problems daily with the Energy Department. "They own the damned place and yet they're charged with our health and safety. We file a formal safety complaint with the Department of Energy, and do you know what we get back? 'Take it up with the company,' they say. They don't even investigate."

In Bloomfield's nine years at the plant, he can recall only one safety inspection. That was two years ago.



Gov't standards at Portsmouth plant, which is like one pictured above, allow workers to be continuously exposed to radiation.

The Department of Energy cited Goodyear for 102 safety violations—and then turned them over to the company to take care of.

"They've never been back and every one of those violations still exists."

Bloomfield cites examples of the company's approach to safety. Salaried workers who survey work areas for radiation contamination are told not to wear gloves or other paraphernalia that might "cause apprehension on the part of hourly employees."

He says the company's attitude is:

"If the workers become afraid of working in the areas where there's contamination, we're going to have problems."

He continues, "Company people, salaried people as high as shift superintendent, will tell workers, 'You can eat that stuff, it won't hurt you.' This is the kind of indoctrination our new employees get.

"If there is a gaseous release contained in a building, they don't go in and clean it up. As soon as it crystallizes from a gas to pellets, they tell them to get back in there and go to work. All you have to do is get it in your system in any way at all—through an open wound, by inhaling it, picking it up through eating, anyway—and you've got radiation in your body."

The union has also discovered that Goodyear is falsifying reports on the radioactivity analyzed in workers' urine. "We accidentally came across a urinalysis report marked 'company confidential' that didn't coincide with the reports we were getting," he says.

"They were telling us there were no problems, but the confidential reports were way higher than the ones they were letting out to the union.

"We sent a complaint to the Department of Energy. They said, 'Don't complain to us, talk it over with the company.'"

## Antinuclear actions around world

By August Nimtz

Tens of thousands demonstrated throughout Europe against nuclear power on June 2 and 3. The International Days of Protest Against Nuclear Power were initiated by anti-nuclear groups in Europe.

The largest actions took place in the Netherlands. According to Reuters, more than 10,000 people gathered near the town of Gasselte to protest nuclear plants and the storage of radioactive waste. The government is considering using nearby

salt caves as a dumping site.

In Spain, civil guards fired on a demonstration of more than 2,000 in the Basque city of Bilbao, killing one woman. The marchers were protesting the construction of an American-supplied nuclear plant near the city. Outraged protests against the killing of the activist have since taken place in Pamplona, another city in the Basque region. Militants have also called for a general strike throughout the region.

Associated Press also reported

that more than 8,000 participated in a demonstration at Kalkar, West Germany, against the construction of a fast breeder reactor. Three thousand took part in a protest against a plant site in the French province of Brittany.

And in Canada, about 1,000 marched on a nuclear plant near Darlington, Ontario. Sixty-one protestors were arrested at the plant.

Protests were also scheduled to take place in Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Austria, Great Britain, and Ireland.

## ...miners

Continued from page 3

safety standards, coupled with the creation of more mining jobs, could boost the nation and local economies. And he emphasized that more research and development could make coal an even more viable energy resource."

Lou Antal, director of western Pennsylvania's UMWA District 5, told the *Journal*, "While the Three Mile Island incident points out the potential danger, there is much more danger ahead for the people of Pennsylvania, because they have plans on the drawing board to have (at least 27) nuclear plants strung across the state of Pennsylvania—thereby making Pennsylvania a 'nuclear dumping ground.'"

Turning to the Carter administration, Antal said Energy Secretary James Schlesinger "is for nuclear energy and not for coal. And now he's switched his remarks to solar energy, which is years away. In my opinion, it (the energy maze) is a total sham—a cover-up for continuing with nuclear energy."

The *Journal* makes it clear that the UMWA is for burning coal *cleanly*, just as the union is for mining coal *safely*. It takes the opposite stance from the coal industry and utilities, which insist that federal safety and pollution laws must be relaxed before the coal alternative can be massively tapped.

The UMWA supports proposed federal regulations, now under heavy fire from the coal companies and utilities, to require an 85 percent reduction in sulfur emissions at coal-powered plants.

Development and research of coal are low on the Energy Department's list of priorities, the *Journal* reports. "The utilization of coal in an environmentally acceptable manner requires that we invest the

necessary funds immediately—not sometime in the unseen future," District 20 IEB member Frank Clements told Carter's Coal Commission.

Miller's statement noted, "The source of nuclear energy is uranium; uranium is mined like coal. It is processed four times prior to its actual conversion to fuel and to the subsequent use of this fuel to produce electricity. If coal was processed that many times, little or no waste or pollutants would result from the burning of coal, either."

One unfortunate aspect of the UMWA's approach is that it bends to the oil monopoly's false line that dependence on "foreign" energy sources—especially "Arab oil"—is responsible for the energy crisis. That very claim is, of course, used by the energy

trust to justify high prices, nuclear plants, and attacks on workers' rights.

But it is not "Arab oil" that caused the present gas shortages or that put miners out of work. The layoffs and shortages are the products of an energy system, *controlled by the powerful U.S. oil monopolies*, that operates only on the basis of what will produce the biggest profits.

As the *Journal* quotes District 5 director Antal, "... the oil people own much of the coal reserves. It seems to me that since there's more profit in oil, the oil companies figure they can always reach back for coal. The name of the game is the buck, and the luck of the buck is in the oil companies' favor. They're dictating the energy policy."

## Colorado UMWA backs protests

The following is excerpted from a letter from United Mine Workers Local 6417 President Joe Voorhees to the Coalition to Close Fort St. Vrain, an antinuclear group in Colorado.

We the members of Local #6417, District #15, United Mine Workers of America, would like to inform you that we back your position against nuclear power. We are in favor of shutting down any and all nuclear power plants.

We naturally are in favor of coal production and coal powered power plants and feel the Federal Government should spend some money to make coal fired power plants suitable for use all over the country.

There has been a gross misrepresentation of

facts when it is stated that nuclear power is not as costly in human lives as coal. We would like to challenge the nuclear power companies to talk to some older uranium miners. Those miners that have worked in the mines for 20 years or so and have all died of lung cancer.

Our area, Grand Junction, Colorado, has gone through very lengthy and expensive tailings removal process. It would probably be impossible to assess the number of radioactive cancer deaths related to these tailings.

The coal supply today heavily outweighs the present demand, thus causing a very soft market for coal. We feel that with an effective energy policy, with coal, the safest, most economical, natural fuel available, the employment opportunity would be very great in the coal industry and power plant operations.

# Open letter attacks Vietnamese revolution

By David Frankel

The publication in five major newspapers May 30 of an "Open Letter to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" has given the U.S. government a big victory in its offensive against the Vietnamese revolution.

Under the guise of protesting human rights violations in Vietnam, a number of prominent figures from the movement against the Vietnam War in the 1960s signed an utterly reactionary apology for imperialism.

Cosigners of the letter (there were eighty-four in all) represented a mixed group. They included a number of top trade-union officials: Douglas Fraser, president of the United Auto Workers; Jacob Sheinkman, secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; and César Chávez, head of the United Farm Workers.

Auto workers, farm workers, and others should be outraged at this misuse of their unions' name to serve a reactionary cause. Fraser and Sheinkman never tried to seriously mobilize the union ranks during the Vietnam War, despite the overwhelming antiwar sentiment that existed. And today they are helping Carter prepare for future wars.

Also represented among the signers are Democratic Party hacks such as former California governor Edmund Brown and Frank Mankiewicz, who served in the Kennedy administration during the early years of the war.

Using pacifist folksinger Joan Baez to front for them, these forces were successful in roping in a layer of suckers who—unlike them—were known as opponents of the Vietnam War. These include Bradford Lyttle, Daniel Berrigan, Nat Hentoff, and Staughton Lynd.

### A country at war

In an unrestrained attack on the Vietnamese revolution, the open letter charges that "instead of bringing hope and reconciliation to war-torn Vietnam, your government has created a painful nightmare. . . ."

Before looking at the specific charges in the open letter, it is useful to review the context in which they are made—something that the signers fail to do.

Vietnam today is a country at war. The reason is that American imperialism, after its defeat in 1975, is attempting to prevent the extension of the Vietnamese revolution and, if possible, to overturn the socialist revolution in Vietnam itself.

Washington is backing rightist armies in Laos and Kampuchea that are trying to reestablish pro-imperialist regimes, and it is increasing its aid to the military dictatorship in Thailand.

The very day after the open letter appeared in print, an aide to former Kampuchean Prime Minister Pol Pot announced the formation of a right-wing front uniting the counterrevolutionary forces in the area. (See story on facing page.)

Meanwhile, the Stalinist rulers in Beijing (Peking), also taking their cue from Washington, threaten Vietnam with a new invasion.

What is behind this ominous build-up against Vietnam?

The answer given by imperialist propagandists is that the Vietnamese regime is out to conquer all of Indochina, perhaps even all of Southeast Asia.

We are asked to believe that the Vietnamese workers and peasants—after thirty years of uninterrupted war that left their agriculture disorganized, their industry and cities in ruins, and much of their land ravaged by defoliants and high explosives—don't want to be left in peace to rebuild their country.

According to the capitalist media these victims of a century of imperial-



U.S. troops rounding up Vietnamese villagers as suspected rebels in 1966. In signing open letter, union officials such as Douglas Fraser take side of imperialism against Vietnamese workers and peasants and against interests of U.S. labor movement.

ist aggression have now suddenly embarked on an unprovoked campaign of conquest.

### Fear of revolution

This explanation, so reminiscent of Washington's original charges of "Communist aggression" in Vietnam, is false to the core. What explains the new developments in Indochina is the advance of revolution in Indochina, and imperialism's fear that the social revolution will spread even further.

There is good reason for the U.S. ruling class to fear the effect of the Vietnamese revolution on the workers and peasants in Southeast Asia.

Despite the staggering difficulties faced by the Vietnamese workers state, it has been able to carry out a major expansion in health care and education. It has made rapid strides in reducing unemployment, reorganizing agriculture and industry, and returning the land to the peasantry. And it has decisively thrown off the yoke of imperialist domination.

While you would never know it to read the open letter, these social changes—which U.S. imperialism and its Saigon clients fought desperately to prevent—have improved the lives of tens of millions of working people.

These are the accomplishments made possible by a social revolution, by the elimination of the exploitation of the workers and peasants by capitalism.

The completion of the overturn of capitalism in South Vietnam in March 1978 led to the intensification of an imperialist-inspired border war carried out by the right-wing regime in Kampuchea, and to a sharp increase in the capitalist propaganda campaign against Vietnam. The open letter's dismissal of the revolution as a "nightmare" is a part of this campaign.

When Vietnamese-supported forces overthrew the Pol Pot government in Kampuchea in January 1979, the hatred of the imperialists reached a crescendo.

Although Carter was successful in getting the Beijing Stalinists to invade Vietnam in February, he has not been able to achieve the desired result—Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea.

Carter and his advisers have learned again and again that they cannot rely

on surrogates such as the shah of Iran or the military dictatorship in Thailand to preserve imperialist interests. They have to free their hands for direct intervention with U.S. forces.

### Propaganda war

Side by side with the U.S.-financed shooting war now going on in Indochina, there is a propaganda war designed to cover up Washington's responsibility in the whole criminal operation and to prepare the American people for new imperialist interventions.

The open letter signed by Fraser and company is a major development in that propaganda war. It has been seized upon by all those who want to discredit the anti-Vietnam War movement and the ideas that it fought for.

Rewriting the history of the Vietnam War and undermining antiwar sentiment among the working class is absolutely necessary for the imperialists if they hope to carry out their war plans.

In this vein, the open letter asserts that the new government in Vietnam is, if anything, worse than the U.S.-sponsored dictatorship. It tells the Vietnamese that "the cruelty, violence and oppression practiced by foreign powers in your country for more than a century continue today under the present regime."

Accusing the Vietnamese government of "brutal disregard for human life," the statement calls on it "to establish real peace in Vietnam."

But there is one reason, and one reason only, that Vietnam remains at war today: *the continuing U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia*. The statement completely ignores this central fact.

### 'Political prisoners'?

Citing "verified reports" from the same capitalist press that lied about the slaughter in Indochina for years, and that is today lying about everything from the gas shortage to the Iranian revolution, the open letter recounts a tale of horrors.

Without bothering to point out the legacy of thirty years of civil war and the continuing imperialist-inspired war against Vietnam, it charges that "the current number of political prisoners [is] between 150,000 and 200,000."

As with its other claims, the statement provides no solid evidence for its

figures. Nor does it back up its assertion that a substantial number of the prisoners were not connected with the Saigon dictatorship.

The fact is that when the new regime in Vietnam came to power, it released hundreds of thousands of political prisoners. It dismantled the "strategic hamlet" concentration camps in which vast numbers of peasants were penned. And it also freed thousands of prisoners of war.

But the Vietnamese government had to contend with the fact that the Saigon dictatorship had built up a repressive apparatus numbering some 1.4 million. Under the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the Vietnamese don't feel that they can allow all of the former Saigon officer corps, police force, and functionaries to run loose.

Guerrilla groups organized by former U.S.-trained officers of the Saigon Army are still operating in some sections of Vietnam. A report in the June 1 *New York Times* described the account of three "refugees, including a former captain in South Vietnam's elite airborne division, [who] reported having taken part in ambushes of Communist trucks on lonely jungle roads and the killing of Communist policemen in a provincial town."

### 'Starvation diet'

Another complaint in the open letter is that prisoners are "fed a starvation diet of stale rice"—the same charge that was made in regard to American prisoners of war by right-wing forces during the Vietnam War.

Because of the ruin brought by the U.S. war to Vietnam's agriculture, the country has difficulty feeding itself. Prisoners are not the only ones who are suffering. In 1977, floods, drought, and attacks on border areas by Kampuchean forces led to a 25 percent reduction in the rice ration for all Vietnamese. (Under the new regime, rationing assures that all have food—something the pro-U.S. government never tried to accomplish.)

Union members who—unlike Fraser and Sheinkman—are really concerned about hunger in Vietnam should demand that these labor officials call on the Carter administration to lift the U.S. trade embargo, and that Washington provide massive aid to help the

*Continued on page 8*



## New light on imperialist drive in Indochina

By Fred Feldman

The former deputy prime minister in Pol Pot's regime in Kampuchea has made a public bid for expanded imperialist backing and a "united front" with forces of the CIA-installed Lon Nol government, which fell in 1975. In a May 31 interview with *New York Times* correspondent Henry Kamm, Ieng Sary—now second in command of the remnants of Pol Pot's rightist Khmer Rouge army—stated the following:

- "Mutual comprehension is growing" between the Khmer Rouge and the forces of the former Lon Nol regime, both of which are fighting to topple the new Kampuchean government and drive out Vietnamese troops.
- The Kampuchean regime that might emerge if the alliance succeeds could be "capitalistic or even monastic."
- "Forces from outside" are fighting alongside Pol Pot today.
- The Thai military dictatorship has a "very good attitude" and is giving vitally needed assistance to the Pol Pot forces.
- More outside help is needed to defeat the Heng Samrin government and its Vietnamese allies.
- Atrocities and excesses occurred during Pol Pot's reign.
- The Khmer Rouge opposes any international effort to prevent a famine in Kampuchea.

The interview, one of several given by Ieng Sary to major capitalist dailies, signals a further escalation of the drive by imperialism, U.S. imperialism above all, to contain the Indochinese revolution.

Kamm obtained at least part of the interview while accompanying Ieng Sary on a flight from Bangkok, Thailand, to Colombo, Ceylon. Quotations and summaries of Ieng Sary's remarks were reported extensively in the June 1 *New York Times*.

Ieng Sary told Kamm that he had just left Kampuchea. A recent photograph of Pol Pot accompanied the *Times* article.

### Rightist 'united front'

This open announcement of a counterrevolutionary "united front" follows the massive defeat dealt the Khmer Rouge in recent months by Kampuchean and Vietnamese forces. The alliance is designed to provide acceptable cover for Washington and its Southeast Asian allies to intervene more openly and with greater military force. Ever since the fall of Pol Pot in January 1979, Washington's aim has been to topple the new Kampuchean government and install a reliable capitalist regime as a buffer between the Vietnamese workers state and the shaky capitalist regime in Thailand.

The interview coincided with stepped-up pressures and threats against Laos, Kampuchea, and Vietnam from the Thai regime, Beijing (Peking) Stalinists, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The "implication" throughout the interview, according to Kamm, was that Heng Samrin's government now "controlled all of Cambodia except for one or two pockets."

"Former Prime Minister Pol Pot," Kamm stated, "is ready to enter a coalition with his right wing enemies, his top aide said today."

Ieng Sary told Kamm that "mutual comprehension is growing" with key figures in the former Lon Nol regime. Lon Nol's government, installed with imperialist backing in 1970, was driven out in a five-year civil war led by the Khmer Rouge. What is today called the Khmer Rouge is only a reactionary remnant of this army—the product of splits, purges, and bloody clashes that began in 1973, two years before rebel units captured Phnompenh.

Ieng Sary expressed interest in having Kampuchean Prince Norodom Sihanouk act as head of the proposed counterrevolutionary front. Sihanouk, who is now living in Beijing, was selected to represent the Pol Pot government at the United Nations just before the Khmer Rouge government fled Phnompenh in January 1979. When Sihanouk discovered that the regime's repressive record had discredited it around the world, he formally dissociated himself from Pol Pot.

The June 2 *Washington Post* quotes Ieng Sary as saying, "If [Sihanouk] believes that the people are the principal force in the fight against the invader, we believe that our people will trust him and perhaps even grant him the honor of leading them. We are ready to forget everything on condition that Sihanouk is ready to fight."

### 'Capitalist or monastic'

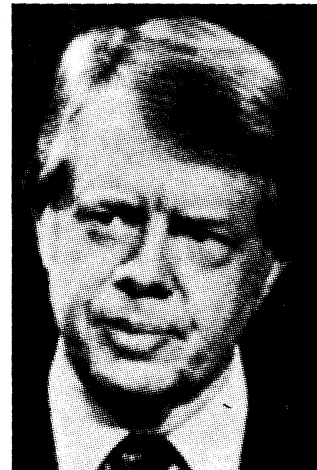
Pol Pot's deputy made it clear that the imperialists would benefit greatly from a government backed by Khmer Rouge military forces. "The Communist Party is ready to step aside. We are ready for anything on behalf of the effectiveness of the national struggle."

Kamm stated that Ieng Sary said that the regime that might emerge "could be capitalist or even monastic, and would be chosen in free and secret elections that could be supervised by the Secretary General of the United Nations."

Ieng Sary's bid to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim followed that imperialist diplomat's recent whirlwind tour of Southeast Asia. Waldheim tried to pressure the Vietnamese regime to accept UN "mediation" in the Kampuchean civil war. The UN continues to recognize Pol Pot's forces as the legitimate government of Kampuchea.

In contrast to previous Khmer Rouge policy, Ieng Sary did not deny that massacres had taken place while the Pol Pot government ruled Kampuchea. Instead, he "charged that Vietnamese agents had infiltrated Cambodia and committed atrocities to blacken Cambodia's reputation."

Perhaps hoping to gain a bit of credibility, Ieng Sary also "said that local authorities had committed occa-



Imperialists, led by President Carter (top left), are trying to form a bloc against spread of revolution in Indochina. Main figures (moving clockwise from Carter) are Japanese Premier Ohira, whose regime has promised aid to Khmer Rouge; Khmer Rouge chief Pol Pot; Thai dictator Kriangsak Chamand; In Tam, prime minister of Kampuchea during U.S. occupation; and former Kampuchean chief of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

sional excesses," according to Kamm. The Khmer Rouge leader said that "perhaps some thousands" died in this way.

### 'Outside help' obtained

Ieng Sary told Kamm that "forces from outside are fighting against Vietnam with us on the battlefields." Kamm added, "These are believed to be Cambodians recruited by the Free Cambodia [Khmer Serei] movement, linked with former Prime Minister [under Lon Nol] In Tam, a refugee in the United States."

The Khmer Serei was formed in the early 1960s under the direction of the American CIA. Its core is composed of Kampucheans trained by the U.S. Special Forces.

But "forces from outside" also include the increasingly active role of the Thai army in the fighting.

"Today, sinking into a first-class seat on a Thai airliner . . . Mr. Ieng Sary spoke warmly of Thailand's assistance," Kamm said.

"It is a very good attitude," Ieng Sary said of the Kriangsak dictatorship's policy. "It is also in the interest of Thailand. If Cambodia became a Vietnamese satellite it would have direct repercussions on Thailand. On that basis, we are convinced that relations with Thailand will continue to improve."

"Vietnamese satellite" is a code word for the fear shared by the imperialists and their neocolonial Asian allies that the Heng Samrin government may be compelled, under the pressure of the Kampuchean workers and peasants, to establish a workers state. Such a move would certainly have revolutionary "repercussions" on the workers and peasants in Thailand.

In an obvious bid for increased U.S. help, Ieng Sary told Kamm that the Pol Pot forces would need outside help for a campaign to force the Vietnamese out of Kampuchea. "He refused to name Thailand as a channel for such help," Kamm said, but "well-placed Cambodian sources said Thai assistance would be required."

According to correspondent Richard Nations of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, large concentrations of Khmer

Rouge soldiers who fled into Thailand were given medical treatment by the Thai government and trucked to a safer base in Kampuchea. The Vietnamese have since driven the Khmer Rouge soldiers back across the Thai border, Nations reported. He continued:

"Thai military analysts say that the Vietnamese have mined the border to seal the Khmer Rouge inside Thailand throughout the monsoon. 'We try to find a hole in Vietnamese defenses where the Khmer Rouge can slip back on to their own soil,' a source said. . . . It will go on like this with huge Kampuchean forces flushed back and forth across the border until someone loses patience.'" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 1.)

Kamm noted that the Khmer Rouge forces "often brought with them long columns of civilians, against their will, in full view of Thai troops and other observers."

Refugees who flee from the Khmer Rouge are also forcibly returned by Thai troops to rightist control, even though Thai authorities "concede that it is likely that those forced across the border face death as 'traitors' to the Pol Pot movement."

The Thai army's probes into Kampuchea increase the likelihood that at some point Kampuchean and Vietnamese forces may have to strike back in self-defense. "The Thai military anticipates some sort of Vietnamese cross-border action," Nations reported.

Thai "military sources" charged June 2 that "Vietnamese-led Cambodian forces have crossed into Thailand several times in recent days in pursuit of guerrillas loyal to Pol Pot," according to the June 3 *New York Times*.

### Bigger military moves

U.S. imperialism is the engineer of this Thai-Khmer Rouge operation. Although Washington has preferred to maintain a discreet silence on the fighting there, the Thai government makes no moves without the closest consultation with the U.S. government. It is no accident that six years after the withdrawal of American ground troops from Indochina, the

*Continued on next page*



Vietnamese-backed forces liberated Phnompenh January 7. Imperialists fear extension of Vietnamese revolution and aim to overturn new regime in Kampuchea.

# ...new light on imperialist offensive in Indochina

**Continued from preceding page**  
largest U.S. diplomatic mission in the world is located in Bangkok.

The U.S. imperialists have no illusions that the Thai army can stand up to the Vietnamese and Kampuchean government forces. Their game plan foresees the possibility of using a Thai-Vietnamese conflict as a pretext for more extensive imperialist military operations against the Indochinese revolutions.

"Most military specialists feel," said John McBeth of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "that with a well-sited, in-depth anti-tank defence on its eastern border, Thailand could buy enough time to allow for outside intervention. That, in the opinion of diplomats, could involve ground and air forces from Malaysia and other Asean states. They don't rule out direct American reaction, either a massive airlift of some arms or even battlefield intervention by carrier-based fighter-bombers of the Seventh Fleet. China has also promised unspecified support for Thailand if attacked by Vietnam." (*FEER*, June 1.)

## Beijing's moves

As tensions rise on the Thai-Kampuchea border, the Beijing Stalinists are again stepping up military pressure on Vietnam.

According to a Reuters dispatch reported in the June 2 *New York Times*, the Vietnamese army newspaper *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* charged June 1 that Beijing was massing hundreds of thousands of troops along China's border with Vietnam and Laos. It accused Beijing of participating in "a desperate effort to resist the Kampuchean revolutionary administration and to revive the genocidal regime of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary."

Beijing has also paralyzed negotiations for settlement of its "border dispute" with Vietnam by centering talks on the counterrevolutionary demand for withdrawal of Vietnamese troops

from Kampuchea and Laos.

The Beijing regime is seeking large-scale trade and credits from the imperialists as its reward for these counter-revolutionary services.

The ominous moves by the Thai government and by Beijing were accompanied by the first open declaration from an imperialist power that it will aid the remnants of the Pol Pot government.

Japanese Foreign Minister Sunao Sonoda announced May 31 that he would "not only consider the requests for aid" from Pol Pot's representatives but would "meet with the appropriate officials to have it acted on immediately."

The Japanese government still extends diplomatic recognition to Pol Pot. No imperialist power has yet granted recognition to the new government of Heng Samrin.

## Famine: imperialist weapon

The U.S. imperialists are counting on another famine to help block the Kampuchean struggle for national and social liberation. In the interview with Kamm, Ieng Sary encouraged this effort to starve the Kampuchean masses into submission.

Agricultural production was already devastated by the years of civil war and U.S. saturation bombing. Today, under the impact of a new civil war and the collapse of the Khmer Rouge's hated system of forced agricultural labor camps, food is dangerously scarce.

In an interview with Wilfred Burchett published in the May 30 *In These Times*, Kampuchean President Heng Samrin stated the following as the priorities of the government: "Settle the people, help reunite them with their families and return to their native villages, provide them with food and clothing, renormalize life, open schools and hospitals and the pagodas, get rice production started, especially before the start of this year's rainy season."

Samrin told Burchett that the food situation was "very difficult." Burchett added, "It is clear from what he said, and from the general situation in the countryside, that Kampuchea is heading for near-famine conditions in the next few months."

Prince Sihanouk is one of the reactionaries who hopes to ride back to power over the starved bodies of Kampuchean workers and peasants. He told *Far Eastern Economic Review* correspondent Nayan Chanda, "The Soviets can give weapons to them but not rice. . . . With Kampuchea in ruins, with Laos without an economy, having to feed the Kampucheans, to feed the Laotians, to feed the Vietnamese themselves, Mr. Pham Van Dong, Mr. Le Duan cannot go further. In a few years under the pressure from the whole world they will have to let Sihanouk go back to Kampuchea to solve the problems." (*FEER*, April 27.)

The Khmer Rouge also sees famine as its most powerful weapon. According to Kamm, Ieng Sary dismissed as Vietnamese propaganda the "suggestion that an international food aid program was required. He said the Pol Pot Government was conducting not only a military campaign but also an agricultural production drive."

Pol Pot's "agricultural production drive" was described in more detail by James Pringle, writing from the Thai-Kampuchean border in the June 4 *Newsweek*: "As the Khmer Rouge retreat, they are evidently leaving behind one last bitter legacy. Civilians say that Pol Pot's men are burning Cambodia's rice barns and sowing paddies with mines to prevent them from being planted. 'It is farming season, but no one can get into the fields to do anything,' said Cheam Ly Hour, 31. A few months from now, Cambodia may reap the final harvest of the Khmer Rouge—a nationwide famine."

Despite the victories won by the Vietnamese troops and Kampuchean

government forces, Washington is determined to prevent the consolidation of an anti-imperialist regime in Kampuchea.

A year ago, the military operations aimed at quarantining the Vietnamese revolution were taking place along the Kampuchea-Vietnam border—supplemented by military pressure from Beijing. Today the U.S.-Thai-Khmer Rouge alliance has been pushed back to the Thai-Kampuchea border. As John McBeth in the June 1 *Far Eastern Economic Review* put it, Thailand, deprived of its "traditional buffer," in Kampuchea, has become a "frontline state" in imperialism's struggle against revolution in Southeast Asia.

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# ...open letter offers helping hand to Carter

**Continued from page 6**

Vietnamese restore their ravaged land.

A particularly gory charge raised by Fraser and the other signers of the open letter is that "people are used as human mine detectors, clearing live minefields with their hands and feet."

Once again, some pertinent facts are left out. Not just prisoners, but ordinary Vietnamese farmers are continually falling victim to the unexploded bombs and mines left behind by U.S. forces in Vietnam. And thousands of Vietnamese, not just prisoners, are mobilized to detect and remove the mines.

## What unions should demand

Instead of sniping at the Vietnamese workers and peasants, as the signers of the open letter do, the unions should be demanding that Washington provide Vietnam with modern mine detectors and other equipment to safely restore its agricultural areas.

Instead of blaming the Vietnamese for trying to remove unexploded U.S. bombs and mines, they should demand that Washington pay the massive reparations it owes the peoples of Indochina for the most brutal bombing in the history of the world.

Union officials such as Fraser and Sheinkman—if there is an ounce of sincerity in their talk about peace and freedom—should be demanding that the U.S. government stop its aid to the Thai dictatorship and rightist guerrillas so that the Vietnamese people can devote their full energy and resources to rebuilding the country.

Such solidarity with the Vietnamese workers and peasants—instead of with the imperialists who are still trying to subjugate them—is directly in the interests of working people in the United States.

Fraser has talked about the "one-sided class war" being waged against American workers by the employing class. But in signing the open letter, he is doing his best to help the U.S. rulers in their class war against the workers and peasants around the world—from Detroit to Indochina. If the rulers get their way, working people will pay the price in blood.

## Harvest of death

Despite all its advances, Vietnam is still reaping a harvest of death. But the crop was sown by American imperialism. That is where the blame should be placed.

To their credit, most of the former antiwar figures approached by Baez refused to sign the open letter. Only eighty-three out of the 350 people she said she asked agreed to sign.

However, the continuing offensive of the imperialists means that the pressure continues. Baez, for example, in response to the refusal of figures such as Jane Fonda, Philip Berrigan, and Daniel Ellsberg to sign the open letter, launched a red-baiting attack that has been given amplification by interviews in the *New York Times* and on NBC television's "Today" show.

Meanwhile, the June 9 issue of the *New Republic* ran an article attacking the American Friends Service Committee for refusing to enlist in the campaign against the Vietnamese revolution.

An editorial in the June 1 *Washington Post* welcomed the new additions to imperialism's counterrevolutionary campaign. The hypocrites of the *Post*, while pretending concern for human rights, suggested that perhaps Baez and her friends should have come out against the Vietnamese revolution ten

or twenty years ago.

"No good purpose would be served, however, by ideological recrimination," they say.

Recriminations, as far as the *Post* is concerned, are for those who stand up to the crimes of imperialism, not for new recruits to its camp.



U.S. forces during Vietnam War. Open letter puts blame on Vietnamese for carnage from mines and unexploded bombs. But U.S. ruling class is responsible for harvest of death.



## Workers resist gov't attacks

# Arab struggle deepens Iranian revolution

By Fred Murphy

Strikes and mass demonstrations by thousands of Arabs in Khuzestan province, which contains Iran's main port and oil-producing centers, have sparked a crackdown by the capitalist Khomeini-Bazargan government. The aim is to disarm revolutionary-minded workers there and crush their protests for national and trade-union rights.

The Arab workers of Khuzestan—particularly those in the oilfields and Iran's major port of Khorramshahr, played a key role in bringing down the shah's tyranny. Since then, they have stepped up their struggles—as have many workers, peasants, and oppressed nationalities in other parts of the country.

This inevitably brought the Arab workers into sharp conflict with Khomeini and Bazargan, who are trying to put an end to the mass struggles.

Customs workers in Khorramshahr—the majority of whom are Arabs—began a strike in mid-May for higher wages and recognition of their union. On May 29 a right-wing gang fired on the striking workers, wounding two.

At around the same time some twenty steelworkers leaders were arrested in Ahwaz, and a central Arab leader of the oil workers council there was seized and taken to Tehran.

On May 30, elite units of the Iranian navy launched predawn assaults on two Arab cultural centers in Khorramshahr, where Arab activists had been conducting sit-ins in support of their demands for national autonomy and cultural rights.

An Arab cultural center in Ahwaz was also attacked and occupied by military forces of the central government on May 30, and a wave of arrests was launched against Trotskyist supporters of the Arab struggle there (see accompanying article).

The naval commando attacks in Khorramshahr came only two hours after the conclusion of lengthy negotiations between Arab leader Ayatollah Mohammed Taher al-Shobeir Khaqani and Khuzestan Province Governor-General Adm. Ahmad Madani (who is also commander of the Iranian navy).

Admiral Madani told al-Shobeir that Arab activists would have twenty-four hours to disarm and withdraw from the former U.S. consulate building and the headquarters of the shah's National Women's Organization, which they had occupied and turned into cultural centers. But instead Madani immediately sent his troops into action.

The Arabs resisted, and fighting spread to other parts of Khorramshahr and to the neighboring oil-refining center of Abadan. Large numbers of Arabs went into the streets, responding angrily to Madani's attempt at repression. The central police station in Khorramshahr, the post office, a government tobacco factory, and various stores and shops were set afire.

Madani ordered a curfew and state of emergency—the first such decrees in Iran since the overthrow of the shah's regime in February.

The central government sent in some 700 army paratroopers and pro-Khomeini militiamen to help put down

the Arab resistance. Tanks and armored personnel carriers moved into the streets. From the adjacent Karoun River, naval torpedo boats poured machine-gun fire into Arab neighborhoods.

Reports in the Western press indicated that by May 31 the centers of the two cities were under the control of the central government. But large sections of the Arab communities remained in the hands of Arab freedom fighters.

An aide to Arab leader al-Shobeir said that 200 persons were killed and 600 wounded in the two days of fighting.

On June 1, thousands of Arabs

marched in Khorramshahr and Abadan to protest the attacks on their organizations and communities and to demand that the authorities hand over the bodies of victims of the massacre to their families.

The Arab marchers also demanded the removal of Admiral Madani as governor-general, identification and prosecution of all those responsible for the massacre, and the rectification of one-sided and hostile news broadcasts about the events in Khuzestan.

After the demonstrations, thousands of Arabs gathered at a Khorramshahr mosque and began a sit-in to back up their demands.

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

## 70,000 at Zahraie debate

The Iranian Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party (HKS) continue to be in the center of the countrywide debate on the future of the revolution.

Seventy thousand persons gathered at Teachers Institute in Tehran on May 30 to hear HKS leader Babak Zahraie debate top "Islamic Republic" ideologist Abu al-Hassan Bani Sadr on the topic "Property, National Independence, and the State." The three main daily newspapers in Tehran plan to print the transcript of this meeting.

The debate was the second between Zahraie and Bani Sadr. The first one, on April 10, was broadcast on all-Iranian television and viewed

by an estimated 22 million persons.

On June 1, Zahraie was scheduled to speak at the University of Tabriz in Azerbaijan Province. Seven thousand persons gathered for the meeting, but the organizers decided to postpone it when a gang of about 100 hoodlums showed up, armed with knives, swords, and revolvers.

Iranian Trotskyists report that the disruption became the chief topic of discussion in the streets of Tabriz; residents expressed their outrage at the attack on freedom of speech. When one of the thugs returned to his house, a crowd of neighbors surrounded him and demanded that he get out because he had "besmirched the good name of Tabriz."

## Nine Trotskyists arrested in Iran

At least nine members of the Socialist Workers Party (HKS—Hezb-e Kargar-e Sosialist) have been arrested in Khuzestan province since the conflict between Arab workers and the central government began there. The arrests of HKS members took place in Ahwaz, one of the oil-producing centers in the province.

In a June 2 statement, the national leadership of the HKS, the Iranian section of the Fourth International, demanded the release of its members in Ahwaz. "The lives of all these revolutionary fighters are in danger," the statement said. "We have no information of their whereabouts or their fate."

The first arrests came on May 30. Omid Mirbaha and Mohammed Poorkahvaz were taken from their car by officials of the local Imam's Committee, whose leadership generally supports the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The two were taken to committee headquarters and beaten.

On May 31, HKS member Hamid Shahrabi went to committee headquarters along with the brother of Poorkahvaz. They were told that the arrested Trotskyists had been taken to Karoun Prison. But officials there denied any knowledge of the case.

When Shahrabi and Poorkahvaz's brother went back to committee headquarters, they were detained by guards shouting, "We're going to arrest you all."

Poorkahvaz's brother was released after it was determined that he was not an HKS member. Shahrabi was held longer and interrogated, but finally released. As he was leaving the building he was jumped by a rightist gang that had apparently been waiting for him. He was beaten and badly injured.

The Trotskyists refused to be intimidated by these actions, however. The same day, the executive commit-



The May Day issue of 'Kargar' (Worker), the newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party, featured bill of rights for Iranian workers and peasants.

tee of the Ahwaz HKS released a statement in support of the Arab struggle in the province and demanding the lifting of martial law.

On June 1, twenty armed Imam Committee members rounded up at least seven more HKS members at their homes, confiscating their books, magazines, and newspapers.

The following HKS members are known to have been arrested in these raids: Mustafa Seifabadi, Fatima Fallahi, Hormoz Fallahi, Maha Hashemi, Mustafa Gorgzadeh, and Morteza Gorgzadeh. Shahrabi was

also rearrested.

Since the Ahwaz HKS was founded, it has actively campaigned in support of the oil workers in the region and for full national rights for the Arab population. The Trotskyist newspaper *Kargar* is popular among the workers and is posted up in the headquarters of many Arab organizations.

The HKS is urging that protests demanding the release of the imprisoned Trotskyists in Ahwaz be sent to Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Office of the Prime Minister, Tehran, Iran.

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George Novack will be speaking in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Leon Trotsky, coleader with Lenin of the Russian revolution and founder of the Fourth International.

Novack is a noted Marxist scholar, defender of civil liberties and veteran leader of the Socialist Workers Party.

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# Public ownership of energy: labor's answer to shortages

By David Frankel

In New York City, gasoline prices went as high as \$1.30 a gallon over Memorial Day weekend. But the oil monopoly is just beginning to squeeze.

Both Texaco and Gulf announced May 29 that in June they will cut gas deliveries to filling stations across the country by another 10 percent compared to last year.

Shortages of diesel fuel are pinching working farmers, truck drivers, and others. Shipments of diesel fuel have been cut back to 55 to 85 percent of levels a year ago, while the price has gone up 50 percent.

Working people are convinced that oil company profiteering is responsible for the shortages and price-gouging. Truckers, auto workers, and others have already staged some protests. This rising anger has prompted statements by top union officials opposing Carter's plan to decontrol domestic oil prices. And a few have pointed to the need for some kind of public ownership and supervision in the energy industry.

United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser calls for "government action which will benefit the public interest." Washington, he asserts, "must take control of imports, rather than hoping that the oil companies will behave in a socially responsible manner."

"In addition," Fraser says, "the government should directly engage in the exploration and production of oil and gas from public lands. There should also be government-operated refineries. . . ."

## 'Give us a yardstick'

Fraser makes it clear that he is *not* calling for nationalization of the existing corporations, but rather for creation of a publicly owned agency that "will provide competition for the private companies, and—equally important—will give us a yardstick to judge their performance."

Fraser argues that such a public agency would enable us to "break out of the trap in which the multinational companies are the only—and obviously self-serving—source of information about reserves, costs, refinery capability and similar matters."

A similar program is proposed by the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition, headed by Machinists President William Winpisinger. The coalition's executive committee also includes several other international union presidents: Fraser of the UAW; Lloyd McBride of the Steelworkers; Al Grospiron of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; Jerry Wurf of the State, County and Municipal Workers; William Wynn of the Retail Clerks; and John Ryor of the National Education Association.

At a May 1 energy coalition news conference, Winpisinger called on the government to "establish a publicly owned oil and gas company to compete with and be a yardstick for the private companies, as Canada has done."

He declared that "the oil companies must open their books and meet with the American people so we can get to the bottom of the biggest robbery in American history."

## Open the books

Opening the books of the energy trust is an excellent idea. Every bit of information on energy sources, stockpiles, refinery capacity, profits, costs, new technology, and so on—along with complete records on safety and health—should be made available for public scrutiny.



New Jersey unionists demonstrate against oil price ripoff. Sentiment is growing in labor's ranks for nationalization of energy industry. Militant/Arnold Weissberg

But the oil giants are not about to "meet with the American people" voluntarily. It will take a massive campaign by the labor movement against both the corporate blackmailers and their defenders in the government to force the truth about the energy crisis into the open.

Unfortunately, none of the top union officials associated with the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition has moved to throw the power of the labor movement into such a campaign. They have not even done much to publicize or popularize the demand to open the books.

This may have to do with the fact that the "yardstick" idea actually points in a different direction. It implicitly accepts that the "business secrets" of the oil corporations cannot be violated. Instead, Fraser and Winpisinger suggest that the government set up a competing "public" company as a means of *deducing* the truth about the operations of the monopoly profiteers.

Presumably the "public" company would find out through its own experience how much it costs to produce and distribute energy. But it would take months if not years before a new company would start to develop such information.

And what about the reserves, stockpiles, manipulations, and hidden profits of the *existing* oil corporations? They would be left untouched.

## 'Break the stranglehold?'

Such a time-consuming and roundabout method offers little hope of getting at the facts that are needed *now* to deal with the energy *emergency* facing working people.

Yet Fraser asserts that creation of a publicly owned company to compete with the oil giants would "break the stranglehold" they now exert.

This is simply not realistic.

Last year, according to *Fortune* magazine, the five largest U.S. oil companies—Exxon, Mobil, Texaco, Standard Oil of California, and Gulf—had assets of \$116 billion and sales of \$165 billion. They admitted profits of \$6.6 billion, although the real figure is

undoubtedly much higher.

Together with a handful of other corporations, these capitalist giants control the energy industry from top to bottom—from the oil in the ground to the gas pump. The same oil corporations also control natural gas and are increasingly dominant in coal, nuclear power, and other energy sources as well.

Even a government investment of tens of billions of dollars would not be enough to challenge these oil corporations for a share of the market. And besides, why should billions of our tax dollars be spent to set up such an entity?

## The real problem

All the physical equipment for producing and distributing energy already exists, along with a trained work force to run it. It doesn't have to be built again. It is there.

The problem is that the industry is owned and controlled by a handful of capitalists, wielding the greatest concentration of economic power in history, who in their blind pursuit of profit trample on the needs of hundreds of millions of people.

As long as the industry as a whole is left in private hands and run for profit, mere establishment of *another* company—"public" or private—changes nothing and solves nothing.

That's why some Democratic Party politicians—notably Sen. Adlai Stevenson—have introduced legislation to create just such a "yardstick" company. This proposal enables them to pose as opponents of the energy monopoly while refusing to challenge the real root of the problem—private ownership and control.

## Public ownership

In fact, liberal *New York Times* columnist Tom Wicker suggested May 29 that if such a "semipublic" company were set up—run, of course, by the same rules as the rest of the capitalist industry—then the private corporations' "tenuous credibility might even be improved as a result."

A much more reasonable and realistic proposal is to fight for the government to *take over* this existing industry—to nationalize it—and convert it into a public service or public utility.

Such a nationalized industry should be managed by a directly elected board. It should not be allowed to function like Washington's phony "regulatory" agencies or the Tennessee Valley Authority, which are staffed by corporate hirelings and which keep all vital information secret.

No—when we say public ownership we mean *public*. The elected management of the energy industry should hold *public* meetings and keep all its records and decisions in *public* view.

The workers in the energy industry themselves are in the best position to secure the facts, to uncover the records, and to police the functioning of the industry so that price-fixing, sabotage of production, or artificial shortages are not allowed.

In addition, the workers on the job—through their unions or plant committees—should have full authority to ensure that health and safety standards and decent working conditions are maintained.

This kind of public ownership—with the wall of secrecy torn down and with the workers' control on the job—could open the way to running the entire energy industry in the interests of human need rather than private-profit greed.

## Democratic Party

Fraser, Winpisinger, and other top union officials tailor their proposals to what they think the Democratic Party—or at least some wing of it—will find acceptable. That's why they insist that only such timid half-measures as a "yardstick" public company are feasible.

But if by realistic we mean measures that can actually solve the problems faced by working people, rather than what will please the Democratic politicians, then the only road forward is a fight to expropriate the industry and transform it into a real public service.



# UAW delegates urge oil takeover, labor party

By Glen Arnodo  
and John Powers

COLUMBUS, Ohio—More than 200 delegates attended an Ohio United Auto Workers CAP (Community Action Program) conference held here May 29 to protest the energy crisis.

We heard speeches by UAW President Douglas Fraser and Ohio senators John Glenn and Howard Metzenbaum.

Bill Casstevens, Region 2 UAW director, opened the conference by saying that one key element in the gas crisis is the fact that the oil companies control all vital information concerning oil supplies and production. If the oil companies won't do what is socially responsible, said Casstevens, then the government should "enter" the oil industry.

"We are energy junkies, dependent on foreign oil," is how Senator Glenn began his remarks. Needless to say, his complaint wasn't well received by auto workers who have to pay exorbitant gas prices simply to get to work.

But Glenn pursued the theme that working people must sacrifice. If this wasn't bad enough, he couldn't resist putting in a plug for nuclear power.

"Nuclear power has been bent but not broken because of some concerns about safety," he said. "No energy source is 100 percent safe. We kill 150 coal miners each year mining coal. Nuclear energy looks pretty good compared to that. We have yet to kill someone."

Yet all the delegates realized that the Three Mile Island accident had jeopardized the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Glenn apparently didn't notice that before the meeting started members of the Lima-Troy CAP council had distributed a paper detailing their opposition to nuclear power.

Next Glenn aimed his fire at the freedom struggle in Iran. "Iran went down and cut off some supplies," he said. "The free world could be strangled in a day's time by a shutoff of Mideast oil." According to Glenn,

*Glen Arnodo and John Powers are members of UAW Local 451 in Cleveland.*

American foreign policy must center on keeping that oil flowing—no matter how.

Fraser summed up the mood of most delegates when he said, "The American people feel they're getting exploited, and they're right." He talked at length about the fantastic profits made by the oil companies. The ten largest companies, according to Fraser, make \$10 billion more in profits than the automotive, steel, and aerospace industries combined.

Fraser proposed increasing our use of coal as an energy alternative and creating a federal energy corporation to give the oil companies some competition.

The final speaker before discussion began was millionaire Senator Metzenbaum. His demagogic attack on the oil companies was warmly received. But when it came down to solutions to the energy crisis he had nothing to offer. His main proposal was to fire Energy Secretary James Schlesinger, a move that would hardly stop oil companies from raking in billions in profits at the expense of working people.

Little time was left for discussion. But it was clear the delegates were in a militant mood and ready for their union to give them the go-ahead for a real fight against the energy monopolies.

A delegate from the Defiance area CAP council kicked off the discussion by urging a UAW-initiated boycott of one of the major oil companies.

Then a brother from Ford Local 420 rose and said, "We should take a page out of European labor and have a national shutdown for three days." His proposal brought a round of applause.

"Back in 1958 organized labor in Ohio knocked the hell out of the 'right to work' law," said another delegate. "We have to organize the masses like in 1958 and let Congress know we protest this."

A member of Ford Local 1250 then introduced a resolution. Although it incorrectly placed some of the blame for the energy crisis on foreign countries, the resolution did demand "that the corporations who control our energy supplies either stop ripping off the consumers or be nationalized."

## LIMA TROY CAP views



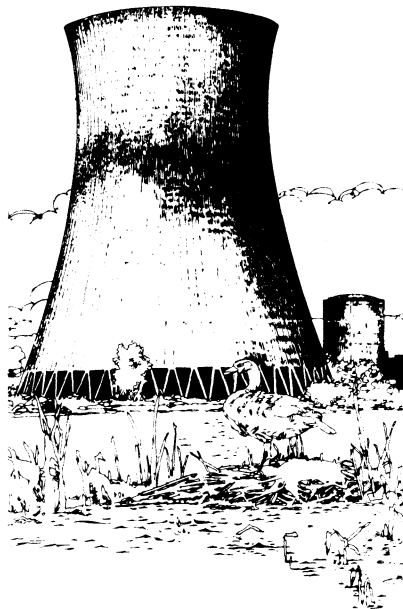
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### CAP Longtime Opponent Of Nukes



"That was no incident, it was as close as you can get to catastrophe," that's what one nuclear expert said about the near tragedy at Three Mile Island nuclear power plant.

Lima-Troy CAP has been warning about the dangers of nuclear power since 1973, when an extensive study led the council to conclude that nuclear power is not clean, safe, or cheap as the atomic industry would have us believe.

With all the talk about evacuation plans, established safe zones, contamination areas, and low level radiation dosages, one would think the country was preparing for war instead of an energy source. Government reports say the cost of a major reactor accident might kill as many as 3400 people and cause \$17 billion in property damage. Your home owners insurance policy excludes nuclear accidents.

Lima-Troy CAP Council first became interested in nuclear power in 1972 when we learned of the increasing incidence of cancer and leukemia in families living close to atomic power plants. Our CAP Council has adopted several resolutions on the issue and has been successful in getting the Ohio UAW-CAP Council to take a stand calling for a moratorium on licensing and operating the plants in Ohio until proven safe.



Front page of May 'Lima-Troy CAP Views,' published by a United Auto Workers Community Action Program Council in Ohio.

It resolved that "UAW members are no longer going to be passive toward the ripoff of our hard-earned monies. If both the Republican and Democratic parties are going to continue to be insensitive to our problems, we of the UAW should strive to join with all of labor and organize our own political party and elect state and federal representatives who are willing to represent all the peoples of our great country and not just the large corporations and their powerful lobbyists."

This labor party resolution was re-

ferred by the chair to the Ohio State CAP Executive Board for consideration. Little action can be expected from this quarter. It's clear the official leadership has no real alternative strategy to fight back against the oil companies.

But it's equally clear that delegates were well aware of the potential power labor could mobilize for this fight. As one put it, "We have the power to bring this country to its knees. You can bet that then we would get all the gas we want."

## Auto workers lash out at 'gas crisis' layoffs

Using the gas shortages as their excuse, major auto corporations have laid off thousands of workers: 5,000 at Ford and some 20,000 at Chrysler. In addition, workers at the American Motors Jeep plant in Toledo have been put on rotating week-long layoffs.

At the end of May, Chrysler announced another major cutback. It said it will close its giant Hamtramck, Michigan, assembly plant at the end of next summer. Even before then the Hamtramck work force will be cut from 5,000 to 4,000. On June 3, some 2,000 auto workers and their families marched and rallied in Hamtramck to protest the closing. Placards demanded, "Save our jobs" and "Keep my family together."

Below, Detroit and Toledo auto workers speak out on the latest wave of layoffs.

### Detroit

By Bill Arth

DETROIT—After months of rumors of impending layoffs, Chrysler lowered the boom on Dodge Truck workers here in April.

Not only will the entire assembly plant where I work be closed for the month of July, but when production resumes in August the second shift will not be recalled. About 3,000 workers will be put on indefinite layoff.

To make matters worse, it was announced that Chrysler's Supplemental Unemployment Benefits fund will go broke this summer.

Not surprisingly, layoffs became the number-one topic of conversation in the plant. Anger at Chrysler began to boil over as management continued to schedule overtime so it could lay us off on schedule.

"Chrysler can't sell trucks because of

the gas crisis," said Greg Novoselsky, who's worked here seven years. "But the gas crisis is manipulated by the oil conglomerates."

"By working us overtime Chrysler shows their lack of concern for the unemployed," he added. "They have a mad obsession with profits. The layoffs serve their purpose of putting the fear of god in their workers. The more laid off, the more they can put their thumb on workers to keep them in their place."

Workers' anger, however, was coupled with frustration about our ability to fight back. To combat this, a number of activists in Local 140 drafted and circulated a resolution to be introduced at our May 20 membership meeting.

The resolution sparked a lively discussion about layoffs at the meeting, which was attended by more than 100 members—about twice the usual number.

Its chief proposals were: 1) that the international union negotiate a shorter workweek in the 1979 contract; 2) that Local 140 demand an end to overtime at Dodge Truck while union members are laid off; 3) that the union establish an unemployed committee to help unify laid-off and working union members and to reach out to other UAW locals.

Local 140 President Charles Williams answered back with an attack on the membership. He accused us of not buying enough Dodge Trucks to keep the bosses in business. When speakers rejected this line, he ruled our resolution out of order.

After his decision was appealed, a voice vote was called. The vote was extremely close but the chair ruled for Williams and adjourned the meeting.

While our resolution didn't pass, members of the local are thinking and talking about what will be necessary to wage a real fight against layoffs. And that's a good start.

### Toledo

By George Windau

TOLEDO—I work at the American Motors Jeep plant here along with about 6,000 other workers. Recently AMC shifted us to alternating workweeks—one week at work, one week laid off.

The company blames declining sales on the gas crisis. This cutback came after months of company-enforced mandatory overtime.

Now rumors are circulating that our Supplemental Unemployment Benefits fund has run dry and there won't be any SUB pay for weeks off.

My co-workers aren't buying these excuses.

"Jeep usually runs with a backlog of orders back three or four months," one young worker pointed out. "How could the gas crisis affect sales so soon?"

"Mandatory overtime probably allowed the company to catch up on their backlog," said another. "You didn't see them complaining too loudly when the union canceled it [the overtime]. Maybe their backlogs are caught up and that's how the gas crisis caused sales to drop."

Workers I talked to were quick to make the connection between these layoffs and upcoming auto contract negotiations at the Big Three.

"I've been here sixteen years and I know when something's going on," said one union steward. "The company goes through a certain song and dance when we get close to contract talks to scare the union. But I've never seen anything like this before. I heard they're going to lay off 3,000 workers by September."

"This happens every time the contract comes up," said an older worker. "The company always claims poverty so they don't have to give us anything. As soon as they've got everyone scared—with these layoffs and rumors of bigger layoffs—you'll see, we'll be working six, seven days a week again."

# Steelworkers win victory in Inco strike

By John Riddell

SUDBURY, Ontario—One of the longest major strikes in Canadian history ended in victory as nickel workers here voted June 3 to approve a new contract and return to work.

The 12,000 members of United Steelworkers Local 6500 had been on strike against Inco, the biggest nickel company in the world, since last September.

On May 12 the strikers voted down a contract offer proposed by their bargaining committee. They were confident they had Inco on the run and that by holding out longer they could get more. They did.

Settlement terms include wage increases of \$.61, \$.10, and \$.10 over three years, bringing the base rate from \$6.79 to \$7.60. There is an unlimited cost-of-living escalator that will pay an estimated \$1.80 at the current inflation rate.

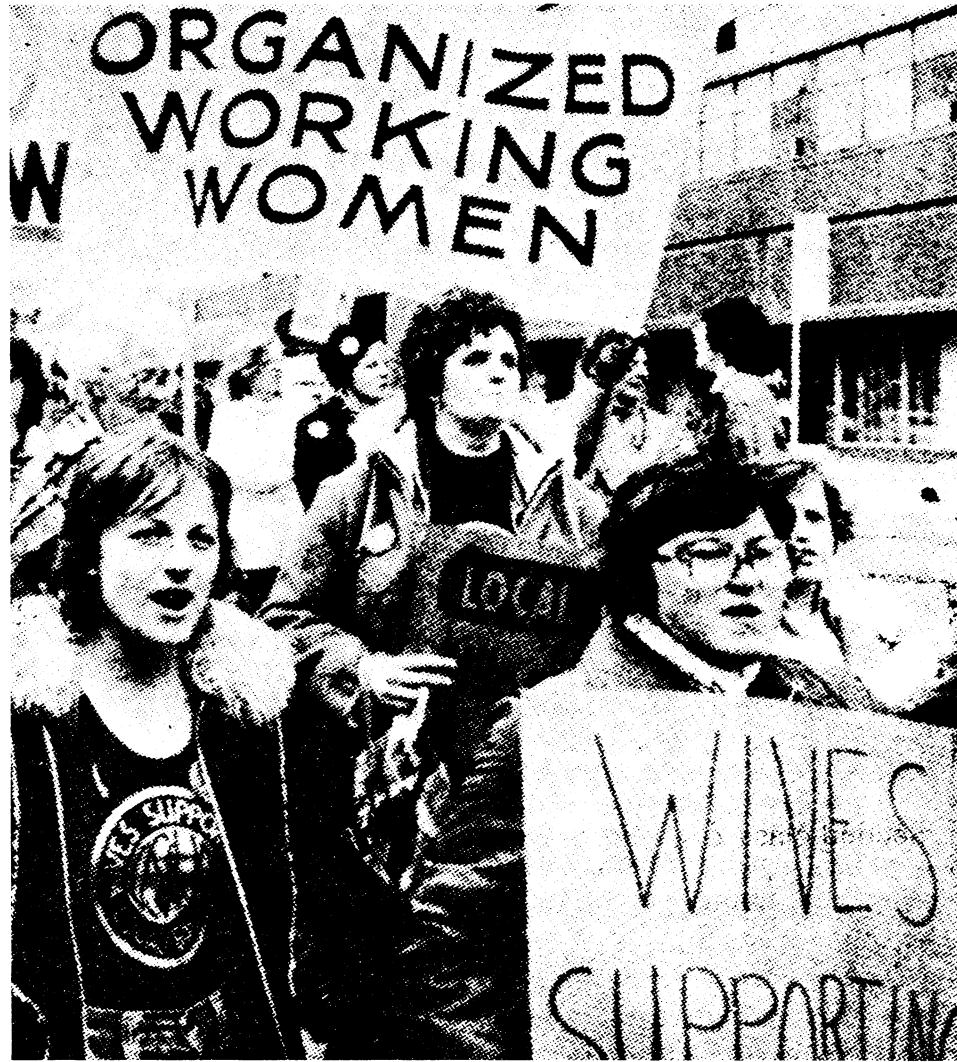
In a breakthrough for Canadian workers, the Inco strikers won the first "thirty and out" pension in the country. Beginning in June 1981, workers can retire on at least \$600 a month after thirty years' service, regardless of age. And the general pension allowance was increased 35 percent.

The existing grievance procedure was retained against company attempts to weaken it.

But even more significant than the exact settlement terms is the union's success in turning back Inco's attempt to "teach the miners a lesson."

For the first seven months the strike was essentially a lockout. Inco forced the workers out with an insulting four-cent-an-hour wage increase offer and demands to reduce the number of stewards and weaken the grievance procedure.

The giant nickel company thought it was in a strong position to crush the



'Wives Supporting the Strike' march in Toronto on International Women's Day.

miners. The world nickel market was depressed, stockpiles were high, and several thousand miners had been laid off in recent years.

But the miners stood firm through the winter. They won impressive solidarity in Sudbury and across the continent. Union locals in Canada and the

United States donated some \$600,000 for strike support. The United Steelworkers international strike fund paid out \$12 million in assistance.

As the months passed, nickel markets tightened and prices rose—putting new economic pressure on the company.

After the May 12 contract rejection, there were signs of stepped-up solidarity activity and steelworker unity against Inco. Blake McGrath, newly elected president of Steelworkers Local 6166 at Inco's mine in Thompson, Manitoba, issued a call for a conference of all local unions in the nickel industry to organize support for the Sudbury strikers. Other nickel locals responded positively.

On May 25, more than 1,000 people attended a benefit concert in Montréal for both the Inco workers and striking copper miners in Murdochville, Québec.

A committee called Wives Supporting the Strike played a big role in maintaining solidarity in Sudbury itself and also participated in rallies in other cities.

A Sudbury Citizens Strike Support Committee was initiated by the union and delegates from the New Democratic Party, Canada's labor party. It put out fifteen issues of a support newspaper.

Federal NDP leader Ed Broadbent and Saskatchewan NDP Premier Allan Blakeny both visited Sudbury during the recent election campaign and expressed support for the strikers.

Many workers felt they could have gotten a better settlement by staying out longer, and nearly one-third voted against acceptance of the contract. But despite divided opinions on the contract, nearly everyone felt a major victory had been won over Inco.

As one striker proudly told me, "This victory will help all the workers against their companies. It shows you've got to fight for what you believe in and hold out. That's the way forward. And *we'll* help *your* union—we'll help every union that's in a fight with the boss in the future."

## District 31 voting reflects militant union trends

By Dick McBride

GARY, Ind.—Recent local union elections in United Steelworkers District 31, which encompasses 130,000 members in the Chicago-Gary area, reflected trends that are symptomatic of the entire labor movement:

- heightened interest in the union and desire to affect its policies,
- the growing leadership role of women in unions in basic industry, and
- pressure from the membership for the union to take more militant stands in defense of workers' rights.

There was a higher turnout than usual in the April balloting in District 31, especially for grievance committee races. More women were elected to executive boards and other union positions.

The elections produced no significant shift in the number of offices held by supporters of Ed Sadlowski, the

former District 31 director who ran for United Steelworkers president in 1977 on a program of union democracy.

In general, all candidates—whether supporters of the international officialdom or independents—tried to present themselves to the membership as progressives. This meant voicing at least token solidarity with the Steelworkers strike in Newport News, Virginia; opposition to the racist *Weber* case; and support for women's rights.

Yet these major issues were not at the center of the elections. Candidates gave more emphasis to assembling a "winning slate" than to presenting a clear perspective. From what their campaign literature said it would be hard to tell one slate from another. By and large, members' votes were based on the individual record of the candidates as grievors or fighters against the company.

### Democratic elections

Nevertheless, the voting gave some indication of what's going on in our union. This is particularly true since the elections were run democratically, which was not the case before Sadlowski was elected district director in 1974. As a teller, I can verify this.

Alice Peurla was elected president of the 7,500-member Local 65 at U.S. Steel's South Works, defeating by a narrow margin incumbent President John Chico and Don Stazak.

Peurla is the first woman president of a large basic-steel local in the union's history. Since only 500 women work at South Works, obviously a majority of her supporters were men—a sign of the significant changes occurring in the union. The vote seemed to be a conscious one for Peurla as an individual since no one else on her slate was elected to the executive board.

Peurla said her main goal "as president of Local 65 will be to make the union serve the members and not the other way around.

"I will support all efforts to democratize and otherwise improve our international union," she said. She specifically cited the right to vote on local and national contracts, opposition to the no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement, and opposition to restrictive election rules in the international union.

### Red-baiter defeated

Also in Local 65, Frank Mirocha, a former president of the local and a virulent anticommunist, was decisively defeated in his campaigns for financial secretary and grievor. He finished last in both races. His attempt to red-bait his main opponent got him nowhere.

Since the election, Local 65 has taken several important stands. It passed a resolution to give the United Farm Workers \$500 and to hold a plant-gate collection. Peurla has also decided to open up the union committees to all members as a way to encourage more participation in the life of the union.

Local 65 endorsed the June 3 antinuclear action held in Michigan City, Indiana, and decided to put out its own leaflet to build it. A resolution against the Bailly nuclear plant, focus of the June 3 protest, was also passed.

And on May 29 the district held a meeting at Local 65's hall to discuss maternity benefits for women steelworkers. More than 150 women and men participated in the discussion.

In other election results, Bill Andrews was elected as the first Black president of the 18,000-member Local 1010 at Inland Steel, the largest local in the union. Andrews was elected vice-president in 1976 and has served as

president since former President Jim Balanoff was elected district director in 1977. The "Rank and File" slate led by Andrews and Balanoff won all but one of the executive board positions in Local 1010.

David Wilborn's "The Workers" slate easily defeated incumbent President Paul Kaczocha in the 6,000-member Local 6787 at Bethlehem Steel in Burns Harbor. Two Black women leaders of the District 31 Women's Caucus were among those elected to the executive board.

In Local 1014 at the huge Gary Works of U.S. Steel, incumbent President Jack Parton, a conservative, breezed to reelection. His slate won the entire executive board and eleven out of thirteen grievor spots in the 12,500-member local.

### Women elected

And at the 5,000-member Local 1033 at Republic Steel, Frank Guzzo won an unprecedented fifth term as president. Three women were elected to the executive board as the local's first women officers.

Since the election Local 1033 has held a rally in commemoration of the Memorial Day Massacre of 1937. The meeting drew 175 workers from the district to learn more about our union's history and its relevance to today's battles such as Newport News.

The Local 1033 women's committee is initiating, along with the district leadership, an anti-*Weber*, pro-affirmative-action forum on July 19.

The most significant point of the elections in District 31 is that regardless of the outcome, most of the locals have since taken positive stands on important social issues. This is a sign of the membership's growing desire to use union power to defend themselves against the employers' offensive.



Militant/Andy Rose

Alice Peurla, elected president of Local 65, is first woman to head major basic steel local.



**'Cracks so big you could trip'**

# Profits prove the culprit in DC-10 crash

By Nancy Cole

Facts sifting to the surface about the nation's worst air disaster are fast confirming a trio of culprits:

- McDonnell Douglas Corporation, which designed and manufactured the DC-10 jet;
- American Airlines, which failed to adequately inspect and repair it;
- the federal government, which consistently ignored its unsafe features.

On May 25, 272 passengers and 2 workers on the ground were killed when American Flight 191 lost an engine shortly after takeoff and plunged to the ground a half-mile from the end of a runway at Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

The trio's first response was to dismiss it as a freak accident. Investigators discovered a three-inch bolt on the runway. The bolt was said to have split because of metal fatigue, in turn causing the engine to drop off.

On May 28, the Federal Aviation Administration ordered quickie inspections of all 138 domestic DC-10s. Bolts were to be checked or replaced and engine mounting components glanced over for cracks.

No interruption in service was planned for the planes, which carry some 135,000 passengers daily. Only if the inspections were not made by 3 a.m. on Wednesday, May 30—well past the busy and profitable Memorial Day weekend—were the DC-10s to be grounded.

Asked why he had not immediately grounded the jumbo jets, FAA head Langhorne Bond answered that "the risk seems sufficiently small." Asked if he would fly in one of the DC-10s before it was inspected, he responded, "I will and I have," adding that the plane is a "very fine aircraft."

Meanwhile, in Chicago, two United Airlines mechanics—Ernest Gigliotti and Lorin Schluter—finished the FAA-required inspection, but then decided they would take it further. In order to do so, they no doubt had to break some company rules, and maybe even dodge a foreman.

"We removed the access panels and found cracks so big you could trip over them," said Gigliotti. "Rivets were broken, fasteners were sheared. It gives you a funny feeling in the pit of your stomach to see the extent of that damage."

Despite all the industry and government experts "investigating" the



Stakes mark spots where some of 274 bodies lie among DC-10 wreckage

crash, it was the mechanics' discoveries that forced the FAA to order all DC-10s grounded until inspections could be made. It was the first time in the history of commercial jets that the FAA grounded a plane.

By May 31, airline mechanics had reportedly found problems in the engine mounts of thirty-seven DC-10s.

Then on June 1, the FAA revised the figures upwards, announcing that problems were discovered in nearly half of all DC-10s—sixty-eight instead of thirty-seven. Nonetheless, the majority were soon back in the air.

On June 4, the National Transportation Safety Board suggested that maintenance procedures might have caused the accident. It seems that American and other airlines use shortcuts when removing the pylons, or engine mounts, from the plane. The engine is supposed to be lifted out of the pylon first, but it is faster—and thus cheaper—to do it all in one operation. But it can damage the pylon.

The full scope of the problems with Flight 191 can be traced back to 1970 when the DC-10 was rushed into production to beat out its wide-body competitors. Since then it has been involved in at least seventeen serious accidents. With the Chicago crash, the death toll climbed to 623.

This includes the worst single aircraft disaster in world history—the 1974 crash of a Turkish plane near Ermenonville, France, which killed 346 people.

The Ermenonville crash occurred after a rear cargo door fell off, a

problem with the DC-10's design that McDonnell Douglas and the FAA were aware of in 1969 before the DC-10 was even ground-tested. In 1972, the loss of a cargo door on one DC-10 caused part of the cabin floor to collapse, forcing an emergency landing in Windsor, Ontario.

"After the near-miss over Windsor," reports *Newsweek*, "FAA chief John Shaffer arranged a 'gentlemen's agreement' with McDonnell Douglas, allowing it to carry out necessary door changes on a voluntary basis. A full year later, the recommended modifications had not been made on eighteen domestic DC-10s, and at least one plane had left the factory without the cargo door adjustments. The FAA was still gently pestering McDonnell Douglas to run studies on the cabin floor when the Turkish jet went down at Ermenonville."

It was four more years before the cabin-floor modifications were completed.

Of course, such design problems are not confined to DC-10s. "Economics dictate the basic design of a plane," explained the *New York Times* June 2. A major aim is to reduce weight of the plane, which cuts down on operating costs. Thus the lightest materials possible are used.

Another cost reducer is to cut down on maintenance checks and overhauls.

In that, the airlines and manufacturers have the full backing of the FAA. The engine support area on a DC-10 is scheduled for inspection only once every 3,600 flying hours, or about once

a year.

Some airplane parts are checked as infrequently as once every eight years!

DC-10s "haven't been flying that long," explained Los Angeles United mechanic Ray E. Ray, "yet every time you get behind panels and look at things you don't inspect routinely, there's always cracks."

Even when a mechanic reports finding a crack, Ray told *Newsweek*, a foreman can override the mechanic's decision, ruling that it isn't necessary to do much work on the plane.

But will this tragedy at least mean that it's curtains for the DC-10?

Not likely. "Airlines aren't going to give up their current fleets of DC-10s, if only because of the huge amounts of money already invested in the planes," predicted the *Wall Street Journal*.

McDonnell Douglas is even on a drive to sell a new "stretched" version of the jet, which would hold up to 500 passengers.

The Chicago crash is the latest in the ongoing saga of disasters, from the Three Mile Island nuclear accident to the chemical dumps that have disrupted the lives and health of thousands of people across the country.

The DC-10 disaster certainly did little to restore the public's faith in capitalist corporations, or in the Democratic and Republican officials entrusted with regulating them.

But the two United mechanics, who had no interest in protecting industry profits but sought only to find the crash's cause, prove that catastrophe will be averted when working people run the country.

## Dow begins cover-up of Calif. blast that killed 2

By Carl Finamore

PITTSBURG, Calif.—Dow Chemical claims it doesn't know what caused the explosion at its plant here May 27 that killed 2 workers and injured 100. But Dow's criminally unsafe operations have led to some unusual admissions by state health authorities.

The head of the state's Department of Industrial Safety compared the poor safety record of nonunion facilities such as Dow, Du Pont Chemical, and Exxon with the better performance by the much larger unionized refinery and chemical facilities in the East Bay.

Workers at these plants, organized in the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union, have conducted several strikes in which safety was the major issue.

As a result, the last fatal accident at these unionized operations was in 1969. But at one nonunion plant alone, the Exxon facility in Benicia, there have been four deaths in two separate accidents since 1978.

A similar comparison could be made to the safety

records of union and nonunion coal mines.

A major issue in last year's 110-day coal strike was retention of union-controlled safety committees with the right to call miners off an unsafe job.

While the Dow workers are not unionized, most of the injured were part of an outside construction crew organized by the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers. They were working near the pesticide tank that exploded.

As a by-product of the explosion, deadly phosgene and chloroacetylene gases were released. Both can cause liver and respiratory damage. Even several ambulance attendants, fire fighters, and hospital workers were injured by exposure to these toxic fumes.

Yet Dow claims the gases and material released by the explosion are "perfectly safe." But, adds Michael Schneider, deputy director of the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CALOSHA), "they tell us that it will dissolve leather shoes and rubber boots."

The Asbestos Workers union is demanding a full investigation by OSHA of Dow's disregard for safety. The union wants to know why there was no warning bell in operation at the control tower when the pressure in the tanks reached near the explosion point. The union would also like to know why there

was no evacuation bell for workers outside near the tanks.

In addition, Monte Manwill, business representative for Local 16 of the Asbestos Workers, wants to know why the tank, which had been inoperative for some time, was started up while there were workers on the job site.

These are the types of questions Dow isn't used to answering, so the company at first refused to allow union representatives on the plant premises. Dow also barred the union from a press conference held to "explain" the accident.

During the past year Dow obtained a court order banning federal OSHA inspectors from the plant until the company was given the names of the workers who filed the complaints. Without union protection, the workers had understandably made their complaints anonymously.

Dow's coverup extends beyond the workplace. Dr. Larry Rose of CALOSHA reported that Dow had no warning system for the surrounding community. Dangerous gases were released and there is evidence of regular leaks. Rose compared the situation to that of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident.

OSHA has recommended that the construction workers stay away from the contaminated job site. But Dow is forcing its own nonunion workers to clean up and repair the damage with no guarantees against exposure to toxic fumes.

Carl Finamore is a member of United Steelworkers Local 1440 at U.S. Steel's Pittsburgh Works.



Militant/Dick Roberts

# Rail slas Ho

## By Dick Roberts

Everywhere railroad workers are under attack. The U.S. railroad industry is carrying out a campaign to drastically reduce the size of the labor force and to intensify the work that the remaining railroad workers have to do.

On the Milwaukee Road this attack has taken the form of the threat to liquidate most of this bankrupt company's operations. Five thousand or more workers could lose their jobs.

Reductions in crew size—called crew-consist—are spreading from railroad to railroad. They began last year on the Milwaukee Road and Conrail. The excuse was that these companies were bankrupt and that a reduction in the work force would help to keep them running.

But the companies were lying. They went ahead to liquidate the Milwaukee Road *after* reduced crews had been imposed on that line.

On April 9 the Burlington Northern announced it also intended to reduce crews. The BN is one of the most powerful and profitable railroad companies in the country. It offered no excuse.

In Los Angeles the Southern Pacific is attempting to ram through crew-consist reductions by blackmailing the workers over their layoff times.

## Crew-consist

The companies made big promises about bonuses workers would receive if they took the crew reduction. But where the crews have been cut working conditions have gotten considerably worse.

There are fewer regular jobs. More people have to work on call—on what is known as the "extra boards."

When the company did send out bonus checks, "everybody felt they got cheated out of some portion of what they were due," Milwaukee Road employees told me.

On Conrail a lifetime compensation was promised for the thousands of workers who lost their jobs through the merger of the Penn Central and other bankrupt lines. But the latest word is

that the \$250 million employee fund, supposed to last forty-five years, is running out—after only a few years!

Stepped-up harassments don't end with crew reductions. On the Soo Line in Minneapolis last winter, with its bitter snow and cold, "you couldn't lay off, everyone was working twelve hours day after day," workers explain.

## Amtrak

The attack on railroad workers extends into issues of grave concern to the rest of the population as well. Despite its increased popularity and increased need with the deepening gas crisis, the government is trying to drastically reduce rail passenger service.

The latest statistics show big increases in Amtrak ridership—especially on long-distance trains.

But the long-distance passenger routes are the very ones the government is moving to cancel.

Railroad workers are also forced to work under increasingly dangerous conditions, which affect the communities along the right-of-way. Liquefied propane explosions and the release of deadly anhydrous ammonia gas have brought tragedy to small towns along the railroads.

Rail workers are also forced to carry most radioactive waste. About 90 percent of spent nuclear fuel is shipped by train, including all high-level waste from nuclear weapons production. Often this radioactive material is not even labeled!

The government uses the excuse of "military security," but the real aim is to hide hazardous cargo from workers and the towns the railroads go through.

## Fightback

All over the country, rail workers are beginning to fight back.

- In Minneapolis five United Transportation Union locals and a number of leaders of other rail unions sponsored a protest meeting to present the arguments of those who would be affected by the Milwaukee Road bankruptcy.

- In Los Angeles UTU workers on the Southern Pacific stood firm against the layoff blackmail scheme.

- The Three Mile Island disaster produced resolutions of protest from various railroad locals. Three UTU locals in Chicago have held popular educational discussions on the dangers of nuclear power.

- On the Burlington Northern, UTU members are circulating a petition calling upon the union to resist crew-consist reduction. In many of the BN's Chicago yards, the overwhelming majority of UTUers have already signed the petition.

- The Soo Line workers in Minneapolis and St. Paul ultimately staged a three-day work-to-rules slowdown in order to force the company to back off from its winter speedup campaign.

The most dramatic protests of all took place in January-March on Conrail in the Youngstown, Ohio, and Pittsburgh yards. They were in response to the company's attempt to pull three conductors out of service for exercising their right of early quit-time—a right won by railroad workers decades ago.

In these Conrail yards the workers had also been subject to crew-consist reductions and other forms of stepped-up harassment. They were fed up, and when the conductors were pulled out in a Youngstown yard, they shut down the yard the next day.

## 100 percent solid

All of the approximately 500 workers in the Youngstown yards respected the protest—from the clerks to the engineers. Many got out in roving buses to spread the word to other yards.

Within three days they had shut down the huge Conway yard near Pittsburgh, one of the largest yards in the country, with more than 5,000 workers. As in Youngstown, the Pittsburgh protest was 100 percent solid, involving all of the crafts.

And in another two days the protest was spreading throughout the region. The pressure on Conrail headquarters in Philadelphia was intense. On the sixth day of the protest Philadelphia gave in.

The conductors were reinstated.

Management maneuvered to punish protest leaders but so far no one has been disciplined.

When about 6,000 rail workers go out to defend three jobs you know that trouble is brewing for the companies!

But these militant struggles have so far remained isolated. They aren't reported in the press and most railroad workers probably do not realize the extent of the willingness to fight back and the potential that exists for resisting the carriers.

"We sometimes don't know what's taking place in the next terminal, let alone nationally," is a frequent complaint.

How can rail workers move from this beginning state of struggle to a nationally united effort that can stem the railroad companies' attack?

It is first of all necessary to realize that the owners of the railroad industry do have a *national railroad strategy*. The key to understanding it is a small railroad in Florida—the notorious Florida East Coast.

That company weathered fourteen years of strikes. It busted unions. It succeeded in slashing its labor force from 2,541 to 765—a 70 percent reduction.

The Florida East Coast could do this because it is a small company owned by powerful capitalist interests—the Du Pont family.

It shows where this railroad profit drive would go if the owners were not blocked by the unions, if they could destroy union opposition, which they want to do.

The FEC has two-person crews running over 300 miles from Jacksonville to Miami doing road and yard work with no caboose. *The rails as a whole would like to ship only freight, only filled-up cars, whenever they are filled up, wherever they want, regardless of the human toll.*

This is why they are cutting passenger service.

It seems absurd in the middle of an energy crisis when we need more, not less, passenger service, which could employ tens of thousands more rail workers.

The rails could also carry much more coal, which is abundant in this country, and could be used to immediately end dependence on deadly nuclear energy. Building up the roadbeds and otherwise improving the coal-hauling railroads would also bring thousands more jobs.

## Energy crisis

But this is not the energy plan of the rulers of this country. Their plan is to make us pay two, three, or four dollars a gallon for gas. They want to increase the amount of electricity produced by potentially catastrophic nuclear plants. This is the plan President Carter represents and it is what the government is trying to force on us.

So far as the railroad owners are concerned, their idea is to reorganize the entire rail system under five or six roads. The Milwaukee bankruptcy plays a special role in this scheme.

Previously, in mergers, provisions were required for at least some form of compensation for the workers of the merged lines. This bankruptcy is a new device for the company to carry out a drastic speedup eliminating jobs by the thousands *without compensation*.

If it goes through it won't stop with the Milwaukee Road. The deliberate bankruptcy on this railroad is the opening attack aimed at a number of lines across the country. It threatens



Militant/Howard Petrick

Protest over company harassment closed down Conway and neighboring yards this spring.



# Owners aim to 1 jobs, services unionists can fight back

tens of thousands of jobs.

The rulers of this country, however, have no intention of doing away with the railroads altogether. Such basic industries as food, coal, steel and auto, oil and petrochemicals could not function for a moment without the railroads.

The long recognition of this fact explains why the railroad unions are throttled with the Railway Labor Act and numerous other legal blocks that make it practically impossible for these unions to strike.

The vital necessity of the rails explains why the government moves so quickly, as it did in the case of the national Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks strike last year, to bring court injunctions and to force striking unionists back to work.

It is why Philadelphia gave in a few days time to the spreading protest of the Conrail workers.

The key to the struggle of railroad workers is to recognize and to mobilize the tremendous potential power of the railroad union movement.

## Allies

The railroads are vital not only to industry. Rail passenger service is increasingly needed by everyone. The ruling class is seeking to destroy this social service.

Millions of allies of railroad workers

would respond if the rail unions responded with *their own national transportation plan*. This would be a plan based on social need, not on private profit.

In preparing such a plan the unions would demand that the companies *open their books and records to public scrutiny*: What are the real organization plans of the railroad trusts? How do they tie in with the plans of the oil trusts? What's the truth behind the bankruptcies? What are the real profits of the railroads? Who owns these companies? Who stands to profit from spiraling energy prices and the firing of thousands of railroad workers?

Transportation should be easily available to everybody. This requires taking the control of transportation out of the hands of private owners and making the railroads a real public service responsive to the needs of working people.

Railroad workers have long experience with so-called regulatory agencies such as the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Department of Transportation, and the Federal Railway Agency, all of which function in secret and only serve as a front for the railroad companies in government. That's not what we need.

The rail unions should aim at putting the railroads under the management of a popularly elected board. This

board would function completely in the open. Its decisions would be discussed and debated by the populace as a whole.

Such a fighting perspective is alien to the present top officialdom of the railroad unions. These misleaders act as though the unions are merely leaves blown by the storm and can do little to affect the crisis around them.

They have no feel for the real power of unions, of the union ranks. They rely only on lobbying the government. In the face of the stepped-up attacks, the union officialdom has helped keep workers in the dark about the extent of the attack and the extent of the fight-back.

As the axe fell on the Milwaukee Road, the UTU headquarters in Cleveland said, "Write your Congressman." That was it. They offered no plan to inform the membership about what was really happening and mobilize them in the fight to stop it.

But a fighting perspective does make a lot of sense to workers who keep the trains running and who face the mounting attack on working conditions. Many of them are already taking part in local battles to stem this attack.

They are also thinking about the need to transform the union movement. They realize that we need fighting unions and that this requires union democracy. The struggle to gain the

right of members to vote on contracts and directly elect the top officials in the UTU is a vital part of the struggle to transform and democratize this union.

Solidarity is another key to advancing the interests of workers. Respecting the picket lines of the BRAC workers on the Norfolk & Western last winter helped them to make some gains in that strike. The solidarity in the yards in Youngstown and Pittsburgh forced Conrail to step back from its victimization plans. Such solidarity points toward the much-needed step of overcoming the craft divisions among the rail unions.

## Labor party

A determined struggle to defend railroad workers and to preserve and improve rail service will quickly lead to a clash with the capitalist two-party system. The government, which is controlled by the Democratic and Republican parties, has been a willing tool of the railroad industry in carrying out its attack.

More than any other industry, the railroads are subject to a multitude of antiunion government agencies. These agencies were set up to protect the railroad companies' rates and profits, not the public interest. They were set up by and are staffed by Democrats and Republicans in collusion with industry officials.

The same two capitalist parties passed the National Railway Labor Act and all of its amendments down through the years, which keep the railroad unions in a straitjacket.

Workers need their own party, a labor party, based on the unions and fighting for the interests of working people and their allies. An independent labor party would make the struggle against the railroad and the energy trusts a top priority.

A fighting rail union movement can win support from working people everywhere, who have a vital stake in mass public transportation. It can draw support from the farmers and small businesses that are also threatened by the liquidation of rail lines. It can win support from those who live along the rights-of-way and who are threatened by rail disasters, and from those who oppose nuclear power and the destruction of the environment.

Making railroads into a real public service—that has been a natural wish of Americans for more than a century. It will require a struggle to take the railroads out of the hands of private capital and put them under public ownership. It is long overdue.

## Railway clerks score gain on right to vote

By Kathleen Mickells

TORONTO—A major step toward winning the membership's right to vote on contracts was taken at the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks convention, held here in May.

Previously clerks had been able to vote on their contracts—but all abstentions were considered as yes votes!

International President Fred Kroll tried to get the convention to constitutionalize this sham procedure but the delegates rebelled. Many local chairpersons, who are automatically delegates, voiced the sentiments of the ranks for a real vote.

"That was more of an opinion poll than membership control," one said.

"It is nearly impossible to defeat a contract under this procedure," said another delegate.

"What kind of vote is this when no matter which way the majority of those actually voting vote, they find that all they get is a yes vote?"

Kroll's move to ratify his procedure was amended from the floor to make it a one-person, one-vote procedure, with only ballots cast to be counted. Kroll then asked for a vote

on his versus the amended resolution and declared that he had won the vote.

It didn't go. The delegates demanded a division of the house. In the final voting they defeated Kroll's method.

The new procedure still isn't as democratic as the one coal miners have. In the United Mine Workers Union, every member gets a copy of the full contract, not a "summary." They have the right to discuss it, hear an explanation from local officers, mull it over for forty-eight hours, and then vote. This was a powerful rank-and-file weapon in last year's coal strike.

Resolutions were also submitted from around the country to reduce the hours of the workweek. Many clerks are being forced to work on call.

"They're on call twenty-four hours a day, sometimes working eight hours then getting eight hours rest then having to go back at work for another eight hours. This can go on for three or four days," said a clerk observing the convention.

One resolution from Lodge 1502 on the Burlington Northern in Port-

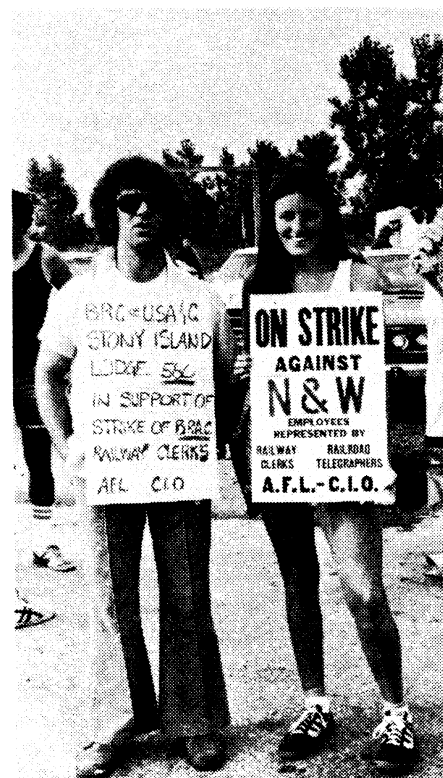
land, Oregon, called for thirty hours work with no reduction in pay. The resolutions committee said it agreed in principle, but referred the question to the international for later negotiations.

The National Railway Labor Act was attacked in some resolutions. This law forced the clerks at Norfolk and Western through two and a half years of delays before they could launch their strike last year.

Other issues discussed at the convention included reasserting BRAC's commitment to passing the Equal Rights Amendment, child care, equal pay for equal work, organizing the unorganized, and solidarity with such struggles as the rubber workers currently on strike.

In certain union affairs Kroll was able to strengthen his hand. A resolution was shoved through by a close vote giving the international the right to dissolve lodges. This is seen as a weapon that the international officialdom can use against dissident locals.

Kathleen Mickells is a member of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks in Cicero, Illinois.



Militant/David McDonald  
BRAC strike against Norfolk & Western last year showed militancy, solidarity.

## Minnesota protest meeting

# Rail unions spotlight bankruptcy scheme

By Greg Cornell

MINNEAPOLIS—A public protest meeting here June 5 showed that the plan to liquidate the Milwaukee Road isn't going to go over quietly.

In speeches from the podium and over an open mike from the floor, more than 250 railroad workers in attendance voiced anger at the "manipulated bankruptcy" and enthusiasm for building a united fight against the Milwaukee Road's threatened shutdown.

The meeting was endorsed by six locals of the United Transportation Union and one local of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks. It turned the spotlight on the backroom maneuvers of the courts, the Congress, the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the railroad trustees who have been charting the bankruptcy course.

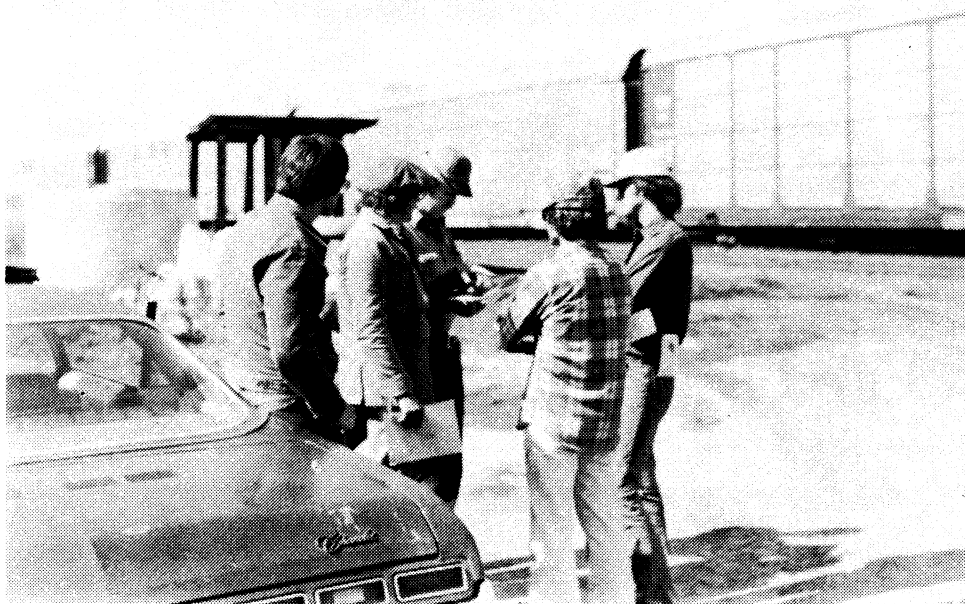
The meeting included workers of all ages, men and women, from many different locals and crafts on the Milwaukee line. Employees from other railroads, including the Chicago and Northwestern and the Burlington Northern, also participated. Several farmers attended.

A liquidation could result in the layoff of all 10,000 Milwaukee workers.

There were many ideas raised on how to fight the bankruptcy. A banner behind the speakers' table read, "Stop The Milwaukee Shutdown—Open Up The Milwaukee Road Books."

A public investigation to show how the corporate heads of the Milwaukee railroad deliberately engineered the bankruptcy was a popular demand. A petition was circulated at the close of the meeting asking Congress for "a public investigation into the facts that caused this once prosperous railroad to go bankrupt."

The meeting organizers promised to send out a report and transcript of the



Milwaukee Road yard workers discuss plans for June 5 protest

Militant/Dick Roberts

meeting to other railroad union locals on the Milwaukee Road. More such meetings—from Chicago to Seattle—were encouraged to break through the silence and the secrecy of the bankruptcy. People had come from as far away as Oregon and Idaho to participate in the Minneapolis meeting.

The news that the protest meeting was going to take place was widely reported in the media. All four television stations in Minneapolis and St. Paul covered a news conference announcing the forum. There were articles in the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* and the Minneapolis *Star*.

Featured speaker at the protest forum was Kendall Gustafson, a sales representative for the Milwaukee Road,

who was flown in from Portland, Oregon.

Gustafson's name became known over night to thousands of railroad workers after he sent a statement over the railroad Teletype to rail yards across the country, suggesting that the bankruptcy was a scheme manufactured to line the pockets of the Milwaukee Road's top officers and the other railroad trusts.

He also sent the wire to President Carter and members of Congress. The only response from the Carter administration, he said, was a letter from a low-level functionary at the Interstate Commerce Commission, suggesting Gustafson direct his questions to the

bankruptcy court judge hearing the Milwaukee Road case in Chicago.

"The questions must be answered," Gustafson told the forum. "An investigation must be launched, manned by senators, congressmen, farmers, and rail labor."

Other speakers at the forum were Charlie Wilson, local chairperson UTU 263; George Stahley, local chairperson UTU 650; Bill Peterson, a railroad worker and a central organizer of the meeting; and Al Harrington, chairperson BRAC Local 1478.

During the open-mike discussion, one worker after another rose to charge deliberate mismanagement of the railroad. Many had years of experience behind them. They described how good railroad cars were often scrapped and how locomotives costing half a million dollars were often stripped of their parts under company orders to repair other locomotives. Meanwhile the cannibalized locomotives sat unused in the yards while the railroad paid mortgage payments to the bankers who own them.

Elmer Berglund, Minnesota legislative director of the UTU, also spoke at the meeting. Berglund continually repeated the theme that sending letters to Congressmen was the only way to save workers' jobs.

Several union officials from as far away as Montana and Iowa also advocated letter writing. It was an obvious attempt to limit the protest to the confines of the corridors of Congress, rather than placing the issues squarely before the public.

However, the most enthusiastically received remarks were those that militantly attacked the company and pointed out the need for more actions like June 5 to mount a national fight-back.

## UTUers block Southern Pacific harassment

By Jim Little

LOS ANGELES—Members of the United Transportation Union on the Southern Pacific line have won a victory here. We defeated a unilateral move by the SP to restrict time-off rights of train crews and others.

The SP used Superintendent's Notice 20 to notify employees that the "privilege" of time-off would be put entirely under the control of company officials on the Los Angeles Division.

Up to May 14, when the measure was scheduled to take effect, train crews could "mark off" or "lay off" up to seven days by informing the crew clerk.

Train crew members reacted most vociferously to this change in company policy because they are most affected. The majority have no designated days off. If you don't have top seniority you have work on call.

Some work twelve, fifteen, twenty hours a day and are called back to work in ten hours. Regularly scheduled road switchers work twelve hours a day, six and seven days per week.

So laying off is no big luxury.

In response to the posting of Notice 20 here, UTU Local 240 held a meeting to hear a report from General Chairman Jim Thorton about the change.

The meeting took on the tone of a protest. Some 100 members of UTU packed the meeting room. Thorton said that he opposed the new policy, and that he had called for mediation under the Railway Labor Act. This would take some time. He said that he had asked International President Al Chesser to personally intervene on this issue and that Chesser had declined.

*Jim Little is a member of United Transportation Union Local 240.*

Thorton finished by saying there was nothing that could be done. But he said, offhandedly, that it should now be easier to get off when sick. This set off laughter, jeers, and angry growls.

Despite the gas shortages, some workers were threatened with being fired when they told the company they couldn't get to work because they were out of gas.

A few said they had worked twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty days straight (twelve hours per day) and couldn't get off.

A young brakeman with long blonde hair said that laying off for five or six days once in a while was the only good thing about the job. Everyone shouted agreement.

People took the floor and pointed out that this was the only way you could have any personal life or family life. One guy said angrily that he had lost his wife and two kids to the long hours and time out of town. He demanded his time off.

Many responded to this. They said that their broken relationships and divorces were caused by long hours and no time off.

Someone said that we have a right to time off. He said, "This is not an economic issue, this is a life-style issue, a human rights issue." This remark captured the feelings of the majority.

Someone proposed that we strike. The room shouted and applauded in agreement. Thorton said we couldn't strike. There is no provision in the agreement for layoffs.

People began to ask why we couldn't strike, why the SP had the law and the courts on their side.

I took the floor and pointed out that behind this whole issue is the fact that the UTU had signed an agreement without the membership vote. Trainmen would never have signed an

agreement without a layoff provision. We need membership votes on all agreements.

Thorton then reported what was behind this move by the SP. They were trying to cut a person off the train crew consist. They were using this as blackmail. In effect the SP is saying: "If you want time off, then give up a crew member."

But why should we surrender any crew member to the profitable SP?

The discussion went on for hours. People kept questioning why the union was so weak. They insisted that the union should provide leadership on this.

I pointed out that the policy of depending on politicians and working through the courts under the RLA was what had surrendered our right to strike. We needed union democracy to control the policies and we needed the right to strike.

Our final action was to instruct our local chairman to meet with the leaders of the other locals affected by Notice 20, and together they would meet with the company. They would inform the SP that we emphatically rejected Notice 20 and demanded simply that they take it down.

We then set up another meeting to decide what we should do if the company failed to meet our demands. This mobilization of the power of the union ranks paid off.

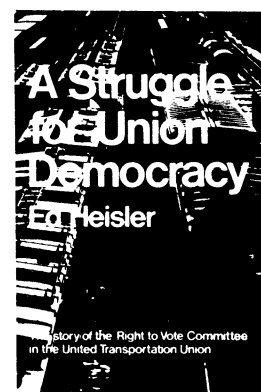
When the meeting between the union representatives and the company took place, the company simply said, in the middle of the meeting, it would pull down the notice, and we were back to plan A.

Jim Thorton apparently changed his mind after the union meeting. He asked for and received authority from the international UTU to serve notice of a strike on this issue, and he served

notice. And for the time being, the SP backed off.

Notice 21, dryly stated that Notice 20 was "temporarily" suspended.

This whole flap proves one thing. The democratic voice of the members and their united action makes the union strong against the companies' attacks on our rights.



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## As 'peace' talks go on

# Israel steps up attacks on Palestinians

By David Frankel

The provisions of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty signed in March are being carried out on schedule. El Arish, the Sinai Peninsula's main town, was returned to Egyptian rule May 25 after twelve years of Israeli occupation.

On the same day, negotiations over the future of the Israeli-occupied West Bank opened in Beersheba.

These events made page-one headlines in the big-business press. But other moves, which are just as much a part of the Mideast deal worked out under President Carter's prodding, have not been played up in the same way. These include:

- Approval by Congress of \$4.8 billion in additional armaments for the Israeli and Egyptian regimes;
- Stepped-up attacks on the people of Lebanon by Israeli military forces;
- A tightening of the Zionist grip on the occupied territories;
- And finally, broad hints that U.S. military forces might be stationed in the Sinai.

### Mass murder in Lebanon

Since April 10, well over 100 persons—the vast majority civilians—have been killed in Israeli air, naval, and artillery raids on Lebanese villages. Hundreds more have been wounded. The victims included six persons attending a wedding reception in the village of Mohamarah, an infant boy in the Nahr al-Bared refugee camp, and eight children in the village of Babilye.

Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin boasted in a May 7 speech that "we struck at the Palestinian murderers," and called for the expulsion of the 400,000 Palestinians in Lebanon. Begin declared that "there should be no difficulty" in resettling the Palestinians in other Arab countries.

Although there is nothing new about the Israeli regime perpetrating mass murder in Lebanon, the new treaty with Egypt has given the Zionists a freer hand.

Begin is well aware that his aggressive course could lead to a confrontation with the more than 20,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon, and possibly to a new war. But he also knows that the Syrian army is no match for the Israeli military machine, and that Syria is doubly vulnerable without Egyptian support.

Thus Begin is pushing the Syrians hard. With Israeli encouragement, right-wing Lebanese Christian militia forces led by Maj. Saad Haddad de-

clared the section of southern Lebanon they control "independent" April 18. Begin vowed continued support to these rightists in his May 7 speech, and demanded the Syrians get out of Lebanon. The Syrians are "the source of all trouble" there, he declared.

### Begin's 'autonomy' plan

Begin has also spelled out his proposal for Palestinian "autonomy," as promised in the treaty with Egypt. Under his plan:

- Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip would continue, as would Zionist colonization.
- Israel would retain control of more than a million acres of "state land" in the West Bank, and would be able to confiscate privately owned Arab land for "security needs," including the establishment of new Zionist settlements.
- Israeli control over water resources would be maintained.
- Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza would be subject only to Israeli law.
- The 1.2 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would be allowed to elect a local council—after the candidates were OK'd by Israeli authorities—but the council would not be allowed to pass legislation. Its authority would be restricted to such areas as education, health, and municipal services.

Israeli Minister of Agriculture Ariel Sharon outlined the government's view of Palestinian "self-rule" in an interview in the May 9 *Christian Science Monitor*.

"Our troops will have the right to go into the casbah of Nablus [the largest West Bank town outside of Jerusalem], go in there and arrest people, search for weapons, and so on," Sharon declared.

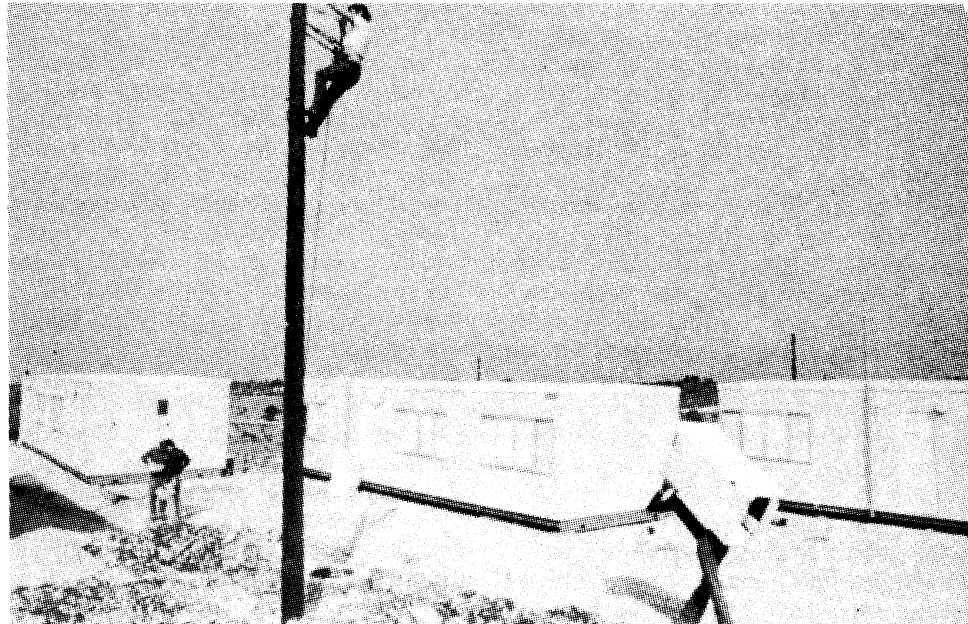
He added, "Take it for granted—about our military presence and settlements there—that will be forever."

Even the editors of the *Washington Post* had to admit May 7 that "plainly, from the viewpoint of Palestinian self-determination, this plan is a fraud."

An editorial in the May 11 *Christian Science Monitor* commented that "it suggests Israel does not really seek a genuine settlement."

### 'A cynical trick'?

On June 3, the Israeli cabinet underscored its intentions by voting to seize Arab-owned land just outside of Nablus for the purpose of establishing a new colony there.



Zionist settlers moving in. Israeli regime is stepping up confiscation of Arab land and colonization of West Bank.

Anthony Lewis, an enthusiastic supporter of Carter's Mideast diplomacy, complained in his *New York Times* column June 4 that "Israeli actions have lately been so unrestrained as to seem almost provocative. It is as if Israel were trying to show that the peace treaty gave it carte blanche to settle and permanently subjugate the West Bank."

Lewis continues: "Those of us who welcomed Begin's autonomy proposal . . . are now being driven to believe that Arab critics had a point when they said it was a cynical trick."

The tone of surprised and injured innocence taken by Lewis and other supporters of the Mideast treaty in the capitalist media reflects the diplomatic stance of American imperialism. Just as it did in the years leading up to the deal between Begin and Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, Washington is striving to play soft cop to the Zionist regime's hard cop.

For example, in the *New York Times* article on the opening of negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza, Bernard Gwertzman reported that Secretary of State Cyrus Vance "sought the middle ground befitting a mediator, but his tone was chilly to Israel."

Through such cheap gestures Washington hopes to draw other Arab regimes into the negotiations and ease Sadat's isolation.

Carter has had little success with this tactic so far, owing to the impact of the Iranian revolution. With the example of the shah's overthrow still fresh, regimes such as the Saudi monarchy—which in other circumstances would have been willing to back the treaty—are afraid of arousing mass opposition at home.

Carter hopes that if the negotiations are drawn out long enough, and if Sadat manages to hang on to power in Egypt, there will be new opportunities to undermine Arab opposition to the treaty.

As Sadat put it when asked about the possibility of Palestinian participation in the negotiations, "Let us not raise this question now. Let us see after three years."

### A risky game

But such a waiting game has its risks. What if Sadat's position is challenged by the Egyptian masses, or revolution threatens to triumph elsewhere in the Arab world?

"I would not rule out the use of force to defend our own vital interests in the area," Secretary of Defense Harold Brown told the House Foreign Affairs

Committee May 8.

The *Washington Post* reported May 18 that "officials in the Carter administration are studying sending a force of several thousand U.S. soldiers to police the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty if the Soviet Union carries out its threat to veto United Nations forces for that task. . . ."

Such leaks by lower-level officials are used as trial balloons by the government, to try to accustom the American people to the idea of stationing U.S. military forces in the area.

Inside Israel, meanwhile, Begin's intransigent policies are putting wind in the sails of the most fanatical Zionist forces. Although the Zionist regime has already confiscated 27.3 percent of the West Bank's total land area, Zionist groups are demanding that this be stepped up.

When the Zionist colony of Kiryat Arba was denied permission to expand onto adjacent Arab-owned land in April, the settlers there took matters into their own hands. Using a power saw, they cut 550 grapevines in the Arab vineyard they wanted to take over.

At the same time, Kiryat Arba settlers occupied a building in the center of Hebron, demanding that a new colony be started there. Asked where the Arab residents of the area should go, Kiryat Arba leader Rabbi Moshe Levinger said, "They can live here or another place, I don't care."

### Just part of the job

The racist scum led by Levinger murdered two Palestinian high-school students in nearby Halhul in April. On May 2 another Kiryat Arba resident, "Prof. Ezra Zohar, shot a student, Riyadh Nakhleh Daoud, who at the time was sitting on a bench in front of a dormitory" (*Christian Science Monitor*, May 11).

In its May 14 issue, *Newsweek* said of the same incident that "the peaceful rally at Bir Zeit [against Zionist settlement] so incensed nearby Israeli settlers that one of them shot and wounded a 20-year-old Arab student in the chest. . . ."

Of course, Professor Zohar has nothing to fear from the Israeli courts. They were set up in the first place as part of the racist Zionist apparatus that carried out the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland and the expropriation of their land. Killing off those who resist—whether in Lebanon, the West Bank, or Israel itself—is just one more part of the job.

## Israeli anti-Zionist arrested

Uri Davis, a prominent Israeli anti-Zionist, was arrested May 24 by Israeli secret police. An Israeli court ruled the following day that Davis could be held without charges for eight days of interrogation.

For the past year, Davis had been teaching at the University of Bradford in Britain. He was arrested as he returned to Israel after hearing that the regime was trying to implicate him in a frame-up.

In mid-May the Begin government rounded up fifteen Palestinian students belonging to the Democratic Progressive Movement. Members of the campus group had earlier issued

a statement of opposition to the Israeli-Egyptian treaty and stated their political solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Reports in the Israeli press indicate that the regime is trying to link Davis and the DPM as participants in a common "conspiracy." Government officials have already charged that the DPM is a front group for al-Fateh.

Having been arrested for thinking the wrong thoughts and saying the wrong things, the Palestinian students in the DPM now face torture at the hands of the Israeli secret police. They are still in custody.

## Rulers' grip still precarious

# Peru: workers struggles enter defensive stage

By Fred Murphy

The failure of the masses to join a three-day general strike in January of this year marked the end of the prerevolutionary situation that opened in Peru in July 1977. The turning point in the situation came in September 1978 with the crushing of a nationwide miners strike.

That strike by the key sector of the Peruvian proletariat—the 48,000 workers at Peru's copper, iron, and other mines—came on the crest of a wave of struggles in which the masses resisted the military government's austerity drive. For more than a year there had been continual local and province-wide general strikes, three nationwide general strikes, factory occupations, peasant land seizures, student mobilizations, and uprisings in the huge shantytowns that ring Peru's cities.

In the course of that upsurge—which began with a twenty-four-hour general strike throughout the country on July 19, 1977—the masses won important political concessions from the regime. Martial law, in force since July 1976, was lifted. A constituent assembly was convened and a return to civilian rule promised. Political prisoners and exiles were amnestied. A measure of press freedom was restored, and leftist groups were allowed to function more or less openly.

### Real wages drop

In contrast to these victories in the political sphere, however, the workers and their allies were unable to wring any significant economic concessions from Peru's crisis-ridden capitalists. In fact, just the opposite occurred. During 1978 alone—the year in which mass struggle was at its highest pitch—real wages dropped a full 37% and the number of persons without fulltime employment rose by more than 100,000. Over half the work force remained "underemployed." By the end of 1978 it was estimated that 60% of the population lacked sufficient income to guarantee the proper caloric intake of food.

By the time the miners strike began in August 1978, such deepening misery was taking its toll on the militancy of the masses. The main cause of the strike's defeat lay elsewhere, however. The Communist Party-controlled General Confederation of Peruvian Workers (CGTP) failed to offer timely solidarity to the miners union. As soon as it was clear that the CGTP bureaucrats had no intention of calling a general strike to back up the miners' demands, the military mobilized its troops and tanks. The mining districts

were put under martial law, and a protest encampment set up by 3,000 miners and their families in central Lima was brutally routed.

The miners were forced back to work with none of their demands met. In October, November, and December, fresh struggles broke out among students, peasants, public employees, metalworkers, bank clerks, and residents of several towns in the Amazon region. But these battles remained isolated, and in the absence of any centralized mobilizations, the masses were forced into retreat.

### CGTP leaders organize defeat

In December the CGTP's Stalinist leaders called a general strike for January 9, 10, and 11. But this was done in a perfunctory fashion, with little organization. The bureaucrats blocked all attempts to form a unified strike committee with the various unions outside the CGTP. The date of the strike was set arbitrarily, coming immediately after the year-end holidays rather than as the culmination of a rising wave of struggles.

The regime and the bourgeois parties whipped up a propaganda campaign against the strike, stressing a sudden "threat of war with Chile" and the alleged danger that the work stoppage might thwart the promised return to civilian rule. (In earlier strikes, some of the bourgeois parties—the APRA<sup>1</sup> in particular—had lent verbal support and their followers had participated.)

Because missing three consecutive days of work is grounds for dismissal under the dictatorship's labor laws, a three-day work stoppage would have threatened participants with summary firings. In their majority, the workers chose not to take this risk.

The obvious disunity among their leaders and the near-total lack of direction for the strike; the fear of heavier repression than on previous occasions (the regime put up a massive show of military force in the days before January 9); and the realization that few economic gains had resulted from earlier work stoppages led many workers to go to their jobs on January 9 and most others to return on January 10. The CGTP leadership called off the strike in the middle of its second day.

### Rulers' counteroffensive

The military rulers pressed their advantage after the strike collapsed. The state of emergency was extended

1. Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (American People's Revolutionary Alliance), Peru's main bourgeois party.



Militant/Miguel Fuentes

Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco speaking at FOCEP rally last October

until March 6. So long as it was in force union meetings and political gatherings were banned and persons could be arrested and held without charge. (The latter provision remained in effect even after the emergency was lifted.)

Seven independent newsmagazines were ordered shut down just before the strike, and three others were banned shortly thereafter. Only in April were some of them allowed to resume publication. (Such periodicals are the main source of news in Peru because of the tight control exercised over the government-owned dailies.)

Repression was stepped up against workers and peasants struggles. On February 4 the police launched a brutal assault on the Cromotex textile factory, which had been occupied by its workers since December 28. Three workers were killed, ten were wounded, four disappeared, and fifty-seven were arrested.

A reign of terror was imposed on the peasants of Alto Piura between February 6 and 12. To put an end to seizures of unused land, Civil Guards attacked peasant encampments, killing one and wounding thirty-two, destroying huts and stealing tools and livestock. Seventeen peasants were arrested and charged with "sabotaging the agrarian reform".

On February 28, the political police raided a meeting at the Lima headquarters of the SUTEP, Peru's teachers union. SUTEP leader Abel Callirgos was murdered by the cops and thrown out of a fourth-floor window. Several dozen SUTEP leaders were jailed. The regime is seeking to head off a resumption of the nationwide teachers strike that was suspended July 27, 1978, after the government pledged to recognize the union and grant its demands. That pledge remains unfulfilled.

Cops even raided the Lima Cathedral on March 20 to dislodge the editors of several of the banned magazines. The journalists had chained themselves inside the cathedral crypt and begun a hunger strike to protest the closure of their publications.

The military sent heavily armed troops back into the mining districts in mid-March to crush a renewed strike against the Southern Peru Copper Company. Hundreds of miners were arrested, and about fifty were held for trial by military courts.

The miners were forced back to work at the beginning of April. The government and the company then collaborated in firing dozens of union leaders, evicting them from company-owned housing along with their families, and deporting them to remote areas of the country.

Leaders of unions of hospital, bank, and university workers were also jailed in April and May.

Other unions have been attacked in a less direct way. Working closely with the Ministry of Labor, the bourgeois APRA party has been trying to regain a foothold in the unions it once controlled. Aprista thugs took over the Callao fishermen's union on March 19, and the next day they also seized the headquarters of the Federation of Peruvian Fishermen. (A similar operation was mounted by the Ministry of Fisheries in 1971; the union remained under government control from then until the fishermen wrested it back in 1974.)

The Stalinists atop the CGTP have also weakened the unions by continuing their drive to split or regain control over federations led by forces to their left. In April they held a rump congress of the powerful metalworkers federation, FETIMP, and gained official recognition for it from the government. The majority of FETIMP locals, including those from the biggest plants, held a separate congress April 27-May 1. A bloc of Trotskyist and independent delegates managed to block moves by the Maoists and dissident pro-Moscow Stalinists to take the FETIMP out of the CGTP.

### Aid from imperialist banks

By demonstrating its ability to hold the masses in check and enforce the austerity drive, the military regime has enhanced its standing with its imperialist creditors. A round of negotiations with the International Monetary Fund and the big banks and governments that hold the bulk of Peru's \$8.9 billion foreign debt enabled the regime to secure a "rollover" of some 90% of the debt payments that were to fall due in 1979 and 1980. This means that only 30% of Peru's export revenue during those years must go to debt retirement—down from a projected figure of nearly 70%.

At the same time, Peru's foreign-



Striking miners march in Lima. Crushing of miners strike last September was turning point in Peruvian politics.



## Brazil regime raids 'Versus'

By Fatima Olivera

SÃO PAULO—Police agents from the Department of Political and Social Order (DOPS) invaded the offices of the leftist monthly *Versus—Afro América Latina* here on May 15 with a search-and-seizure order. The raid has meant a temporary shut-down of the paper and the confiscation of its books and records.

*Versus* was slapped with a \$10,000 fine on April 3 for alleged irregularities discovered during a government-ordered audit begun in September 1978. On May 9 a Technical Police official showed up with orders for another audit. He was met by a delegation of supporters of *Versus's* right to publish, which included several deputies from the federal Congress and the state legislature, the president of the São Paulo state Union of Professional Journalists, and representatives of the Brazilian Press Association and the Order of Brazilian Attorneys.

The cop left without beginning his inspection, but vowed to turn the case over to the DOPS.

In seizing *Versus's* records the dictatorship is seeking both to stifle the independent press and augment

its frame-up case against twenty-five leaders of the legal political group Socialist Convergence who are currently on trial here for "subversion."

"The fact that members of Socialist Convergence work for *Versus* does not justify such pressure against the paper," *Versus* editor Enio Bucchioni told the press after the May 9 visit from the police. "Members of Socialist Convergence also work for the big dailies, and those papers aren't facing audits."

"Two weeks ago," Bucchioni pointed out, "*O Estado de São Paulo* [Brazil's most prestigious daily] published a confidential government document stating that the military's new tactic to silence the alternative press in this period of the so-called 'democratic opening' is through investigations of any violations of the civil code and administrative irregularities by the paper."

"We will not be intimidated by this current wave of indirect censorship against small papers such as *Versus* that question the political status quo," Bucchioni declared. "We intend to stand firm against this attack by the military government."

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

exchange reserves were boosted by the big rise in world copper prices that began in February. This will probably prove ephemeral, however, in that it does not reflect a rise in demand but only a speculative boom—brought on in part by buyers' jitters over the miners strikes in Peru.

Easing of its financial situation has enabled the regime to take a more sophisticated approach in imposing its austerity measures. Price increases and currency devaluations have been introduced in a more gradual fashion, thus camouflaging the continuing attack on living standards and staving off the explosions of mass outrage that accompanied past austerity decrees.

The government has also been in a position to grant selective economic concessions to certain groups of workers, such as sugar, textile, telephone, and steelworkers. This has been done in conjunction with the APRA's drive to reestablish itself in the unions, allowing the Apristas to present themselves to the workers as the ones who can secure concessions from the government.

When the Constituent Assembly was convened last July, large sections of the masses looked to it for solutions to their problems. No such thing happened. The two-thirds majority enjoyed by the APRA and other bourgeois parties effectively blocked efforts by the workers deputies to raise the masses' demands inside the assembly. The APRA and its allies refused to take any measures that might challenge the dictatorship.

Illusions in the assembly have thus waned, but owing to the dead end reached by the extraparlimentary struggles and the persisting crisis of leadership in the workers movement, the masses are now looking to the elections promised for late this year or in 1980 as another vehicle for winning their demands.

The military's plans for restoring civilian rule have been based all along on using the APRA as both a safety valve for mass discontent and the guardian of capitalist stability. But a new obstacle to this aim has arisen with the deteriorating health of APRA's founder and "supreme chief" Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

The eighty-four-year-old Haya collapsed at the APRA headquarters in March and was rushed to a hospital in

Houston, Texas. He is rumored to be suffering from cancer in both lungs, as well as kidney and circulatory ailments. There is no other APRA leader of Haya's stature, so the military fears that his passing would signal the end of APRA's hegemony in Peruvian politics.

The APRA may split into two or more contending factions, none of which would hold the allegiance among Peru's voters that the APRA has commanded since the 1930s under Haya de la Torre's leadership. Despite his many betrayals, Haya still symbolizes for many Peruvians the APRA's early anti-imperialism, intransigent opposition to military dictatorship, and commitment to social justice.

With Haya out of the picture, other bourgeois politicians see enhanced possibilities for their own ambitions. Ex-President Fernando Belaúnde Terry—ousted by the military in 1968—leads the pack. He is currently touring the country and trying to rebuild his People's Action Party.

### Bourgeois maneuvers

Another contender is Luis Bedoya Reyes of the Christian People's Party (PPC). Having slimmer chances, Bedoya suggested in January that owing to the supposed Chilean war threat the elections might have to be suspended. This was viewed as a veiled call for a coup and his own installation as a civilian fig-leaf for continued military rule. Bedoya's move incensed the Apristas, bringing on a shootout between his partisans and APRA thugs outside the Constituent Assembly.

The APRA and the PPC soon patched up their dispute, however. In recent weeks they have been working together closely on the final draft of the new constitution. The workers deputies continue to be blocked from playing any role in the debates.

There are conflicting reports as to when presidential and congressional elections might be called. The Constituent Assembly's term expires July 28. After that it will be entirely up to the military when to hold the vote, and they could of course choose not to do so at all if the outcome looked too uncertain.

The cloudy political prospects have caused the imperialists to show scant enthusiasm for stepping up investment in Peru. "We made our last important investment in Peru six years ago, and

we still don't see any signs warranting another," one company manager told *Business Latin America* in February.

Such statements show how illusory the military's hopes are for an economic recovery based on foreign capital and increased exports. In reality, what lies ahead is continued stagnation and new disasters when the postponed debts begin falling due in 1981.

### Rulers fear Trotskyists

The only way out of Peru's deepening crisis is the socialist solution being put forward by the Trotskyists:<sup>2</sup> repudiation of the foreign debt, expropriation of the big enterprises of the imperialists and the native capitalists, a state monopoly of foreign trade, and economic planning. The Trotskyists explain that only a government of the workers and peasants could put such measures into practice.

These proposals have gained a wide hearing in Peru, owing especially to the immense popularity of Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco of the PRT.

Peru's rulers fear the growing support for revolutionary-socialist ideas. They know that the small Trotskyist forces could grow rapidly in a new upsurge, which despite the recent setbacks could come at any time. Thus the military has already made several probes aimed at blocking the Trotskyists' progress.

Last September, right-wing terrorists widely believed to have been linked to military intelligence tried to kidnap Blanco. They did manage to seize two PST activists and a visiting journalist.

In March, the regime, the right-wing press, and the bourgeois parties all sought to blame the miners strike on the POMR, whose members are part of the leadership at the Cuajone mine.

In April, the political police raided the PST's Lima headquarters and jailed twenty-one activists, including three central leaders. (All were later released without charges.)

Further moves of this kind can be expected. After the Constituent Assembly adjourns, the parliamentary immunity enjoyed by Blanco and other Trotskyist deputies will be lifted. There is a danger that the regime might then seek to prosecute the Trotskyists on some trumped-up charges.

### What road for FOCEP?

The rulers' campaign against Trotskyism has also taken the form of pressure on the Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front (FOCEP), the electoral front formed in December 1977 that includes the three Trotskyist groups plus a number of independent figures in the workers movement.

After the FOCEP gained 12% of the vote in the Constituent Assembly elections, outpolling all other working-class slates, the capitalists mounted a big drive through the bourgeois press—and the Social Democratic weekly *Equis* in particular—to induce FOCEP President Genaro Ledesma to break with the FOCEP's platform of working-class independence and adopt a class-collaborationist stance. At the same time, the right-wing press carried on a slander campaign against Hugo Blanco and the Trotskyists. The whole operation was aimed at domesticating the FOCEP and isolating the Trotskyists within it.

2. There are three Trotskyist groups in Peru: the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party), the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party), and the Partido Obrero Marxista Revolucionario (POMR—Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party). The PRT and PST are sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International and are currently planning to unify. The POMR is affiliated with the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International; discussions are also under way toward unifying it with the PRT and PST.

The pressure on Ledesma, a lawyer widely known for his long record of defending victims of government repression, bore fruit. In February, Ledesma announced the formation of FOCEP-Independiente (Independent FOCEP), a formation led by himself, left-wing novelist Manuel Scorza, and ex-guerrilla leader Ricardo Gadea. They began publishing a newspaper called *FOCEP* (which was soon banned by the government).

The first issue of *FOCEP* carried a political declaration calling for "unity of the anti-imperialist, revolutionary, and democratic forces in a broad united front." It further declared:

Our final goal is the taking of political power through a vast alliance of the popular classes, under the leadership of the proletariat and in coordination with all the political parties and movements of the left. The taking of power and the socialist revolution will be the inevitable result of the unfolding class struggle.

In practice, it soon became clear that Ledesma and his allies were actually seeking to bring the FOCEP into a popular-front alliance with the Communist Party and the petty-bourgeois Revolutionary Socialist Party. Ledesma would be presented as the presidential candidate of this front.

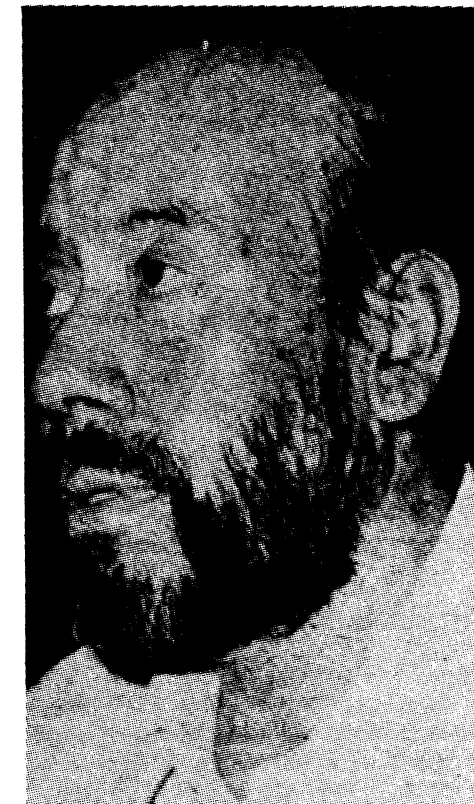
Ledesma has also responded favorably to APRA leader Armando Villanueva's overtures to what Villanueva calls the "responsible left." Ledesma was quoted in the May 14 edition of the Lima daily *El Comercio* as saying that "it is more probable that the left forces grouped around the FOCEP would draw close to the APRA than arrive at an understanding or agreement with the Christian People's Party. . . ."

The Trotskyists are organizing inside the FOCEP to preserve its original character as a bloc for working-class political independence. "The FOCEP arose as a front for struggle against the dictatorship and the right-wing parties," Hugo Blanco declared in response to Ledesma's comments on the APRA. "One of its essential principles is class political independence."

"Dr. Genaro Ledesma is free to make deals with whomever he wants," said FOCEP deputy and PST leader Enrique Fernández. "But he must not compromise the FOCEP, because all of us who are part of the FOCEP uphold class political independence."

The fight to preserve the FOCEP's original class-struggle platform will be the central aspect of the FOCEP congress now scheduled for late June. The Trotskyists and their allies will seek to defeat the capitalist-inspired drive to turn the FOCEP into a class-collaborationist front.

From Intercontinental Press/Inprecor



GENARO LEDESMA

# 1979 contract round

## Auto workers against wage limits



Militant/Terry Bell

Auto workers and retirees demonstrate for cost-of-living protection on pensions and a shorter workweek at the union's April bargaining convention. UAW officials warned members not to expect too much.

By Frank Lovell

(last of a series)

The auto contract expires in mid-September. Formal negotiations between the United Auto Workers and the big three auto corporations—General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler—open in July. But top-level union-management negotiations in this industry are continuous, and the union has been publicly preparing its list of “flexible demands” since the beginning of the year.

At the time of the union's two-day Special Bargaining Convention in Detroit April 16-17, UAW International President Douglas Fraser was conducting the traditional pre-negotiations round of union conferences in a business-as-usual fashion.

Fraser indicated that Carter's guidelines were not expected to affect the auto negotiations even though he and corporation officials have acknowledged the 7 percent ceiling on wage increases. GM chairman Thomas Murphy has urged the rubber companies to hew to the government wage limit, implying that the auto corporations will do the same.

Fraser was the first top union official to endorse Carter's wage-price guidelines and the accompanying “wage insurance” scheme. This proposed tax rebate was supposed to protect the real wages of workers who voluntarily accepted a 7 percent limit on raises.

Price guidelines, as intended, were never applied; “wage insurance,” which required congressional action, found no support there; only the wage limit remained. Union endorsement of the program became less and less tenable.

Fraser told the UAW convention in April that with prices and profits soaring, the administration's guidelines had “self-destructed” and should not be taken seriously.

He praised the Teamster settlement and warned federal wage monitors to stay away from auto negotiations. “They will not be welcome,” he told reporters. On this matter he was repeating past practice. The auto corporations have never welcomed government intervention in their labor policy or any other aspect of their operations.

### Contract demands

New contract demands adopted at the UAW bargaining convention were not expected to conflict with the wage guideline in any event. Priority demands this year are money for a cost-of-living escalator for pensions to protect the living standard of retirees against inflation, and a “shorter work-

time” plan that provides a few “Paid Personal Holidays” in exchange for grueling forced overtime work.

Other demands on the union list include a “substantial” wage increase, improved cost-of-living escalator (COLA) for wages, better grievance procedures, fully paid health and hospital care, the right to strike over production standards, job protection against technological changes, job safety and healthy working conditions, company checkoff of political contributions, and many more.

The list of demands doesn't change much from one time to the next and contract language on most of these issues remains unchanged. The demands are always “flexible,” which means not much attention is paid to most of them in the negotiations.

In debate at the bargaining convention, UAW Vice-president Irving Bluestone explained that specific amounts to be demanded for pension benefits, health insurance, wage raises, COLA payments, and so on, should not be fixed. If too much were allocated for one item, he said, there wouldn't be enough for some of the others.

This is what bargaining in the auto contract consists of: allocating different amounts for a variety of benefits from a labor-costs “package” prepared by the corporations. For the 1979 negotiations the corporate “package” has already been prepared. All that remains is the proper allocation of it, if negotiations proceed in accordance with established procedure and past practice.

### Productivity

The size of the corporate package is based partly on profits, but more on rising productivity. Auto workers have every right to expect that it will be generous, which is not to say that it will be. Fraser has told UAW members that the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed a 24.2 percent increase in auto industry productivity (output per worker per hour) in the 1975-77 period.

Over a longer range, U.S. auto workers built 7.2 million vehicles in 1957, while in 1977 they built 12.6 million, an increase of 74.6 percent. The work force increased only 15.8 percent. This is the measurement over a twenty-year span of “increased productivity,” a euphemism for speedup. No other industry extracts so much from the worker in one hour as the auto assembly line.

Over the same twenty-year period average hourly earnings rose only 41.4 percent after accounting for

inflation. Base pay of assembly-line workers is reported to be \$8.67 an hour including COLA raises to date. Compared to corporate enrichment it is modest indeed, even though it is one of the highest rates for unskilled workers in basic industry.

The UAW leadership is confident that the rate of pay in auto will rise as in the past—continuing to lag behind rising prices, but remaining above average. Whatever may happen to the working-class standard of living, Fraser is sure, auto workers will remain better off than most others. At least, their wages will be higher even if their working lives are shorter.

### 'Minimal gains'

A leaflet distributed at the union's bargaining convention by the UAW Independent Skilled Trades Council said, “Since 1950 the U.A.W. has basically re-negotiated the same agreement over and over again. We have received a 3% wage increase annually for the past 28 years. The gains made have been in the benefit section of our agreement, and those gains are minimal in comparison to the enormous profits enjoyed by the Corporations over the same period.”

GM profits in 1978 alone were \$3.51 billion, largest ever for a private corporation.

“After thirty years of collective bargaining, we are still looking for solutions to speed-up, Subcontracting, Discipline, Health and Safety problems, lines of demarcation, Representation, Job Erosion, New Technology, etc. . .,” said the council's leaflet. “We have watched unemployment rise in our nation to unacceptable levels while the purchasing power of our wages is ravaged by spiralling inflation. We have watched our pensioners relegated to starvation while our leadership is viewed by the public and unfortunately by many of our members as co-partners with the corporations.”

### Unforeseen circumstances

A great deal can happen between now and September to break apart the old mold of labor-management agreements in auto. The specter of layoffs is haunting this year's auto talks. Already Chrysler has thrown 20,000 workers onto the streets; Ford an additional 5,000. Blaming the gas crisis and government pollution standards, the auto companies are predicting more layoffs to come. The downturn that appears to be starting throughout the economy adds to the uncertainty.

Also looming in the background is the union-



busting "southern strategy" being tried out with new audacity by the auto corporations as well as all other big businesses. In 1976 GM signed a "neutrality" pact pledging not to interfere with UAW organizing. In 1978—after flagrantly violating this pledge for two years—GM again made the same promise.

But as the auto talks begin, GM's new assembly plant in Oklahoma City, which opened in April, is still operating nonunion. And the company is doing all it can to keep the 2,000 employees there out of the UAW. If GM succeeds in keeping an assembly plant nonunion, for the first time since the sit-down strikes that won union recognition in 1937, it will signal a major upheaval in union-management relations.

Only one thing is certain. The auto corporations, other decisive segments of the ruling class, and the Carter administration are better prepared for any eventuality than are UAW officials.

The bosses are on the warpath, and Carter is in their war council. That is the meaning of what Fraser last year correctly labeled "one-sided class warfare."

In their war upon the unions and against the working-class standard of living the employing class has forged a vast arsenal of weapons. Carter's wage guideline is only one of them, and is not designed for long-range use. But for purposes of restricting wages in the present round of negotiations it will continue to be effective until replaced by another weapon. Or until the union movement unites to challenge the basic concept of government-imposed wage controls.

What happens this year in the rubber strike, in the electrical industry, in California agriculture, meat-packing, the apparel industry, and construction is bound to have an impact on the auto negotiations. Any responsible leadership in the union movement ought to warn of this possibility and try to unite labor's forces and allies in support of those unions that come under direct attack.

### Political battles

Whatever the outcome of the 1979 contract battles, a new complex element has been added to the old union-management relationship. The working class will get some lessons in the real meaning and hidden dangers of one-sided class war.

Renewed attacks by the employers are driving workers toward involvement in their unions or—as in Newport News, Virginia, and other southern work sites—toward organizing unions where they don't exist. Unions remain the first line of defense for these embattled workers.

The same hostile economic and political forces that drive workers into union activity will also drive them away from the Democratic Party and the two-party system. Carter's wage guideline is only a sample of what the monopoly of political power by the employing class means for workers.

Every strike to defend workers' living standards assumes a political character as it runs smack into the government's guidelines. The struggle developing over this year's wage negotiations points to the need for a labor party that will challenge both capitalist parties.

Workers engaged in the big strike battles that are likely to develop do not have to retreat and wait for the formation of a national labor party. They can help bring that party into existence by running local labor slates against the bosses' parties.

Such labor candidates can point the way toward a labor party just as local strike victories in Minneapolis, Toledo, and San Francisco in 1934 helped inspire the CIO organizing drives.

The idea of the CIO in those days—to organize the unorganized along industrial lines—showed millions of workers the way out of the economic and social crisis of the 1930s. Today, the idea of a labor party—based on the unions and uniting the unorganized, Blacks, *latinos*, women, youth, and working farmers—will make more and more sense as the most effective way to fight back against the bosses and their political wage-cutters.

## Despite court ruling

# Carter, bosses vow to keep wage-cutting guidelines

By Shelley Kramer

You knew the wage-price guidelines were unfair. Now it turns out they're illegal as well.

On May 31 Federal District Judge Barrington Parker ruled that the administration cannot use cutoffs of government contracts to enforce its wage-price guidelines. This government threat has been seized upon by companies as an excuse to hold wage increases down to the 7 percent limit or lower.

Government contract sanctions amount to "a mandatory system of wage and price controls, unsupported by law," said Judge Parker. His decision marked a victory in the suit against the government guidelines filed last March by the AFL-CIO and nine of its union affiliates.

The court ruling—which the administration is appealing—still leaves Carter the option of seeking congressional approval for guideline enforcement measures.

Whatever the outcome of the legal process, Carter and the bosses have made clear their intention to push ahead with the wage-slashing guidelines.

"While the procurement part of the program is important," said chief hatchet man Alfred Kahn, "its absence does not mean that the voluntary wage and price standards have failed or will be abandoned." The guidelines are "alive and well, I guarantee it," Carter's "inflation fighter" told the Alabama state legislature.

Business representatives interviewed by the *New York Times* pledged to continue efforts to hold down wages.

"Our support of the program has been based on the nation's desperate need to control inflation, and not on the threat of government economic sanctions," said General Motors Chairman Thomas Murphy.

Such patriotic pledges have nothing to do with fighting inflation, of course. Since Carter's "anti-inflation" program took effect, prices and profits have hit record-high levels.

In April prices were rising at an annual rate of 13.9 percent. Necessities such as food and gas—exempted from the guidelines altogether—are shooting up far faster.

Yet only two companies have ever been declared in violation of the price guidelines. "For several reasons," says the *New York Times*, "the question of refusing to award contracts to either has not come up so far."

The reasons are simple—the price limits were never meant to be enforced.

The wage guidelines, on the other hand, *have* been enforced—and it hasn't taken contract sanctions to do it.

At a May 30 news conference, Carter boasted that "85 percent, at least, of all the wage settlements, since we imposed the voluntary standards, have been within the 7 percent guideline. Even those that have exceeded the guideline and in my opinion have been much lower than they would have been without the restraints."

The wage guidelines are doing their job. Wages are held to 7 percent while prices are rising twice as fast. That means a cut in workers' real income. Where is the difference going? Into higher profits.

Faced with a deep-going crisis of the capitalist

economic system, the employers are determined to protect and increase their profits at the expense of the working-class majority of society. Carter's guidelines are a weapon in this antilabor offensive.

The weaker sections of the working class—smaller unions, the unorganized, many public employees—are held to 7 percent or even less. Some of the stronger battalions—such as the Teamsters—may "bend" the guidelines by a few cents. But they too are left far behind inflation and far behind what their unions are capable of winning. Thus the guidelines are "flexible."

The threat of contract sanctions never had anything to do with why the bosses comply with the guidelines. Employers simply used the threatened sanctions as legal cover for their wage-robbing demands.

Take Uniroyal Tire. The United Rubber Workers struck the company May 9 after it pulled out of a tentative contract settlement. Uniroyal claimed that agreed-upon wage increases would violate the guidelines, endangering the company's valuable government contracts.

But in their eagerness to prove the insignificance of Judge Parker's ruling against the sanctions, administration officials exposed Uniroyal's claim as a lie. The rubber industry "does little business directly with the government," they conceded.

General Electric, on the other hand, ranks fifth in Defense Department contractors. Right now GE is engaged in contract negotiations with the electrical unions. Is the company's hard line a concession to government pressure?

Again, government officials say no. GE Chairman Reginald Jones "is very sophisticated about Washington," one official confided to the *New York Times*. "I doubt that he seriously thought that we would have shut out G.E. from procurement." The same holds true for the auto companies, the official added.

While the court's ruling will not alter the bosses' aims, it could be effectively used by the unions to educate about the illegitimacy of the guidelines and to rally support for union struggles to keep wages fully abreast of prices.

The unions' ranks have proven their readiness to fight. In local "guideline" strikes across the country—such as those fought by electrical workers in St. Paul, machinists in Milwaukee, and milk drivers in New York. In national strikes by Teamsters, pulp and paper workers in the Pacific Northwest, United Airlines workers, and rubber workers. In organizing battles such as the Newport News Steelworkers struggle.

But labor officials greeted the court decision as though the war were over.

"For practical purposes, the decision served as the final nail in the coffin," said United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser.

The court decision, however, settles no wage contracts. These will continue to be fought out on the picket lines, where the government's presence is both visible and hard felt.

The rubber workers and other unionists on strike against the guidelines urgently need the solidarity of the entire labor movement. A victory for one will improve the chances of a victory for all.

## Socialist program to fight inflation

### • Full cost-of-living escalators for wages.

Contracts should provide full, immediate wage increases to match every increase in the cost of living. The actual movement of prices should be monitored and indexed by union-consumer price committees. Escalator clauses should also cover pensions, social security, welfare, veteran's compensation, and other social benefits.

• **Union-consumer price committees** composed of unionists, housewives, working farmers, and small business people. These committees should be empowered to inspect the books of all retail and wholesale businesses.

• **Shorter workweek** with no cut in pay to end layoffs and provide jobs for the unemployed. No forced overtime.

• **End government interference** with union activity. No to wage guidelines or controls. Repeal anti-union "right to work" laws and all restrictions on labor's right to bargain collectively, strike, picket, or boycott.



Militant/Dale Green

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# Phoenix militants in race for union office

PHOENIX, Ariz.—An election campaign in one of the largest union locals west of the Mississippi is having an impact on the labor movement here.

Construction Laborers Local 383, with 7,000 members, organizes construction, production, and maintenance laborers throughout most of Arizona. The membership is approximately 80 percent Chicano.

Since 1972, Local 383 has been ruled with an iron hand by William Soltero, who is currently business manager and secretary-treasurer of the local. Physical intimidation of rank-and-file members is a common practice.

In the past three years, the local has suffered many setbacks. Representation elections have been lost, and a strike against Del Webb, one of the largest construction firms in Arizona, ended in a demoralizing defeat.

These defeats were not the result of the membership's unwillingness to fight. The Soltero leadership failed to reach out to and build solidarity with other building trades unions. It refused

to lead the membership in a determined fight against the contractors. And it failed to make a serious effort to organize the nonunion construction workers in Arizona.

This has led to a situation where the membership of 383 is ready for a change. Several challengers are in the running for the union election beginning June 9.

Most of the opposition candidates are running on their personalities. But one slate is standing on a positive program of union democracy and militancy. That is the slate of the Rank and File Right to Know Committee. It is headed by Gustavo Gutiérrez for president and Johnny Griego for business manager and secretary-treasurer.

The platform of the Rank and File Committee includes the right to ratify contracts, the right to strike, and the right to vote on local union decisions, such as recommendations for business agents and support of candidates for public office.

The platform calls for an end to

forced overtime, a cost-of-living allowance, and improved grievance procedures.

It proposes a program for union organizing.

And it urges the local to get involved in the campaign to repeal Arizona's so-called right-to-work law and to take action around social issues, such as in support of affirmative action and the Equal Rights Amendment and against environmental pollution.

And the Rank and File Committee proposes the local actively practice labor solidarity by supporting other strikes and union actions.

Rank and File presidential candidate Gutiérrez told the *Militant* that the initial idea behind the committee was to educate the local membership about how unions should operate and what they're all about. Another aim was to fight for such things as bilingual contracts and union constitutions.

When Gutiérrez and some of the Rank and File candidates were business agents for the local, he said, they

were asked a lot of questions, such as "Why don't we have the right to ratify our contracts?" "How come we have to work when we don't have a contract?"

Local 383 members are also concerned with winning the right to strike over safety.

Other unions both within the building trades and outside them know about the election campaign here. At job sites, campaigners for the Rank and File Committee are talking to members of the various trades about the issues in their campaign.

The Rank and File candidates don't expect an honest election, but Gutiérrez believes the campaign has taken a step in organizing the members to take back control of the local.

Whether they win or lose the election, Gutiérrez says, "I feel very strongly that the Laborers will never be the same. This is the first time all these points have been put down in writing and brought to the membership so they can make a choice."

## N. Calif. warehouse workers fight Carter guidelines

By Tom Tomasko

SAN JOSE—Twenty-five thousand Northern California warehouse workers are gearing up for a possible strike battle against their employers and the Carter administration's 7 percent wage limit.

The contract expired June 1 between warehouse employers and locals of the Teamsters and International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. Twelve Teamster locals represent about 20,000 warehouse workers; ILWU Locals 6 and 17 represent 5,000.

The ILWU members will meet June 9 to hear a report on negotiations and vote whether to strike.

Warehouse workers now make about eight dollars an hour. The Industrial Employers and Distributors Associa-

tion, along with other employer groups, has offered a forty-cent wage increase—about 5 percent—in the first year of a three-year contract, with limited cost-of-living adjustments in the last two years.

The employers also have a list of take-away demands: a two-dollar pay cut for new workers, one less holiday, and provisions making it harder to get sick pay.

The Northern California Warehouse Council of the Teamsters and ILWU is demanding wage increases of one dollar the first year and seventy-five cents in each of the next two years.

The key demand of the unions is for an unlimited cost-of-living allowance. The expired contract provided cost-of-living adjustments only up to an infla-

tion rate of 4.5 percent—or about one-third of the government-reported inflation rate today. The unions also want COLA adjustments made twice a year rather than once a year.

The April ILWU convention in San Diego passed a strongly worded resolution against Carter's wage guidelines, calling them "unjust and unworkable."

Carter's program "is a political con job calculated to deceive the American people into thinking something is being done," the resolution said. "It places the blame for inflation on the shoulders of its victims. It puts the power and prestige of the federal government on the side of employers in collective bargaining."

The resolution also noted that "the recent experience of our brothers in

Canada under controls demonstrates the futility of such policies."

The delegates voted that "we do not intend to comply" with the 7 percent wage limit.

ILWU Local 6 has sent a letter to more than 450 other unions and community groups explaining the issues and asking their support.

Local 6 has also formed a picketing committee and devoted one issue of its local bulletin exclusively to the organization of pickets. This is a mammoth job, since several hundred job sites must be covered. Many of the shops are small. Many have members of unions other than the Teamsters and ILWU, whose support will be crucial in the event of a strike.

## ...Nicaraguan prisoners tell their story

Continued from back page

Ronald, twenty years old, has been in jail since February 2, 1979. He was a computer programming student at the Central University of Nicaragua, where he participated in student activities against the government. He also participated in the battle of Matagalpa during last year's upsurge. He left Nicaragua at his mother's request, as she feared for his life. He arrived in Tijuana by bus and was arrested in San Diego.

Juan Carlos, sixteen, is the youngest of the group. Since our interview with him he has been transferred to a detention center for juvenile delinquents called El Campo. He is being held there virtually incommunicado; he is not allowed to receive telephone calls. His only political activity was to participate in one or another anti-government demonstration.

Juan Carlos was arrested several times and was beaten by Anastasio Somoza's national guard, for the crime of being young in Nicaragua. He complains that the national guard didn't let him work or study. They would arrest him time after time, accusing him of being a runner for the FSLN.

During the last days that Juan Carlos spent at the detention center, he was isolated in *el hoyo* (the hole), a small room without light, where it is always cold.

Jorge Alberto is forty-one and has been in jail for the past three and a half months. He belonged to a clandestine anti-Somoza organization. He says that he fears for his safety in Nicaragua. He knows that they are

looking for him and he has been threatened with death. He requested political asylum two months ago.

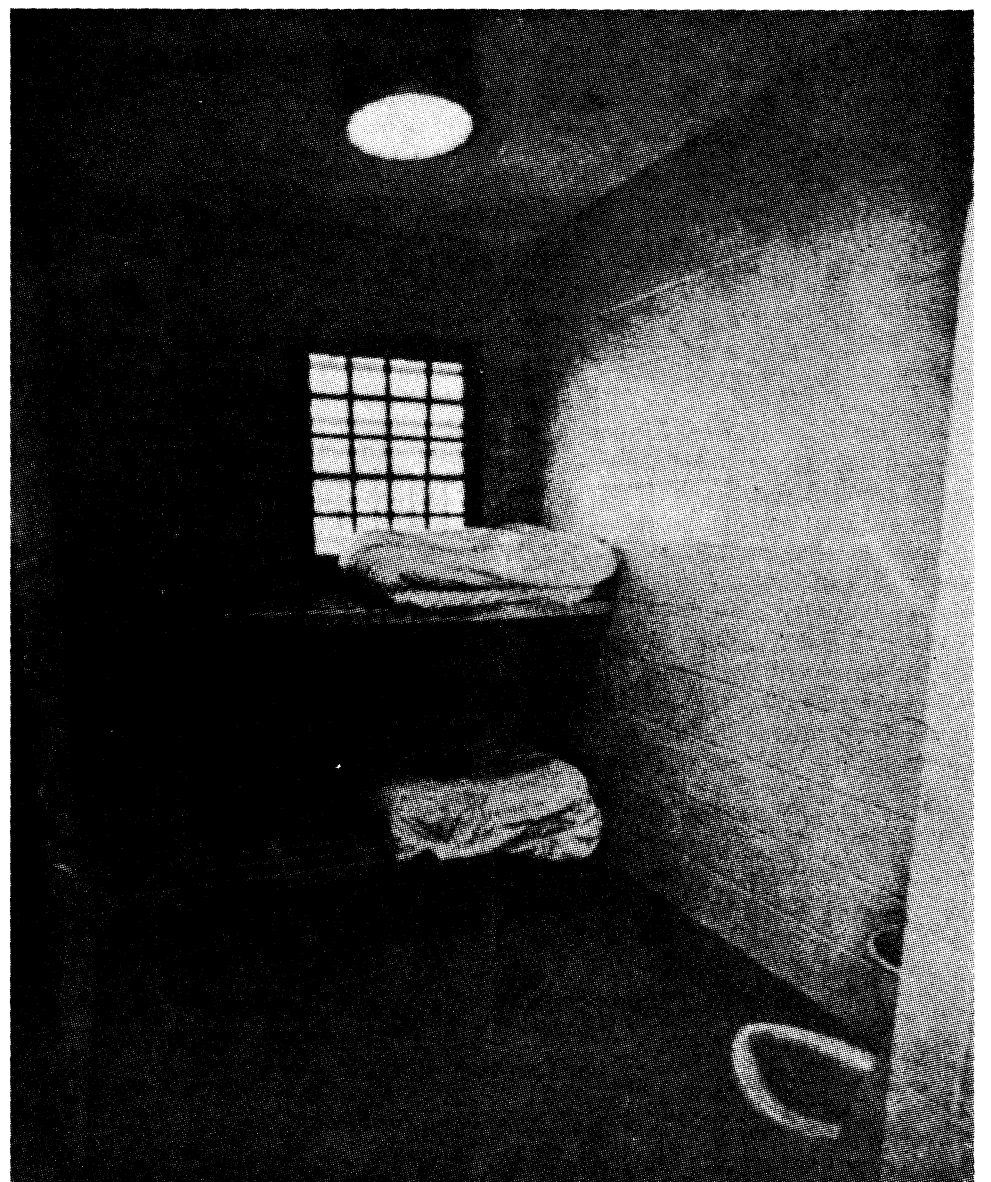
Marvin, who is twenty years old and has been in jail since December 12, 1978, worked for the Nicaraguan Public Hospital services. He was also an activist of the FSLN and was well known in his neighborhood. Before leaving Nicaragua on threat of death, he was held prisoner for three days and severely tortured and beaten. He is the only survivor of the FSLN cell he belonged to.

The majority of the Nicaraguans being held in the Alien Detention Center have already been officially notified of their denial of political asylum in the United States.

Emilio Beteta said in a letter to the INS Commissioner Leonel Castillo that "the Nicaraguan refugee has come to this country in search of temporary sanctuary analogous to the early colonizers who were escaping from the violation of human rights perpetrated by the King of England. . . ."

"The difference in this situation is that the United States is morally responsible for the present events since they were instrumental in seating Somoza as the head of Nicaragua and by advising and arming the national guard."

The case of the Nicaraguan prisoners in El Centro, like the case of the socialist Héctor Marroquín, is key to exposing the ongoing violations of political freedoms and human rights by Latin American regimes Washington considers its "friends."



Isolation cell at El Centro

Jeanne Marklin/San Diego Newsline





## Lives are cheap at Sparrows Point

The following is a guest column by Charlie Rosenberg, a bricklayer helper and member of United Steelworkers Local 2610.

BALTIMORE—The Maryland Occupational Safety and Health agency (MOSH) has charged the Bethlehem Steel Corporation with exposing fifty-seven bricklayers and helpers to a cancer-causing substance and of exposing other workers to excessive amounts of silica dust, which can severely scar lung tissue.

In the first instance, workers were breathing dust from bricks treated with coal-tar products. These bricks are used to line the vessel of the Basic Oxygen Furnace at the Sparrows Point steel plant here.

Bethlehem was cited for not requiring workers to wear respirators while working inside the vessel. But MOSH made no challenge to the company's use of the bricks treated with a substance long known to cause cancer.

MOSH was pressured to begin the investigation after the United Steelworkers here documented five cases of lung cancer deaths and one death from

mesothelioma, a rare chest cancer caused by asbestos. The deaths during a five-year period were among brick department employees.

The MOSH citation hit the bulletin board in my department well over three months after the state health agency first observed the hazard.

Brick department workers on day shift gathered around this official-looking piece of paper on the board. Most of us had heard about the citation, but it was the bottom line that sent us away in disgust: "fine \$400.00."

A real slap on the wrist for a plant that boasts profits in the range of \$265,000 *per day*. Even several foremen shook their heads in disbelief.

It wasn't just the small fine that was upsetting. Or the fact that this citation for a "serious violation" of health and safety laws took so long in coming. It was the understanding that things will continue to go right on as usual.

Bricklayers and helpers are just a few of the thousands of steelworkers who face cancer risks daily at the Point. Coke-oven workers are exposed to benzene and cancer-causing gases. Pickler employees breathe acid fumes. The list is a long one.

But in addition to the long-term health hazards, ten workers have been killed in accidents since early last year.

The Democratic and Republican politicians who found their way to the clockhouses at election time didn't show their faces or make a peep of protest when the ambulance took our dead co-workers from the mill.

They tell us to depend on MOSH and the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration. But Bethlehem Steel can just wink at \$400 fines!

If these capitalist politicians were serious about stopping the deaths and injuries, they would demand heavy fines and criminal indictments of company officials.

But we need to organize our own forces to halt the slaughter on the job. Our union should fight for full-time union health and safety committees, funded by the company. These committees should have access to all the company's health and medical records, including facts on the hazardous substances we're subjected to.

Coal miners have the contractual right to shut down a mine if it poses an imminent danger. We need that right too—with no loss in pay.

## The American Way of Life

### Life is hard for oil execs

The May 14 'Los Angeles Times' featured an interview by Robert Scheer with Harold J. Haynes, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Standard Oil of California. The following are extracts from some of Haynes's comments on the gas shortage.

I don't think what we are going through today is really a crisis. I don't characterize it as a crisis. It is inconvenient to be sure, darned inconvenient. We are just simply going to have to cut back a little bit. It will be inconvenient. But by golly . . . you and I are just going to have to not use as much gasoline.

I know all too frequently when you get into this situation where people are blaming the oil companies, saying they made these windfall profits and all that kind of stuff. Anybody who will sit and listen to the facts will know that that is just plain rhetoric and demagoguery.

I think you certainly understand that in the final analysis, corporations don't pay taxes. The consumers pay the taxes.

I have a lot of compassion for the consuming people in this area, especially the poor people. And it is not just limited to the price of gasoline. Oh, I feel so sorry for some of these young people that can't even afford to buy a house today because they

have gone up 100% in the last three or four years. I have a lot of compassion for them.

I happen to have some young married daughters and the problem they had in buying a house, and the problem that they had in going out and paying \$9,000 for a Volkswagen. I've got a lot of compassion for them. For this whole problem of inflation . . . I've just got all the compassion in the world.

And I repeat it is not just limited to the price of gasoline, my wife stood in line yesterday 20 minutes to buy some meat.

Oh, we [Standard Oil] are fined all the time. But I don't consider that, it is certainly not criminal. Look, we are accused, we are charged, we are maligned and everything else. We are a big company, and that is just going to happen. . . . Sure, we get fined, I mean, hell, I am sure you



Pete Bentovoja

HAROLD HAYNES

haven't gone through life without a traffic fine or something.

On May 20 the 'Times' devoted almost its entire letters page to responses to Haynes's statements. Here are excerpts of two letters.

By golly, the world's energy future is in the hands of rambling, double-talking oil barons like Haynes who can charge any darned price they want for gas. Any darned price. And if you can't afford it, it's too bad. Just too bad.

Gee whiz, I felt sorry for Mrs. Haynes having to wait 20 minutes to get the family car filled with gas. Gosh, it takes me 20 minutes just to find the end of the gas lines.

\* \* \*

Permit me to take the word President Carter used recently to describe my reaction to all of Haynes' answers: Baloney!

I am depressed and very angry. Should an opportunity arise that would bring an election where we could vote to nationalize the oil companies there would not be a moment's hesitation to vote for it. At this point their credibility is zero.

## Union Talk

### San Antonio labor solidarity

This week's column is by David Salner, a member of Local 694 of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

SAN ANTONIO—In 1977, International Union of Electrical Workers Local 780 conducted a three-month strike here against Friedrich Air Conditioning Company. The IUE won.

One of the biggest obstacles strikers faced was city hall strikebreaking. Transit system buses were chartered to escort scabs across the picket lines.

Under threat of losing their jobs, union bus drivers were forced to convoy the strikebreakers, who were too ashamed to go across on their own.

The IUE marched on city hall, picketed the transit system, and generally raised hell over this issue.

As one of the union bus drivers forced to drive across the picket lines at Friedrich, I learned firsthand about management's efforts to divide and intimidate union members.

The transit system and city hall declared that it

would be "illegal" not to bus scabs. This was an obvious smokescreen. The employers like nothing better than to trap public employees in the middle of a labor confrontation, portraying it as their "public duty" to act as strikebreakers.

But most union members see their "public duty" in a different way—a duty to fight for the good of working people, who make up the majority of the public.

The hard-fought Friedrich strike drove home an important point. *United labor action must be the answer to all employer attacks aimed at dividing and weakening the union movement.*

Since 1977, San Antonio unions have begun to respond to this need for labor solidarity. The San Antonio AFL-CIO organized several actions in support of the national coal miners strike in 1978, and helped publicize the boycotts of Coors beer and J.P. Stevens products. Amalgamated Transit Union Local 694, which represents bus drivers and maintenance workers, was one of the first local unions to publicize its support for striking miners.

In March 1979, IUE Local 1013 was forced out on strike by Ingram Manufacturing Company. The AFL-CIO sponsored a solidarity rally on April 17, which drew more than 100 unionists from many different locals. ATU 694 made financial contributions to the IUE strikers, and several bus drivers attended the AFL-CIO support rally.

These solidarity actions are only first steps, but they are the key to strengthening our unions in this low-wage, "right to work" employers' paradise.

When union members start working together in support of one another, they develop confidence in their ability to work together in their own behalf.

This is one reason why low-seniority workers—who are the most abused at their own workplace—are often in the forefront of solidarity activities. They know that if their union cannot come to the defense of other unions under attack, it can hardly be expected to defend them when they try to fight back against arbitrary discipline, forced overtime, and the many other forms of insult and injury faced on the job.

## SLATED ABORTION CURB PROTESTED IN N.J.

Chapters of the National Organization for Women held protest demonstrations against two restrictive abortion bills in Newark, Paterson, Trenton, and Camden June 1.

Pickets and vigils were held in front of Catholic churches to protest the hierarchy's role in pressuring the New Jersey legislature, which is slated to vote on the bills June 14.

The restrictive, and unconstitutional, measures would mandate a forty-eight-hour waiting period before any abortion could be performed and would require notifying parents of pregnant teenagers seeking abortions.

The largest of the protests was in Newark, where seventy-five people picketed at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

In Paterson, Fr. José Alonso, a Cuban exile, was charged with assault and battery by a demonstrator who said he pushed her to the ground. He was also charged with assaulting a cop.

## PLAIN TALK ON GASOLINE PRICES

Gasoline prices will have to hit \$1.50 a gallon before U.S. companies will expand oil and coal production, said the chairman of the board of Standard Oil of Indiana.

Also chairman of the American Petroleum Institute, an oil baron's trade association, John Swearingen said May 31 he did not feel oil companies could "afford" to increase production until U.S. prices rise to the world level.

This may take a year or two, he indicated. But the industry, like a well-armed bandit, is quite willing to hold back supplies until the price is right.

## CHLORINE FUMES FELL 16 CHEMICAL WORKERS

Sixteen workers were overcome by a poisonous cloud of

chlorine fumes at the American Cyanamid plant in Bound Brook, New Jersey, May 31. Four of the victims were placed in hospital intensive care units in critical condition.

The deadly fumes escaped, a plant official said, when a hose from a railroad tank car to a plant building ruptured. A cloud formed that hung over the plant for twenty minutes before dissipating.

Last January 25, workers at the plant ended a fifty-two-day strike. Safety demands were a key issue in the walkout. Workers there suffer a high rate of cancer and lung abnormalities.

The strike settlement included company agreement to begin informing the workers of significant health problems, the generic names of chemicals being used, and written results of medical examinations.

The company has been notorious for trying to conceal from the workers the danger, and the toll, of their jobs.

## 250 CROWD L.A. COURT FOR NUKE DEBATE

More than 250 people crowded into the Harhanan, Louisiana, courthouse May 24 to hear a debate about building a nuclear power plant in Taft.

The debate took place before the police jury of St. Charles Parish (county). Residents have become increasingly alarmed over the potential danger of the nuclear plant being built in their area. The Waterford 3 plant is the same design as the one that almost blew at Three Mile Island.

Arguing the case for the plant, reports *Militant* correspondent Ron Repps, was the public relations officer for Louisiana Power and Light Company, builder of the nuclear generator.

Speaking against the project were two representatives of the

Louisiana Consumers League, which is suing to have construction postponed until it is safe.

The league says it doesn't favor forcing the company to scrap plans for the nuke plant because it would assertedly go bankrupt.

This concession to putting the company's financial concerns before public safety tended to weaken the Consumers League's otherwise strong case.

The representative of the power company, of course, could not present any convincing arguments in favor. He mainly wanted people to take his word for it that it would be safe.

Most people in the audience obviously didn't take his word for it and a number made that clear when they spoke.

The most sensible suggestion was made by a representative of the Oystershell Alliance who said the new plant should be converted to coal.

## SEARS TOLD TO PAY EMPLOYEE IT SWINDLED

A federal judge ordered the Sears company to return a patent to a former employee and give him all the profit it made on his invention. It could run as much as \$60 million.

When Peter Roberts invented a quick-release wrench while working for Sears in 1963 the company told him it wasn't worth much but gave him \$10,000 to sign a release on it.

He then noticed his wrench was prominently featured in the Sears catalogue and sued. Two years ago a jury found Sears had defrauded Roberts and he was awarded \$1 million. On further consideration the judge ordered that the contract be rescinded and that Roberts receive the profit on the 25 million wrenches sold.

Sears is the company that wants affirmative-action programs illegalized because they interfere with its efforts to treat its workers fairly.

## LOUISVILLE GE STRIKE

U.S. District Judge Thomas Ballantine has ruled that a strike by 1,800 workers at General Electric's Appliance Park in Louisville is legal.

The three-day strike by Building 2 workers was suspended June 3 after GE won a temporary court order directing Local 761 of the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers to end the walkout.

GE paraded fourteen witnesses—among them ten foremen—before Judge Ballantine at a hearing June 4 to back up the company's charge

## Radiation safety 'uneconomical'?



Militant/Michael Baumann

### Three Mile Island residents express their view

The government had exempted the Three Mile Island nuclear plant from complying with 1975 regulations designed to prevent radiation leakage during a nuclear accident.

This was admitted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in testimony before the presidential commission probing the March 28 accident at the plant.

The plant was exempted, an NRC official explained May 31, because it had been built before the regulations were issued requiring at least two safety devices for containing radiation in the event of an accident. At the time, only one such device was required.

Why didn't they make them add the extra safety devices?

"Economics would enter into it," conceded a safety specialist for the commission.

Reporting on a visit to the crippled plant, John Kemeny, chairperson of the presidential commission, said he was "shocked" by safety conditions he found in the control room.

Meanwhile, a decision is expected June 15 by the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission on a rate hike for the Metropolitan Edison Company, a part owner of Three Mile Island.

The company wants customers to pay about \$50 million extra on their bills this year to compensate for the utility's added expenses since the shutdown of the nuclear plant.

that the strike was illegal.

The company claimed that the May 25 firing of a Building 2 worker, William Dunn, was the cause of the job action. His case had not yet gone through the three-step grievance procedure, and therefore is supposedly not a strikable issue.

Local president Kenneth Cassady said the union struck over a company job audit, which has eliminated about fifty jobs and speeded up production for the remaining workers in Building 2. Strike notice was served on GE two months ago after grievances on the issue were not resolved.

To date, the strike has involved only Building 2 employees, who produce kitchen ranges. Local 761 represents about 15,000 workers at Appliance Park.

## CLEVE. NOW UNIONISTS GREET HAWKINS

The Cleveland Labor Task Force of the National Organization for Women held a recep-

tion for Cynthia Hawkins May 19.

Hawkins was the first woman included in an affirmative-action job training program negotiated between the United Steelworkers and Kaiser Aluminum at Gramercy, Louisiana. It is this program that is being challenged in court by Brian Weber.

About fifty people—almost all area unionists—attended the reception. Steel and auto unionists were particularly interested in discussing sex discrimination and race discrimination with Hawkins.

She was in town to speak at an anti-Weber rally.

## ANTI-WEBER MARCH AND RALLY IN D.C.

More than 1,000 people marched and rallied in the capital June 2 in defense of affirmative action and against the Weber suit now before the U.S. Supreme Court.

## Gay rights bill enacted in L.A.

The city of Los Angeles has enacted an ordinance barring discrimination based on sexual orientation. Approved by the city council thirteen to two, the measure was signed, without comment, by Mayor Bradley June 1.

The measure provides for civil damages of \$200 to \$400 for a range of discriminatory practices.

Based on similar statutes in San Francisco and Berkeley, it covers discrimination in jobs, housing, public accommodations, credit, and

other areas.

Meanwhile, in a May 31 ruling, the California Supreme Court held that public utilities could not discriminate against homosexuals in hiring and employment practices.

The court reinstated a suit dismissed by a lower court in San Francisco against the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. The antibias suit was brought by the Gay Law Students Association and the Association for Individual Rights.

# What's Going On

## GEORGIA ATLANTA

**ALABAMA BLACKS HIT KKK ATTACKS. EYEWITNESS REPORT FROM DECATUR.** Fri., June 15, 8 p.m. 509 Peachtree St., N.E. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 872-7229.

## MINNESOTA IRON RANGE

**WEBER CASE: THREAT TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.** Speaker: Andrew Pulley, Steelworker and recent Socialist Workers

Party candidate for mayor of Chicago. Sat., June 9, 7 p.m. Northern Electric Cooperative Association, 1500 S. 16th St., Virginia. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (218) 749-6327.

## NEW JERSEY NEWARK

**COAL: LABOR'S ALTERNATIVE TO NUCLEAR POWER.** Speaker: Nancy Cole, Militant staff writer just returned from touring coalfields of West Virginia and Kentucky. Sat., June 23, 7:30 p.m. 11-A Central Ave. Donation: \$1. Ausp: Mili-

tant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

## NEW YORK NEW YORK CITY

**TROTSKY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO MARXISM.** Speaker: George Novack, longtime leader of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., June 9, 7:30 p.m. P.S. 41, 116 W. 11th St., near Avenue of the Americas. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Forum. For more information call (212) 533-2902.

## MEMORIAL MEETING FOR ARTHUR

**FELBERBAUM, FORMER EDUCATION DIRECTOR, SCHOOL FOR MARXIST EDUCATION.** Speakers: Roy Brown, Harry Magdoff, Eli Messinger, Grace Paley, Annette Rubinstein, Martha Schlamme, James Edward Shannon, Sol Yurick, and other co-workers. Sun., June 17, 1-4 p.m. Washington Square Church, 133 W. 4th St. His family and comrades invite friends to attend. Messages c/o Knauer, 88 2nd Ave., #6, NYC 10003.

## OHIO CINCINNATI

## POLICE VIOLENCE AGAINST THE

**BLACK COMMUNITY.** A panel of speakers from the Black and labor movements discuss recent attacks on the Black community. Sat., June 16, 7 p.m. 970 E. McMillan. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: The Militant Forum. For more information call (513) 751-2636.

**THE ENERGY SWINDLE.** Speakers: Ove Aspy, United Steelworkers union Local 1870 and member of the Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 29, 8 p.m. 970 E. McMillan. Donation: \$1.50. Ausp: The Militant Forum. For more information call (513) 751-2636.



Organized by the National Anti-Weber Mobilization Committee, participants came from eastern cities, while similar demonstrations were held in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New Orleans.

The D.C. marchers made their way past the Supreme Court to register their opposition to Brian Weber. Weber is the white Kaiser Aluminum Company employee who is presenting the challenge to the affirmative-action job training program negotiated with the company by the United Steelworkers.

A featured speaker at the rally was Cynthia Hawkins, the first Black woman to gain admission to the training program now being challenged as "reverse discrimination."

Other speakers included representatives of various participants in the coalition that initiated the action. Among these were the National Lawyers Guild, the Black United Front of Brooklyn, and National Conference of Black Lawyers.

Several union bodies endorsed the protest, as did the New York Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and New York National Organization for Women.

The New Orleans rally drew about 150 people. One of the speakers was Kernell Goudia, a Black worker at the Kaiser Gramercy plant, who recently filed an affidavit with the Supreme Court, as did four other workers, testifying to Kaiser's discrimination against Black and women workers.

#### RUSK TAKES DIM VIEW OF PRESS FREEDOM

Dean Rusk, secretary of state from 1961 to 1969 and an important architect of the U.S. war against Vietnam, feels freedom of the press was a

problem in successful prosecution of that war.

"Hope and confidence," he told a Dartmouth College audience May 31, "are essential to democratic institutions and the free enterprise system."

To preserve these "democratic institutions" and, presumably free enterprise too, Rusk had a suggestion: "If another war like Vietnam comes up, the leaders and the Congress should take a hard look at censorship such as we had during World War II."

#### GANG-BUSTER KUCINICH

Every once in a while, a capitalist politician lets his image slip.

It happened recently with Dennis Kucinich, Democratic mayor of Cleveland.

Kucinich projects an image of being a champion of the "little people."

Like, for instance, the three youngsters he personally busted last month.

It seems the alert mayor and his bodyguard spotted three boys playing ball in a drained city pool with a "no trespassing" sign.

What did the fighting mayor do? He personally held them in custody until enough cops arrived to take them away.

But the good mayor is really "progressive." He announced later that the boys had "learned their lesson" and the charges were being dropped.

Pat Harshbarger, mother of the oldest boy, was particularly mad. Last fall, when the mayor was hospitalized, her son had taken the trouble to send him a get-well card.

"He's a good kid," she declared angrily. "He goes to school. He's a newspaper carrier. This kid has a sense of responsibility. . . . They were treated like criminals."

Which just might be the way people who run this society view ordinary people.

### N.Y. convicts anti-KKK prisoner

Felix Castro, an inmate at Eastern New York state prison at Napanoch, was convicted May 28 of rioting and "unlawful imprisonment" of guards.

A Black Puerto Rican, Castro was found guilty by an all-white Ulster County jury with an average age near sixty. They arrived at their verdict in three hours.

Castro was the first of ten inmates facing trial. Their prosecution stems from a rebellion at the prison August 8, 1977.

The rebellion was sparked by bad prison conditions, plus intimidation and brutality led by Ku Klux Klan members of the prison staff.

The KKK activity had become so open that in 1975 an order was issued forbidding correctional officers to join the Klan. Prisoners affirm this was ignored and they continued to suffer violence and other abuse at the hands of the virulently racist guards.

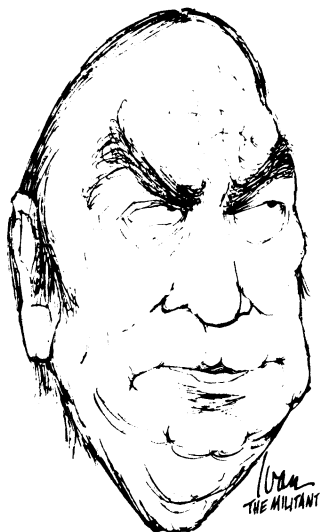
Inmates formed an NAACP chapter and a John Brown anti-KKK committee to get something done. Officials ignored their protests even when the prisoners provided a list of names of guards who were Klan

members or sympathizers.

When the rebellion finally occurred, guards were held hostage for twelve hours but none were injured.

Because this is Castro's third conviction he faces the danger of life imprisonment under New York's Persistent Felon law.

Demands that Castro's conviction be overturned and charges dropped against the remaining nine should be addressed to Gov. Hugh Carey, State Capitol Building, Albany, New York 12224.



GOV. HUGH CAREY

# The Great Society

Harry Ring



**They'll work for less, too**—Some computer scientists believe they can develop "thinking" machines that will ultimately be capable of duplicating human activity, reports the *New York Times*, which concluded, "'Life' could therefore be replaced by intelligent constructions designed, better than those of flesh and blood, to withstand the increasingly hostile environment of an ever-expanding and cooling universe."

**Fish story**—A letter writer to the St. Louis *Post Dispatch* joins a debate on selection of a state fish with the suggestion for the sucker, so that "we taxpayers would feel we're part of the action." After the legislators settle the fish question, the writer suggests, they should agree on a state nut.

**All for us**—President Carter saw no reason for irritation about his using a helicopter for a Pennsylvania fishing jaunt. Actually, he said, it was "much less expensive," and saved gas since he didn't need a car entourage. Besides, "I really believe that it's good not only for me but for the country." A president, he said, needs some recreation.

**Feel secure?**—The General Accounting Office urged the Pentagon to advise the several states that don't know they have atomic weapons within their borders and consequently don't have evacuation plans in case the bombs start leaking radiation. Responded the Pentagon: Nope. National security.

**Things-are-tough-all-over dep't**—"I'm broke. I can't afford it any more."—Hal Champion on resigning his \$52,000 a year post as undersecretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

**They insisted he take a DC-10?**—A report on passenger attitudes since the Chicago air disaster told of one businessman who took out \$150,000 in flight insurance. Normally, he explained, he doesn't bother. But this time he promised his associates he would.

**It figures**—Last year, more than two dozen members of Congress held financial interests in oil and natural gas companies. And the annual financial disclosure statements of seven others listed honoraria from oil companies.

## By Any Means Necessary

### Black voter 'apathy'

The following is a guest column by Osborne Hart.

President Carter went before Black students at Cheyney State College May 20 to tell them if they suffer discrimination, it's their fault.

"How are we going to have the leadership to fight for equal opportunities and affirmative action in jobs, schools, and housing if even the act of voting is too great an effort?" he demagogically asked when the majority of the audience indicated that they had not voted in the 1978 elections.

Carter went on to denounce workers for refusing to make "individual sacrifices" in the face of the economic crisis—particularly the monopoly-organized gas shortage.

According to Carter, the people who suffer from privation and discrimination—not those who profit from such conditions—are to blame.

Black children are forced into segregated and inferior schools. Blacks have twice the jobless rate of whites and nearly 60 percent of Black youth are unemployed. And Blacks are systematically excluded from institutions of higher education. Even the minimal gains won in this area through affirmative-action plans are being reversed through "reverse discrimination" suits.

As Carter sees it, all this is the fault of Black people—we're just too lazy to vote!

Somebody should remind Carter that in 1976 enough Blacks voted to elect him to office. A lot of good that did us.

Just as Carter blames racial oppression on Blacks, he blames unemployment, inflation, and the energy crisis on workers. He says wages are too high and we all have to make "individual sacrifices."

But the fact that working people are being forced to sacrifice is precisely the problem. The employers are on a drive for

higher profits at the expense of our rights and living standards. And Blacks are catching the brunt of the drive.

Carter complains of voter "apathy" among Blacks and says that Blacks have to help themselves—by voting for the Democratic Party politicians who promise to relieve inequality while acting to make it worse.

Carter declares, "Political candidates and incumbents have got to know that you [Blacks] will vote."

This is just "vote for me, I'll set you free" rhetoric.

As the 1980 elections approach, Blacks are being urged toward the voting booths still another time to pull the lever for one or another capitalist politician.

But both Democrats and Republicans represent the employers who exploit us. Both capitalist parties are responsible for defending and maintaining racial discrimination. And both of them are opposed to the rights and interests of all working people. Carter's role in helping the oil companies through decontrol of prices is an example.

The problem is not that Blacks or working people in general are "apathetic"—it is that they see no party that is independent of the employers and capable of serving as a political voice for all the oppressed and exploited.

The most powerful organizations workers have to defend our rights today are the unions. Through the unions we can forge a political instrument that can fight for social and economic equality—a labor party.

Blacks should take the lead in fighting for such an independent alternative to the capitalist parties. We are the ones who suffer the most from the lack of any force that can stand up in the political arena against the employer offensive.

And as the fight for a labor party begins to make headway in the unions, Carter will change his tune about Black "apathy."

## Capitalism and crime

In justifying the legal murder of John Spenkelink in the electric chair, capitalist propagandists have argued that barbaric means such as the death penalty are the only way to deter individual criminals. But what is the root of crime under capitalism? In the following excerpts from Eugene V. Debs's book 'Walls and Bars,' the great socialist and labor leader explained how the system of private property drives working people to acts of crime and desperation. Portions of the book are reprinted in 'Eugene V. Debs Speaks' (Pathfinder Press, \$4.95 paper).

Crime in all of its varied forms and manifestations is of such a common nature under the capitalist system that capitalism and crime have become almost synonymous terms.

Private appropriation of the earth's surface, the natural resources, and the means of life is nothing less than a crime against humanity, but the comparative few who are the beneficiaries of this iniquitous social arrangement, far from being viewed as criminals meriting punishment, are the exalted rulers of society and the people they exploit gladly render them homage and obeisance.

The few who own and control the means of existence are literally the masters of mankind. The great mass of dispossessed people are their slaves.

The ancient master owned his slaves under the law and could dispose of them at will. He could even kill his slaves the same as he could any domestic animal that belonged to him.

The feudal lord of the Middle Ages did not own his serfs bodily, but he did own the land without which they could not live.

The capitalist of our day, who is the social, economic and political successor of the feudal lord of the Middle Ages, and the patrician master of the ancient world, holds the great mass of the people in bondage, not by owning them under the law, nor by having sole proprietorship of the land, but by virtue of his ownership of industry, the tools and machinery with which work is done and wealth produced.

In a word, the capitalist owns the tools and the jobs of the workers, and therefore they are his economic dependents. In that relation the capitalist has the power to appropriate to himself the products of the workers and to become rich in idleness while the workers, who produce all the wealth that he enjoys, remain in poverty.

To buttress and safeguard this exploiting system, private property of the capitalist has been made a fetish, a sacred thing, and thousands of laws have been enacted and more thousands supplemented by court decisions to punish so-

called crimes against the holy institution of private property.

A vast majority of the crimes that are punished under the law and for which men are sent to prison, are committed directly or indirectly against property. Under the capitalist system there is far more concern about property and infinitely greater care in its conservation than in human life.

Multiplied thousands of men, women and children are killed and maimed in American industry by absolutely preventable accidents every year, yet no one ever dreams of indicting the capitalist masters who are guilty of the crime.

Under the capitalist system, based upon private property in the means of life, the exploitation that follows impoverishes the masses, and their precarious economic condition, their bitter struggle for existence, drives increasing numbers of them to despair and desperation, to crime and destruction.

The inmates of an average country jail consist mainly of such victims. . . . The rich are not to be found in prison save in such rare instances as to prove the rule that penitentiaries are built for the poor.

Capitalism needs and must have the prison to protect itself from the criminals it has created. It not only impoverishes the masses when they are at work, but it still further reduces them by not allowing millions to work at all.

If a hundred men are blown up in a mine a hundred others rush there eagerly to take the places of the dead even before the remnants of their bodies have been laid away. Protracted periods of enforced idleness under capitalism have resulted in thousands of industrious workingmen becoming tramps and vagabonds, and in thousands of tramps and vagabonds becoming outcasts and criminals.

It is in this process that crime is generated and proceeds in its logical stages from petty larceny to highway robbery and homicide.

Getting a living under capitalism—the system in which the few who toil not are millionaires and billionaires, while the mass of the people who toil and sweat and produce all the wealth are victims of poverty and pauperism—getting a living under this inexpressibly cruel and inhuman system is so precarious, so uncertain, fraught with such pain and struggle that the wonder is not that so many people become vicious and criminal, but that so many remain in docile submission to such a tyrannous and debasing condition.

It is a beautiful commentary on human nature that so little of it is defiled and that so much of it resists corruption under a social system which would seem to have for its deliberate purpose the conversion of men into derelicts and criminals, and the earth into a vast poorhouse and prison.

### Einstein

Paul Foer (*Militant*, May 18) says that Einstein, whom socialists generally admire, was a backer of Zionism, which revolutionary socialists oppose. David Keil (*Militant*, May 25) sidetracks the issue by trying to show that Einstein wasn't a real Zionist. Einstein's numerous political statements were certainly fuzzy at times, but there can be little doubt that he was a Zionist.

As a man of immense love and sympathy for humanity, he naturally felt special anguish at the plight of his own people, the Jews, and sought solutions. He believed that Zionism presented such a solution. But if Einstein, who died in 1955, had continued to live today I believe he would have seen through this idea.

Paul Foer finds it contradictory that we admire Einstein while condemning Zionism. But the contradiction was in the mind of Einstein (and many others) in trying to reconcile Zionism with a desire for peace and justice. If he were still alive, I suspect that Einstein would now be on our side. And if not . . . well, we would continue to disagree with that great man.

C.K. Starr  
Athens, Georgia

### Militant gets around

I thought you would be interested to know that Frank Lovell's article "How we lost

the 40-hour week" [April 20 *Militant*] appeared taped to the wall outside our cafeteria at Ford's Metuchen plant in New Jersey. It stayed up for a week.

Our normal workweek here is five ten-and-a-half-hour shifts and often eight hours on Saturday.

H.F.  
Hoboken, New Jersey

### People's needs first

I came across a brief article in the *Boston Globe* (May 19, 1979), which indicated that the "Defense" Department "is the country's single biggest petroleum consumer, using about 2.5 percent of the national total."

In light of the recent gas "shortage" being perpetrated upon the American public and the gloomy forecasts conjured up by profit-hungry oil companies, the "Defense" Department's enormous allocation would provide practical short-term relief for most working people.

Thus, one demand the Socialist Workers Party can make in its electoral campaigns is that working people's needs *must* come before the military's; all of the Pentagon's stocks of oil, diesel fuel, and gasoline must be made *immediately* available for civilian use.

Richard Cahalane  
Sommerville, Massachusetts

## UPS contract runaround

You will find enclosed a money order for \$32.00 to cover sixteen new subscription orders. The following names are those of my fellow co-workers at United Parcel Service. Whether they will commit themselves to your political/social beliefs is unknown to me. I, myself, am paying for their subscription, and they in turn are interested in the Teamsters contract negotiations. I feel the *Militant* gives a true outlook toward reality. Please start them off with your May 25 edition; they were very interested in the article concerning the "1979 Contract Round."

About our contract, the Teamsters have left us in the dark *again*. When it expired last November, the union waited almost to the end of December to get a quick short-term contract. When it came time to vote, their advice was to "accept what money UPS gives because Carter might freeze wage levels."

We ended up with a 60-cent raise and a promise that all UPS Teamsters throughout the country would have their contracts dealt with at a national level when the short-term contract expired midnight, April 30.

Well, now the mixed-up shop stewards say we must: 1) vote to become national, and 2) wait until they re-

ceive further word concerning our contract.

The majority of the workers expect to be sold out again, chump change and all. The union and UPS only seem concerned with "the profits," and not our safety or health. Yet they tell us that the contract will mainly be negotiated on the basis of safety and health!

Many of us can tell you stories UPS would like to keep quiet, (accidents both minor and fatal, firings, speed-ups, volume peaking, company harassment—the list is long).

Right now the management is putting on the phony good-guy image in hopes of the workers not deciding to strike. The last time we voted, in December, 1978, we almost had a strike. But because of the confusion brought on by the Teamsters, we ended up with more volume—and a lot of the time missing our breaks.

Management right now is making promises of transfers to many of the workers, but where will they be when the contract is finalized and it is time to collect on their promises? To hell with them—striking is the only way we can make them listen to *us*, but the workers still need more confidence. Only time will tell.  
A Teamster  
California

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# Learning About Socialism

## Price committees vs. inflation

### Capitalism is a killer

Whether it be the continued dangers of nuclear power and weapons or the drive to reinstate the death penalty, capitalism is a killer.

The politicians who run the system have rather unique ways of defending it.

This past week Gov. Bob Graham of Florida signed death warrants for two men who may be the first executed in this country since Gary Gilmore.

Graham is quoted as saying, "There will be less brutality in our society if it is made clear we value human life."

*Edwin Fruit*

*Brooklyn, New York*

### Death penalty

On the date of May 25, 1979, the state of Florida executed John Spinkelink.

This, in my deepest opinion, has paved the way for more and more murders, especially for the poor and minority people. I view the death penalty as no more than a form of legal lynching.

The Afro-American people make up the biggest population of death row inmates in this country. This is especially true in the southern states. I strongly feel that the death penalty will be used strictly against the poor, Afro-Americans, and other minority people. This was definitely the case, in the past, before the death penalty was abolished.

I have noticed, too, that of all the people on death row in the United States over 80 percent of them are in the southern states with Florida leading by 124, and Texas by 105. This goes to show that blood-thirsty lynchers are still a part of the southern atmosphere.

I am strongly opposed to the death penalty and I think that it should be abolished again immediately. There should be a gigantic demonstration all over the United States against the death penalty until it is again stamped out of existence. All Power to the People!  
*A prisoner*  
*Georgia*

**The 'Militant' special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help out, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014.**

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.

The AFL-CIO recently began to organize 'price watch' committees to monitor the soaring cost of consumer goods and services. Staffed by volunteers, the committees include unionists, members of consumer organizations, and community and church groups. Such committees could be an invaluable ally for union struggles to bust through Carter's wage guidelines. By exposing price gouging by big business, they could expose the fraud of Carter's 'anti-inflation' plan and rally wide support to labor's battle to defend living standards.

The AFL-CIO committees, however, are aimed in a different direction. They are seen by top union officials as a substitute for an effective wage fight against the employers and the government. Whatever information is collected is merely forwarded to Carter's Council on Wage and Price Stability, as though the latter could be relied upon to take corrective action.

Ideas on how to mobilize the kind of labor/consumer price committees needed today were described in 'The Fight to Defend the Workers' Standard of Living,' a resolution adopted by the 1946 convention of the Socialist Workers Party. When the resolution was written, post-World War II inflation was eating away at the gains labor had won. The union bureaucracy and the Communist Party Stalinists had launched phony price committees with an orientation similar to the AFL-CIO's today—reliance on the government rather than on union power.

The SWP resolution explained that the capitalist government is both unwilling and unable to stop inflation, which is a permanent scourge of decaying capitalism. A fight for full cost-of-living escalators—contract clauses to raise wages to fully compensate for rising prices—is the only way unions can hope to protect workers' wages, the resolution said. Within that perspective, the SWP explained, effective price committees can carry out a parallel fight against price increases. The section of the resolution on price committees is excerpted below.

"It is the task of every class-conscious worker to participate in committees on prices, to initiate them where none exist and to imbue them with a correct program and with militancy in action. Through these committees an alliance can be forged among the industrial workers, white collar workers, veterans, professional people, and even the farmers and small merchants in their capacity as consumers. The object of this alliance must be to demand its own control over the fixing of prices, since the government has already demonstrated that its price-fixing measures are a fraud.

"The following are some of the steps the committees on prices could take in their struggle against high prices: They should demand the cooperation of the retail merchants in the fixing of prices. Those merchants agreeing to cooperate could be supplied special display cards to indicate their

pledge of cooperation. Regular checkups on prices should be made to see that the pledge is kept. Merchants refusing to cooperate should be picketed. Experience has shown that independent merchants usually cooperate, while chain stores most often refer the committees to the "home office." Thus the role of the trusts quickly reveals itself in this limited form.

"Even if the retail merchant is willing to cooperate, he is limited by the price he must pay to the wholesaler. The committee must therefore demand that the retailer open his books and reveal the price lists of the wholesalers with whom he does business. This step brings the committee face to face with the wholesaler from whom they must likewise demand a pledge of cooperation to control prices.

"The wholesaler in turn is limited in his ability to cooperate by the prices he must pay the manufacturer or processor. Therefore, the committee must demand that the wholesaler open his books and reveal the price lists of the manufacturers and processors with whom he does business.

"By this process the committees ascertain the financial operations and profit margin of each capitalist in the chain beginning at the point of distribution and extending to the point of production. Finally they will reach the big monopolists and demand of them that they open their books. By this means the workers will be able to prove that the real reason for high prices is the exorbitant profits of the capitalists.

"In the books of the monopolists will be found the evidence to prove who are the real big-time profiteers. In these books will be found proof of withholding goods from the market and deliberate destruction of goods to create artificial scarcities; collusion to corner markets; adulteration of products; super profits; fantastic executive salaries and bonuses; stock swindles; huge expenditures for anti-labor propaganda; payrolls for industrial spies; huge sums spent for advertising as a means of controlling the press and radio; lavish expenditures for lobbying in state and federal legislatures; huge contributions to the capitalist political parties; mammoth tax steals; funds used to corrupt officials; and numerous other devices for controlling the government, the press, and the radio in order only more ruthlessly to plunder the general population.

"The struggle for control over the fixing of prices has meaning only if linked to the demand for the opening of the books. This demand, which will be fiercely resisted by the profiteers, will thus become the point of departure for the whole unfolding struggle. This struggle will assume the most variegated forms, such as picketing, demonstrations, boycotts, publicity exposes, demands upon the politicians to support the committee in its struggle, proposals to clean house on the non-cooperating politicians, etc. We can best develop the present unfolding struggles along these lines."

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## U.S. HANDS OFF NICARAGUA!

By Suzanne Haig

A massive uprising of workers and peasants opposed to the bloody dictatorship of Gen. Anastasio Somoza is sweeping Nicaragua.

Rebels from the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) control León, the second-largest city, and a general strike has shut down Managua, the capital.

The Sandinist rebels have reported that the Carter administration is sending direct military aid to support Somoza's murderous attempt to crush the revolt.

On May 30 and 31, as the uprising began, Hercules military transport planes flew into Nicaragua from Howard Air Force Base in the Panama Canal Zone. The planes—one of which was identified with the registration number 6210—carried arms, ammunition, and other military supplies to airports in Bluefields and Puerto Cabezas on the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua,

the rebels report.

Cables from the FSLN and the Group of Twelve, anti-Somoza businessmen and clergy, were released here by the Coalition for a Free Nicaragua and other groups.

The general strike, called for June 4 by the FSLN in Managua, has brought the capital and a half-dozen other cities to a standstill. According to the June 6 *New York Times*, most of the stores and factories in Managua were closed and transportation shut down. The FSLN said that general strikes in Estelí, Jinotega, and Matagalpa were also successful.

In a savage effort to drown the uprising in blood, Somoza's National Guard used paralyzing gases, tanks, helicopters, and gunboats against rebels in the southern area of Rivas, according to the June 1 *Christian Science Monitor*. Martial law has been imposed throughout the country.

Somoza is receiving help from the U.S.-backed regimes in Guatemala and El Salvador to put down the Nicaraguan people. The FSLN reports that C-47 planes carrying troops, munitions, and war materials have flown into Nicaragua from both countries. The rebels also announced they had captured a colonel in the Guatemalan Army, Oscar Ruben Castaneda, who was fighting with Somoza's National Guard in León.

Meanwhile, losing no time, a U.S. congressional hearing June 6 gave a platform to Nicaraguan officials, who charged their country was "under a relentless attack by international communism led by Cuba and Panama."

The U.S. government, which has kept the Somoza dynasty in power for decades, fears that the Nicaraguan rebellion could threaten U.S.-backed tyrannies elsewhere. On June 5 William Bowdler, director of the State

Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, warned that the situation in Nicaragua could "transcend the limits of an internal conflict and affect the peace and tranquility of the whole of Central America."

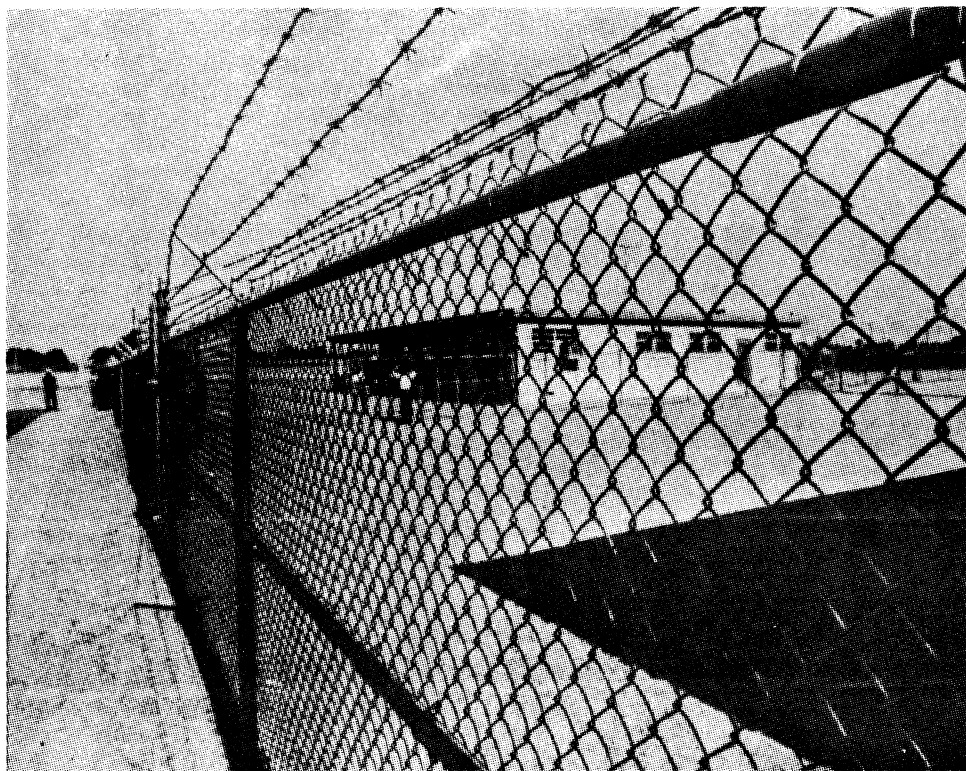
All those opposed to U.S. efforts to prop up the Somoza regime should unite to demand: U.S. hands off Nicaragua! No aid to the Somozan dictatorship!

### New York protest

An emergency demonstration to demand no U.S. intervention in Nicaragua will be held at noon on Saturday, June 9, at the Nicaraguan Consulate, Sixth Avenue and Fiftieth Street in New York City.

The action is sponsored by the Coalition for a Free Nicaragua and other groups.

## Free Somoza's victims in U.S. prison camp



El Centro, California, Alien Detention Center

Behind the barbed wire of this El Centro, California, prison camp, Nicaraguans who have fled the horrors of the Somoza dictatorship are being held under intolerable conditions.

They have been thrown behind bars by the Immigration and Naturalization Service for the 'crime' of entering this country with no immigration papers. They are fighting for political asylum in the United States. If deported back to Nicaragua, they face almost certain death.

The following interview with inmates at the El Centro Alien Detention Center has been released by the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners. Since the interview took place, several of the prisoners have been released, but more Nicaraguans have been incarcerated at the center.

By Norma Gonzalez and Selva Nebbia

SAN DIEGO—Six Nicaraguans who have been held prisoner in the Alien Detention Center in El Centro, California, from two to five months are requesting political asylum in the United States. The detention center, two and a half hours from San Diego, belongs to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) of the U.S. government.

All undocumented persons arrested in western states are kept at El Centro until hearings are held to determine whether they will be deported.

The six Nicaraguans, whose ages vary from sixteen to forty-one years, typify the situation of tens of thousands of Nicaraguans who have fled their country to save their lives, according to Emilio Beteta, president of the Nicaraguan Refugees Assistance, Inc., with headquarters in San Francisco.

The Central American Coordinating Group of Amnesty International confirms that "these men face torture and certain death if they are deported to Nicaragua."

On April 22, we visited the Alien Detention Center to talk to the prisoners and see the conditions in which they were being held.

The facilities consist of a series of one-story military-barracks-style buildings. In an April 17 article in the *Imperial Valley Press*, Virginia Horn described the conditions in detail:

"The barracks are hot in summer.

They are equipped with neither air conditioners nor desert coolers.

"The mattresses are thin, and there are iron bars, not springs, under the mattresses. There are only twenty sinks for each hundred-bed barracks in the bathrooms. . . .

"Aliens are awakened at five a.m., when loudspeakers blare a call for volunteers to make breakfast."

The only reading material allowed is the Bible. The prisoners are forced to work in the kitchen, since they are told by the guards that "if there aren't any cooks, there's no food." The only compensation that the "volunteers" get for a thirteen-hour work day in the kitchen is a pack of cigarettes.

Our brief interviews with the six Nicaraguans were conducted under the strict surveillance of the prison authorities. Upon request of those interviewed, we are not mentioning their last names.

Alfredo, twenty-three years old, has been in the prison for five months. He has been a member of the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) since he was twelve. In the September 1978 uprising in Nicaragua, he lost his father and mother, his wife, and his two children. He left Nicaragua in a hurry, without his papers, and hitchhiked to Mexico. He is the group's spokesperson, since he is the only one who can speak any English. He requested political asylum as soon as he arrived here.

Continued on page 22

### USLA campaigns for asylum

The United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) has announced a major campaign to demand immediate political asylum in the United States for all Nicaraguans fleeing repression. USLA is also demanding the immediate release of those still held in the Alien Detention Center in El Centro, California.

"It is an outrage," said Barry Fatland, USLA executive secretary, "for Carter to call for human rights, and then to turn around and deny political asylum to Nicaraguans."

"Those who have already been denied their asylum request were told bluntly by the government that

only people from 'communist countries' get political asylum," Fatland said.

USLA is asking that telegrams and letters demanding political asylum for Nicaraguans and their release from the detention camp be sent to Leonel Castillo, Director of Immigration, Washington, D.C. 20536.

Copies should be sent to USLA, 200 Park Avenue South, #812, New York, New York 10003. Copies of a special four-page brochure based on interviews with Nicaraguans seeking political asylum are available at two cents apiece from USLA. For further information contact USLA at (212) 254-6062.