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EVERY 12 SECONDS ONE MORE FALLS...

UNDER THE POVERTY LINE

One of the millions of homeless

As Reagan waxes on about the recovery, an estimated 2-4 million people are homeless in the U.S.—with 40,000 in New York and 20,000 in Chicago and in Los Angeles. These figures are higher than any since the Great Depression.

In every state of this country, the homeless forage through garbage cans and search the streets for anything resembling a shelter.

And the prospects for decent housing are dwindling. In Miami the waiting period for public housing is a phenomenal 20 years. The waiting period in New York City is up to 12 years.

EMERGENCY

In 1983, Seattle officials turned away 4,000 applicants for emergency housing. In several Arizona cities, mayors, businessmen and police officials are conducting merciless "anti-transient" campaigns to drive the homeless out of their borders.

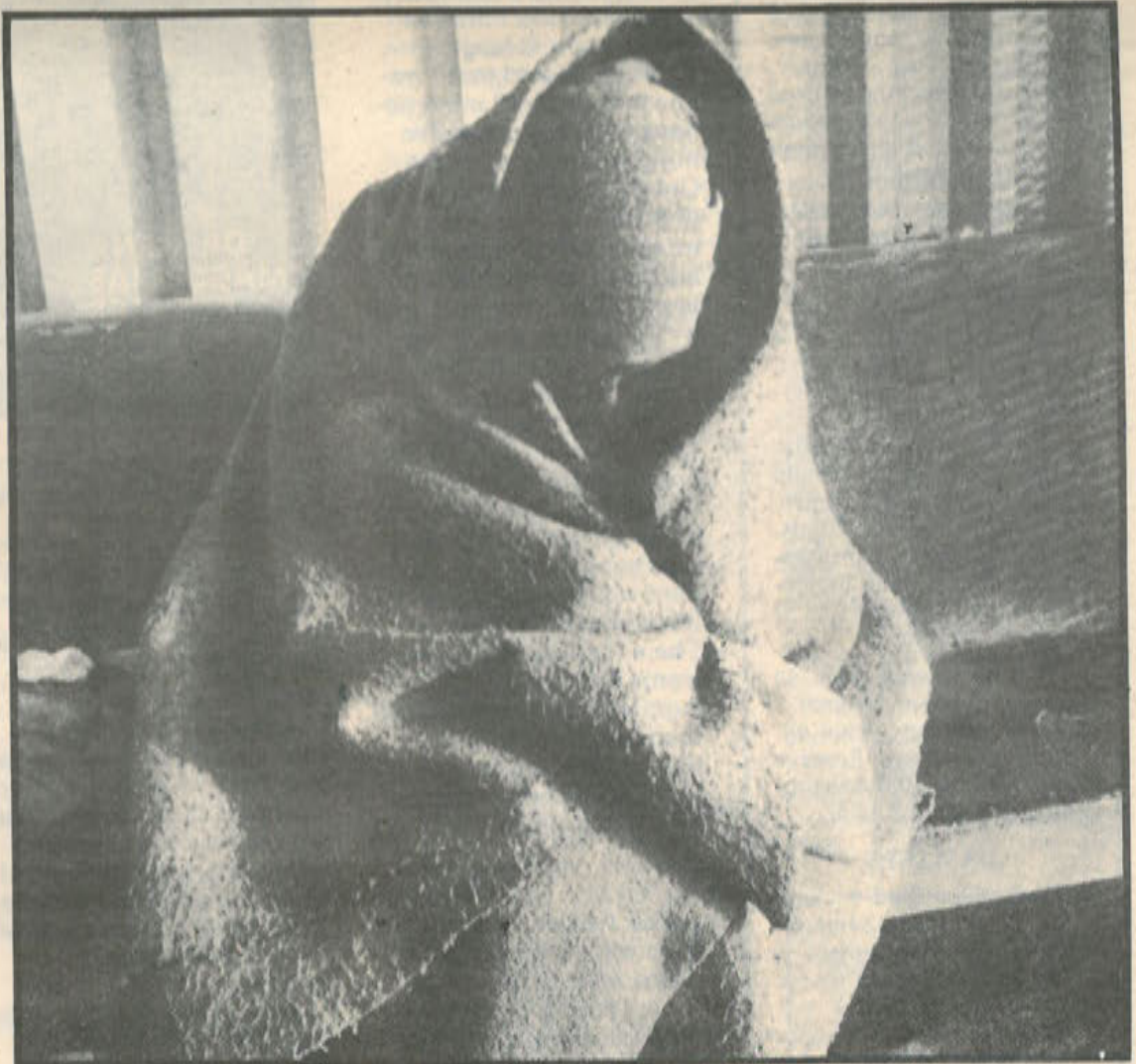
Since 1980 the federal government has dropped 200,000 people from the Supplemental Security Income program, whose paltry benefits often mean the difference between food and hunger—between shelter and homelessness.

What the federal government cut, the states have not replaced. A New Mexico family of four is supposed to survive on \$66/month in public aid. In Indiana the family allowance is \$100—no matter how many people are in the family.

Soup lines and kitchens are booming. Chicago has seen an 80% increase in demand at soup kitchens since 1982, and the city's emergency food program has seen a nine-fold increase in demand since that year. More than 57,000 people are eligible for food assistance in Detroit.

CONTRAST

These figures—only the tip of the iceberg—stand in stark contrast to the December findings of Reagan's \$320,000 Special Task Force on Hunger that there is no "significant evidence" of hunger in the United States.



A New York state official recently calculated that in 1983 "one American had fallen below the official poverty line every 12 seconds."

In those same seconds, the Reagan administration "spent \$72,000 more on defense

programs than on Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid, food stamps, the earned income tax credit, the Work Incentives Program and the Jobs Corps combined."

Reagan's pronouncement in his State of the Union address that "America is back" is a slap in the face of this country's 2 million homeless, 35 million living below the official poverty line and 10 million unemployed. □

Farmworkers win settlement against police brutality

TOLEDO, OHIO—The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) won a small but important victory over police harassment in their six-year-old strike against the Camp-

bell Soup Co.

FLOC won a permanent restraining order against the Lucas County sheriff's department in a pretrial settlement, according to Baldemar Velas-

quez of FLOC.

A Toledo judge barred sheriff's deputies from coming within 35 feet of any FLOC organizer anywhere in the county, Velasquez said.

The case stemmed from a sit-down demonstration at a northwest Ohio tomato field in the summer of 1979. Seven hundred demonstrators picketed the field and talked to work crews.

ARREST

The sheriff's department showed up, arresting 27 people, including Velasquez. Sheriff's deputies placed FLOC activists in an outdoor pen behind the department headquarters. At the pen, FLOC attorney Jack Kilroy advised those arrested.

"We were sitting there talking when the sheriff came out of the back of the jail with deputies and told [Kilroy] he was under arrest for a traffic violation.

"When our lawyer said, 'You've got to be crazy,' the sheriff said 'Get him.' And four deputies jumped him and beat him unconscious."

Kilroy suffered a skull fracture and brain damage. He has been on disability since the beating.

Kilroy and FLOC organizers sued the sheriff and county

commissioners for violating their civil rights in 1980.

Before jury selection in December, 1983, the sheriff's department "as much as admitted guilt" and the FLOC activists won the injunctions.

It was an important psychological victory for farm workers in Lucas County, Velasquez said.

"It's an incredible victory. The big winners are the people down in that county who have been harassed by the law enforcement agencies for years," he said.

RACISM

"When we first came there, I'm walking into a bar with my dad and being told that they didn't serve Mexicans or dogs there. The racism is pretty intense there.

"[But] one old guy told me just last week that 'I never thought I'd like to see the day that Mexicans could take on a sheriff like this and beat him.'

"He felt good about walking down the street now," Velasquez said. "He felt like he owned part of the street now." □



EVANSTON, IL—A C.I.A. "overt operation" to conduct employment interviews with students was recently launched at Northwestern University. But about 25 student pickets made it clear that the C.I.A. is far from totally welcome on campus.

ARMY CALLS RAPE JOB HAZARD

Reasoning that rape is a job hazard for any woman serving in the military, the Army recently refused to pay damages to a woman who was raped and beaten by two fellow soldiers.

Betty Ann Buckmiller, 26, was assaulted while technically on duty in November, 1982.

The two soldiers who raped her were court-martialed in February, 1983 to 20 and 40 years in prison. But Buckmiller claims the Army should pay for her smashed nose, chipped tooth, cut hands, back injury, bruises, other injuries and humiliation she suffered as a result of the attack.

"I don't want this to happen to other women," said Buckmiller, who enlisted in the Army Reserve in December, 1981 because she could not find a job.

DAMAGES

Buckmiller filed a claim with the Army for damages which was rejected in a letter which stated that the military could not pay damages for injuries "incident to service." But as Buckmiller commented, "There's no job I've heard of where rape is incident to any type of working conditions."

That's the Army.

REAGAN'S WAR ON THE POOR

Reagan's war on the poor continues in full force.

Last month a member of Reagan's Task Force on Hunger, Dr. George Graham, stated that "no one in their right mind believes there is a massive hunger problem" in the United States. He also said that the high incidence of infants born prematurely and with low birth weights to poor Black mothers was a "cultural problem" related to "too much sex during pregnancy."

With such amazing and racist conclusions, the task force supposedly proved that Reagan's massive cutbacks of food stamps and food supplements to pregnant women and children has not harmed the poor. The administration now wants to decrease federal supplements by putting all food programs into one block grant and leaving it up to each state to decide how to distribute the grant.

SAVE

This will save the federal government more than \$1 billion over the next five years. You're not going to "correct complex social problems by throwing food at them," Graham said.

Well, are the poor in the U.S. really hungry, or do they just enjoy receiving handouts from the government's the Reagan officials say? The truth is that many



DR. DENA
MAGOULIAS
REFUTES
REAGAN'S
LATEST LIES

studies have documented the tragic existence of widespread hunger.

MALNUTRITION

A study by the state of Massachusetts showed that 10% of children there suffered from chronic malnutrition. In one southern community, 60% of Blacks and 25% of whites had inadequate diets. Eighty percent of New York welfare recipients under the age of three were shown not to be growing at a normal rate—a sign of inadequate nutrition.

The cuts in government food programs have especially affected Blacks. In 1982, 35% of Blacks lived below the poverty line. In one government study, Blacks were shown to be deficient in vitamins A, D and C, iodine, calcium and iron. Two-thirds of one-

year-old poor Black children in Washington, D.C. have hemoglobin levels indicating that they are malnourished.

An infant who does not receive enough nutrition before birth will be born smaller and will have a greater chance of dying: two-thirds of infant deaths occur in low-weight infants. And the facts show that the infant death rate for Blacks has climbed to 24 in 1,000 births, twice the rate for whites.

Such poor nutrition in children can have a lasting impact. Most brain growth occurs during the first two months of life, and malnutrition during this time can lead to mental retardation.

However, Reagan cut \$3.5 billion from food assistance programs in 1981 and another \$548 million from food stamps in 1982.

The food stamp regulations already make it hard for people to qualify even when they are eligible, and long lines and condescending treatment make many hesitant to apply.

WOMEN

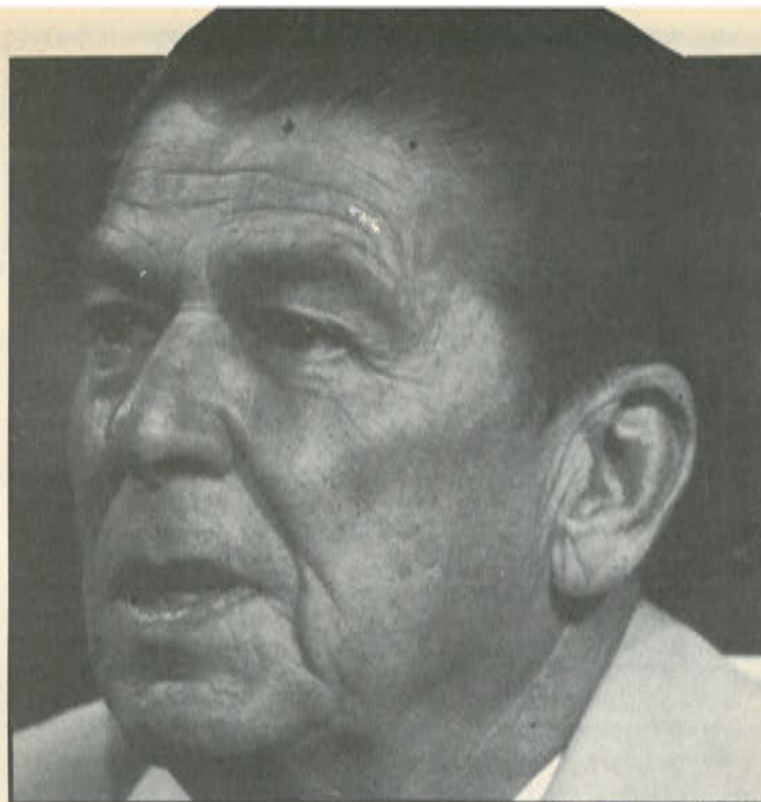
In 1981, the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC) only supplied food to 1.8 million pregnant women, even though 9.6 million were eligible. The food a pregnant woman is given by this program often goes to feed other hungry family members who live in the home, since food stamps only allow 36¢ per meal. But if Reagan's plans succeed, even these measly food supplements will be cut in favor of callous lectures on the need to "avoid sex during pregnancy."

AUDACITY

As Martin Luther King said in 1964, "I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day... I still believe we shall overcome."

The struggle must continue today. Although government officials would have us believe that the fight against hunger is over, they are actually waging a deadly war against the poor. And it is time that we fought back.

RECOVERY: FOR THE RICH ONLY



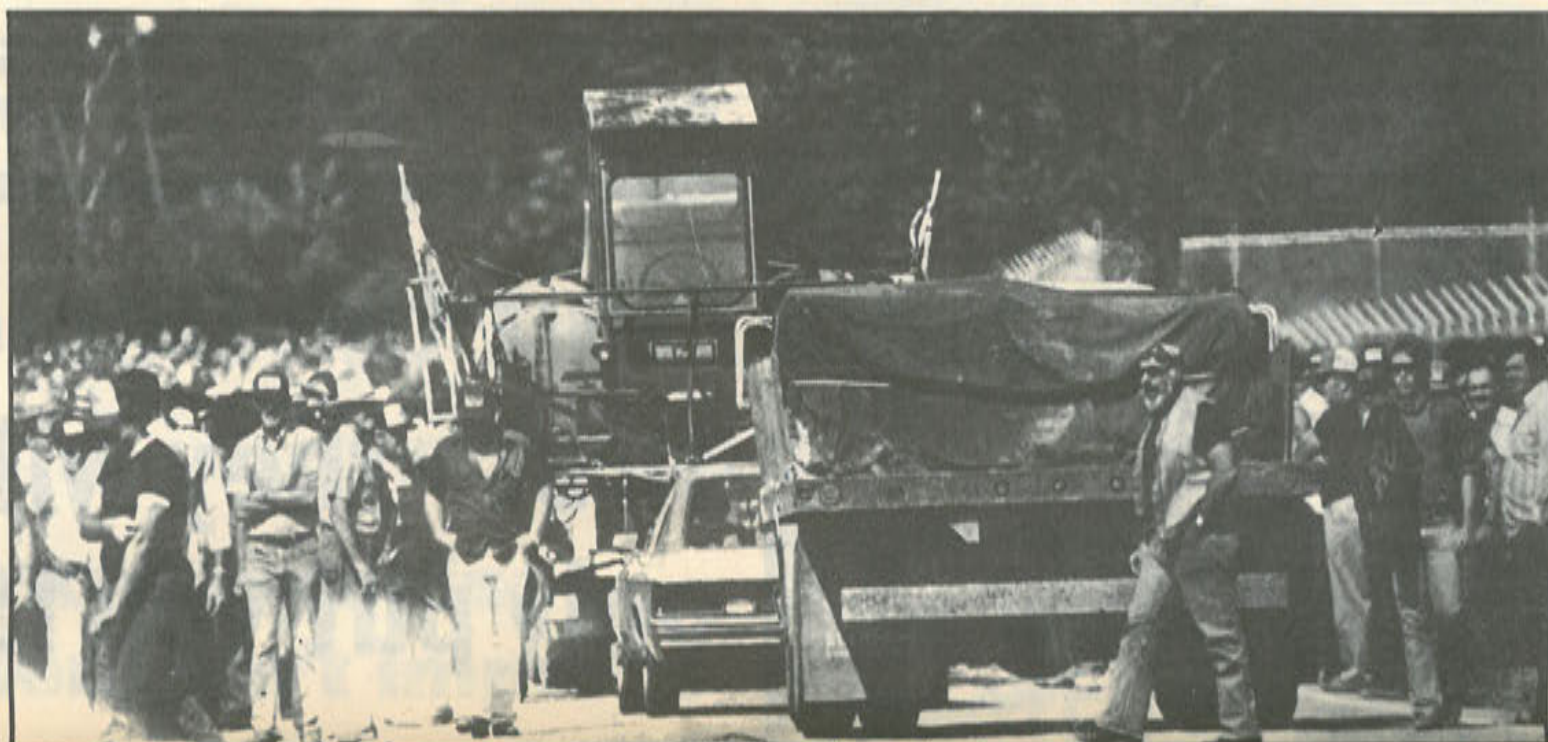
Ronald Reagan was triumphant, even arrogant. In his January State of the Union address, he took credit for a "powerful economic recovery" and a "strong America" abroad. Republicans and Democrats alike gave him ovation after ovation.

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

A week later, he promised more of the same if he is re-elected this fall. He claimed that Americans are better off. Reagan is partly right. Some Americans today are better off—if they happen to be among the 1.2 percent of all households who earn over \$80,000 annually. Those people are the real beneficiaries of Reagan's tax cuts.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the richest Americans will haul in an extra \$64 billion for the years 1982-1985. At the other end of the scale, households with yearly incomes below \$10,000 will face a net loss of \$20.5



Above: Miners in Galatia, IL, 1981. Workers have the potential to transform society.

billion. The gap between rich and poor has grown wider.

For Reagan and America's bosses, "recovery" is defined as an increase in profits—not an increase in the standard of living of the vast majority of Americans—working people. Unemployment has declined from late 1982's high of 10.7%, but the current 8.2% rate remains one of the high-

est since World War II. Tens of thousands of these workers—casualties of plant shut-downs in heavy industry—will never even approach their old wages, if they find employment at all.

THREAT

The bosses have used the threat of such layoffs to demand concessions from or-

ganized labor. With Reagan's blessing, employers launched an anti-union onslaught that began with the President's smashing of the air traffic controllers union in 1981. Workers at Greyhound, Continental and Eastern Airlines are among the latest targets in the union-busting drive.

Black and women workers have been hit disproportionately—women's wages are only about 3/5 of those of their male co-workers, and that ratio continues to fall. Government figures—which are notoriously understated—put unemployment among Black youth at over 50%.

Reagan is adamantly "pro-life" and seeks to outlaw abortion and women's right to control their own bodies. His "Civil Rights Commission" is a hideous joke, investigating discrimination against whites instead of Blacks!

Not surprisingly, millions of workers have said to hell with Reagan. But what are the alternatives?

CHOICE

The AFL-CIO have made their choice clear. Instead of standing up to concession-seeking bosses and protecting jobs, they have endorsed Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale.

Others have fallen in line behind another Democrat, Jesse Jackson. Any Democrat, the argument goes, has to be better than Reagan.

A look at history proves otherwise.

Democratic Vice President Walter Mondale stood by as President Jimmy Carter broke the 1977 coal miners strike. Carter invoked the Taft-Hart-

ley law which prohibits union workers from honoring each others' picket lines. The law was passed by a Democratic-controlled Congress.

It was Democrat Jimmy Carter who cut funding for abortion for poor women. "Life is unfair," he shrugged.

It was Democrat Jimmy Carter who first increased military spending and cut the social budget—proposing the concept of a "limited nuclear war."

It was Southern Democrats who for years denied Blacks even minimal political rights.

The Democrats make no real difference. The temptation to support the "lesser of two evils" only postpones the rebuilding of a strong, working class movement.

Moreover, it identifies Reagan as the problem—when what is at the heart of the problem is the system. A capitalist system is based on making profits—regardless of the human loss.

Workers create all wealth, and they alone have the potential to transform a society based on profits for a few into a society that meets the needs of all. □

More guns for Central America butchers

The Kissinger report on Central America released last month provided an "impartial" and "bipartisan" smoke screen for its real purpose—a full-speed-ahead endorsement of the Reagan administration's policy in Central America.

The report calls for doubling U.S. military spending and stepping up U.S. interference in the region.

It calls for an immediate \$400 million bail-out of the repressive Salvadoran government to defeat the guerrillas. And it asks for the formation of a 1,000 member rapid strike force of U.S. troops.

Some commentators lauded the report for its "concern" with using U.S. aid to improve U.S. allies' human rights policies. But Kissinger added a note to the report saying that it would be ludicrous if Western concern for human rights in El Salvador would permit "a Marxist-Leninist victory."

"STRATEGIC"

The report makes clear that U.S. concern with the region is "strategic" and that a collapse of U.S.-backed Central American governments would threaten U.S. "vital interests."

But disagreements between

Republicans and Democrats on the commission show that there are divisions in the U.S. ruling class, even though they are in agreement on the fundamentals.

The Democrats believe that unless human rights are improved, support for the guerrillas will continue and U.S. interests will be threatened. The Republicans believe that unless the population is terrorized, support for the guerrillas will continue and U.S. interests will be threatened.

Neither side offers anything to the workers and peasants of El Salvador or any other countries in Central America.

FIGHTING WORDS

"After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad and the vampire, he had some awful substance left with which He made a SCAB. a SCAB is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a water-logged brain and a combination backbone made of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he carries a tumor of rotten principles. A strikebreaker is a traitor to his God, his country, his family and his class!"

—Jack London, 1904

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Phelps Dodge battle continues

MORENCI, AZ—In the seventh month of a strike against the Phelps Dodge Corporation, copper miners staged their largest demonstration in weeks on January 13.

Eighteen strikers have been arrested, and county authorities have imposed a nighttime curfew in response to the renewed militance of the strikers.

The strike—the most bitter labor battleground in the country—began on July 1, 1983 when a 13-union coalition

led by the United Steelworkers failed to reach agreement with the company on a new three-year contract.

The main issues of the strike include the company's attempt to eliminate cost-of-living allowances, its plan to set up multiple wage scales and proposed cuts in medical benefits.

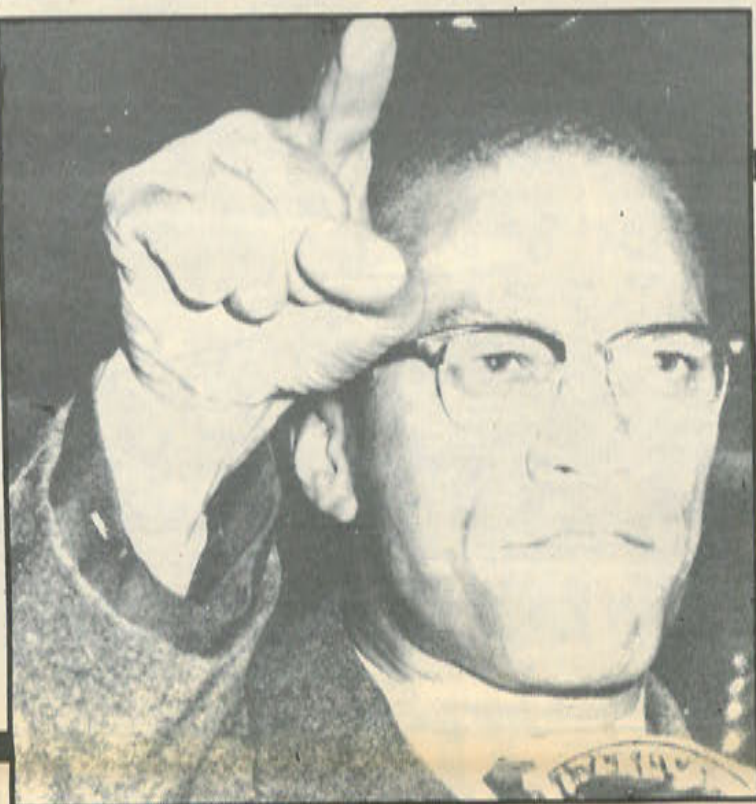
Phelps Dodge—in its strongest stand in years in the face of a strike—has refused to shut down. Instead it has hired hundreds of scabs. □

Anna Walentynowicz—the crane operator who sparked the Solidarity strike, was arrested on December 4, the miners' festival day. She and Kazimierz Sulton were putting up a plaque commemorating the miners killed at the Wujek mine in December, 1981.



BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY: BLACK POLITICS IN AMERICA

"Put the Democrats first—they will only put you last"



“ Well, I am one who doesn't believe in deluding myself. I'm not going to sit at your table and watch you eat, with nothing on my plate, and call myself a diner.

Sitting at the table doesn't make you a diner, unless you eat some of what's on that plate. Being here in America doesn't make you an American. Being born here in America doesn't make you an American.

No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million Black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million Black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy.

So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver—no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim.

I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare.

These 22 million victims are waking up. Their eyes are coming open. . .

It was the Black vote that put the present administration in Washington, D.C. Your

From "The Ballot or the Bullet"—1964

vote, your dumb vote, your ignorant vote, your wasted vote put in an administration in Washington, D.C., that has seen fit to pass every kind of legislation imaginable, saving you until the last, then filibustering on top of that.

And your and my leaders have the audacity to run around clapping their hands and talk about how much progress we're making. And what a good president we have. . .

In this present administration they have in the House of Representatives 157 Democrats to only 177 Republicans. They control two-thirds of the House vote. Why can't they pass something that will help you and me? In the Senate, there are 67 Senators who are of the Democratic Party. Only 33 of them are Republicans.

Why, the Democrats have got the government sewed up, and you're the one who sewed it up for them. And what have they given you for it?

So it's time in 1964 to wake up. And when you see them coming . . . let them know your eyes are open. And let them know you got something else that's wide open too.

It's got to be the ballot or the bullet. The ballot or the bullet. If you're afraid to use an expression like that, you should get on out of the country, you should get back in the cotton patch, you should get back in the alley.

They get all the Black vote,

and after they get it, the Black gets nothing in return. All they did when they got to Washington was to give a few big Blacks big jobs. Those big Blacks didn't need big jobs, they already had jobs.

CAMOUFLAGE

That's camouflage, that's tricky, that's treachery, window-dressing. I'm not trying to knock out the Democrats for the Republicans, we'll get to them. . . But it is true—you put the Democrats first and the Democrats put you last.

Look at it the way it is. What alibis do they use, since they control Congress and the Sen-

Rebellion in Miami, 1982.



ate? What alibi do they use when you and I ask, "Well, when are you going to keep your promise?"

They blame the Dixiecrats. What is a Dixiecrat? A Democrat. A Dixiecrat is nothing but a Democrat in disguise. . .

When you see the amount of power that would be lost by the Democratic Party if it were to lose the Dixiecrat wing, or branch, or element, you can see where it's against the interests of the Democrats to give voting rights to Blacks in states where the Democrats have been in complete power and authority ever since the Civil War. You just can't belong to that party without analyzing it.

I say again, I'm not anti-Democrat, I'm not anti-Republican, I'm not anti-any-

thing. I'm just questioning their sincerity, and some of the strategy that they've been using on our people by promising them promises that they don't intend to keep.

When you keep the Democrats in power, you're keeping the Dixiecrats in power. . . A vote for a Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat.

TIME

That's why, in 1964, it's time now for you and me to become more politically mature and realize what the ballot is for; what we're supposed to get when we cast a ballot; and that if we don't cast a ballot, it's going to end up in a situation where we're going to have to cast a bullet. It's either a ballot or a bullet. □

Purolator Strike: 'We have to stay together'

CHICAGO, IL—As the strike by 150 drivers against Purolator Armored Car Co. enters its seventh month, the going is getting very tough. The strikers are up against a corporate conglomerate not only bent on cutting the wages and benefits of its workers—but bent on destroying the union as well.

Since the beginning of the strike, Purolator has hired untrained scabs to replace the strikers, members of Teamsters Local 725 in Chicago. In addition, the company has instituted 24-hour TV camera surveillance of picketers and has gotten a court injunction limiting pickets to two people at each entrance and threatening \$5,000 fines for any damage to company property. One picketer received cracked vertebrae and was hospitalized after a scab ran him down.

Despite these union-busting tactics, the strikers have remained determined to save their jobs and defend their

by BEN BLAKE

union.

At an early December union meeting, Purolator Teamsters rejected a company offer—nearly unanimously. They turned it down because it included a \$2.60/hour wage cut from a base rate of \$10.15 per hour and a provision that strikers would only be rehired "as needed"—regardless of seniority—with most scabs remaining on the job.

On Christmas Eve, the Purolator strikers held a rally complete with a Santa Claus and gift stockings for their children. Turn-out was almost 100% of the membership despite -17 degree temperatures.

OFFER

In mid-January, Purolator presented a new offer to the striking drivers that upped the wage cut to \$3.00/hour and retained the "as needed" rehiring clause. Although this offer

will be presented to the union membership in early February, it is unlikely to pass without a job guarantee for the strikers.

One striking driver with over 15 years seniority explained the company strategy to *Socialist Worker* in these words: "They're just holding out to see what will happen when we lose our unemployment benefits. They're hoping people will take a union with-

drawal card so they won't have to pay our pensions." He added that solidarity will be needed to prevent this from happening. "We have to stay together to win this strike."

WOUNDED

Another striker with over 30 years seniority and wounded three times on the job told *Socialist Worker* what he had learned over the course of the strike: "I think the problem

began when the union started talking concessions. First it was our COLA (in 1979). Then a wage freeze (in 1981). And now the company wants withdrawals.

"If the company's pushing you backwards, you can't move forward. No union should ever make a concession. If employers ask for concessions, it is because of mismanagement. The union should never give them up." □



Steelworker layoffs: the problem isn't imports

CLEVELAND, OH—On February 7, Clevelanders will vote on whether they want a federally subsidized low-interest grant to be given to two wealthy entrepreneurs to build a state-of-the-art steel bar mill in the city.

The Bar Mill Development Group Co. states that the mill will provide 389 "permanent" jobs.

The move to bring it to a referendum was led by the United Steelworkers union, which is opposed to the new bar mill. They claim that if the bar mill opens up, 3,000 steelworkers could lose their jobs within a 300 mile radius of Cleveland.

NON-UNION

They claim that the company will run a non-union shop, import Japanese steel billets, and manufacture the steel bars using \$18 million worth of modern equipment loaned to the Bar Mill Development Group Co. by the Brazilian government.

The union formed the Save Our Jobs Committee and spearheaded a petition drive to call for a referendum.



Steelworker confronts Cleveland City Councilman.

by APRIL STOLTZ

The USW has been decimated in northeastern Ohio in the past five years. Its membership here has declined from 47,400 to 27,000. Part of the reason is the development of new non-union mini-mills like the one being considered in Cleveland.

And steelmakers have closed mills and refuse to invest because old mills are not profitable. They don't care about steel—or steelworkers.

Under these circumstances, it is absurd to think that steel jobs can be saved by denying funds to build in Cleveland. As Robert Alpert, one of two principals in the Bar Mill Development Group Co., says, "It's not that important for us to locate in Cleveland. There are 50 states to do business in." To be sure, if the plant is not located in Cleveland, it will be easy for Alpert to locate in any of a dozen sites in the Midwest.

USW leaders have tried to

point the finger at foreign imports which are "stealing" USW jobs. Yet these leaders failed to organize any kind of effective opposition to the closure of plant after plant in northeastern Ohio in the past five years.

IMPORTS

The problem isn't foreign imports. The problem is who runs the show. The USW needs to build toward a hook-up with workers in other countries. They must begin to see that workers in their industry in other countries are being ripped off by the same system that ruins their lives in the U.S. by closing plants.

There is a need for steel in the world today. There are bridges, schools, hospitals and many other facilities that many countries desperately need. Yet the bankers and the wealthy have the money and power to decide who will get what, when and how. Their decisions are based on profit, not on human need. □

OIL WORKERS PROTEST KILLING

by TOM O'LINCOLN

RODEO, CA—"You can kill a man, but not the struggle."

Five hundred striking oil workers and their supporters marched to the gates of Union Oil here to bring that message home to management and scabs.

They were protesting the death of 20-year-old Greg Goobic on the picket line on January 19.

Goobic, a wax loader, was killed by an eighteen wheel tanker truck which was forcing its way through the line.

The death came only a day after a picket was injured by a company security car. The company had given assurances that drivers would stop at the line, and give pickets a chance to put their case.

RALLY

Rodeo's Local 1-326 of the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers declared a march and rally for Wednesday, January 25. Supporters came from all over the San Francisco Bay area, including representatives of longshoremen, boilermakers, teamsters and government workers.

United Farmworkers flags fluttered in the breeze.

The central issue in the strike is Union Oil demands for a two-tier wage structure. New employees and workers transferred or demoted

would be on a new, lower wage scale. Over a few years the effect would be to divide the workforce.

Rick Morris, of the local OCAW executive board, told *Socialist Worker* that the march and rally were intended to "inform Union Oil we are not willing to accept their retrogressive clauses," and to "show them that this little local is not alone in the fight."

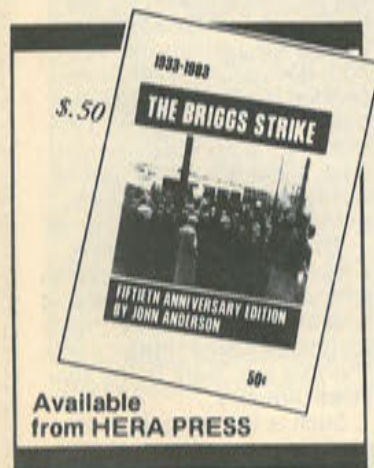
HELP

At the rally Transit Union steward Michael Kirchanski said, "We're behind you, there's a lot of Greyhound drivers live around here and we'll be helping you on the picket line, with money, whatever you need."

Oil workers from nearby Martinez will help pickets, dividing days among themselves.

The generally positive atmosphere was marred only by private comments by boilermakers who said they supported the strike but had been instructed to cross the line by their union officials. There has been a lot of rank and file pressure to reverse this policy.

If you want to visit the pickets and show your support, you can come down any time. The union is running round the clock pickets seven days a week.



Talking about socialism

WHAT MARXISTS MEAN BY "CLASS"

The term class is commonly used in a loose and confused way to refer to such things as a person's family background, education and social standing.

Sociologists also use class as a category in surveys. Usually they regard a person's class as their occupation. Occupations are ranked in five or six 'classes' according to their supposed social status.

In both these cases the purpose of the concept is the same. It serves as a convenient label which can be attached to individuals to give some general idea of their 'life-style' and attitudes.

For Marxists, the concept of class serves a very different purpose. Its aim is not to determine the appropriate label for every individual, not to depict exactly every gradation and shading of the social hierarchy.

It is to identify the fundamental social forces whose conflict is the driving force of history.

MARXIST

The Marxist theory of class is therefore, first and foremost, a theory of class struggle.

What makes an aggregate of individuals into a "class" is not that they all have the same "life-style" or attitudes, or that they all receive the same pay, but that they have a certain basic common interest in opposition to the interests of another class or classes. It is this conflict of interests that generates class struggle.

There are of course innumerable conflicts of interests in society ranging from the trivial squabble between neighbors to the tragic conflicts between people of different races or nations.

What makes class conflict more fundamental than all these other divisions is that it concerns conflicts of interest in the process of production, that is, in the very basis of society.

Antagonistic interests in the process of production are the result of exploitation—the ability of one group of people to extract a surplus from (and to live off) the labor of another group.

It is exploitation that divides

by JOHN MOLYNEUX

society into opposed classes.

The key to exploitation is the effective possession (ownership or control) of the major means of production by one social group to the exclusion of the other group, who are thus forced to work for the dominant group and to yield to them control of the social surplus.

RELATIONS

Historically these exploitative relations of production have taken many forms (ultimately depending on the stage of development of the forces of production) and give rise to different sets of opposed classes.

For example, slave owners and slaves, lords and serfs, landowners and peasants.

In capitalist society the class struggle is principally between the capitalists (who own and control capital) and the working class (who live solely by the sale of their labor power).

This basic view was advanced by Marx in the nineteenth century. Since Marx's time, sociologists (the main bourgeois ideologists in this field) have never ceased to claim that changes in the class structure of capitalism have refuted Marx's proposition and made it "out of date."

In particular they have

Workers are the majority in the U.S.



argued that as capitalism develops, so the working class declines as a proportion of society, while the middle class expands.

Recently this old argument has been given a new lease on life by certain "Marxists" such as Andre Gorz.

In fact the argument rests entirely on the notion of class as a matter of attitudes, life style and occupational category. The vast majority of those claimed for the expanding "middle class"—clerical and office workers, clerks, health care workers (including nurses) and teachers—are, in terms of the relations of production, clearly workers.

MEANS

They neither own nor control the means of production. They live entirely by the sale of their labor power, and they are exploited by capital. They share the same basic economic interests as auto workers, steel workers and miners.

In terms of shaping history, it is not life style that is decisive. There are intermediate layers (or "middle classes")—managers and administrators—who are not themselves big capitalists, but who have some control over the process of production and who also direct the labor of others. But these remain relatively few in numbers.



"We Can't All Work at McDonald's"

by DAN PETTY

It doesn't take a revelation of mystical proportions or a college degree in economics to see the frightfully steep decline in basic industry in the U.S.

Simply pick up a newspaper once in a while. Or better yet, take a tour of Youngstown, Cleveland or Gary, Indiana. Ask any of the more than one million workers in basic industry who have lost their jobs since 1979—the same workers who worked the steel mills, the auto plants, the coal mines, foundries and rubber factories.

At the brief occupation of US Steel headquarters in Youngstown, Ohio by steelworkers in January, 1980, one picket sign read, "We can't all work at McDonalds."

The point was not just to describe the job possibilities remaining. It was an indictment of U.S. Steel and a decade of devastating corporate decisions.

While corporate executives, labor bureaucrats and right-wingers were fighting World War II all over again in their heads—bemoaning the unfairness of foreign competition, the "Japanese invasion" and the influx of "unpatriotic" cars, steel and stereos—the reality behind the decline was carefully avoided.

The mills had once been profit-making, but rather than investing in them by replacing 1940 machinery and restructuring the mills to remain competitive, profits were invested elsewhere. One of the investment targets has been a rising and more profitable business: the service industry.

SERVICE

The service industry, broadly defined, includes communications, transportation and other services like computer programming, banking, guard services, clerical work and, yes, fast food franchises.

According to James D. Robinson III, chairman and chief executive officer of the (don't leave home without it) American Express Company, "The service activities of the economy are now larger than manufacturing. . . . There's been a serious restructuring of the economy."

Business Week magazine explained why: "The improved outlook for the service sector . . . is a result of the cost pressure created by the persistence of high-priced energy and the productivity problems that have long dogged manufacturing. Some of the biggest gains in productivity in the service sector will come from substituting capital for labor."

So the new technology

meets the service sector. A safe, "affordable," highly-profitable industry with its eye to the future. They are the people who brought you the 24-hour bank teller, the microwave airplane food and that wonderful little gadget at grocery check-out counters that reads prices, reduces inventory and sends pink slips to stockers all in the same breath.

The service industry even managed to survive the most recent in a series of economic recessions. While unemployment in manufacturing more than doubled, the service industry expanded by nearly a million workers. Technological changes, however, are predicted to slow that growth.

CONGLOMERATES

Conglomerates like ARA Services Inc. of Philadelphia—which boasts of "260 health care facilities, several national parks and more than 6,000 school buses"—are becoming more the rule than the exception.

But the public sector is not merely the depository of big steel's profits. James F. Bere, chairman of Borg Warner—the Chicago-based manufacturer of auto parts, air conditioners and plastics, started divesting from manufacturing and reinvesting in services during the 1974-75 recession.

Financial services (installment loans for cars, stereos, etc.) and protective services (armored cars, strikebreakers, rent-a-cops, and electronic burglar alarms) now approach 50% of Borg Warner's operations. As one protective services executive put it, "Just about anyone who can afford to meet the payroll for a few weeks and buy uniforms can be in the guard business."

Behind the company brochures is another story. The high profitability of services such as the fast-food, health care and protection industries are built on the extreme exploitation of its workforce.

IMAGE

Despite its high-gloss image, workers in the services are the lowest paid and the least unionized of all sectors except for agriculture. Women hold 83% of the traditional service jobs in food, health, household and personal services and 90% of all clerical jobs. Most Black and Latino workers work in these jobs, many of which are part-time.

The 30% Black and 45% white high school graduates who are able to find work and who aren't economically conscripted into the military will, chances are, work in the services industry.

Such is the formula of the profit system—the nuts and bolts of capitalist survival. □

Graffiti



considered Raider running back Marcus Allen to be a "secret weapon" the Soviets wanted dismantled.

Reagan further mused that if the Raiders could be placed in silos, there would be no need for MX missiles.

After all, he said, "A good defense can also be a very good offense."

The national TV audience must wonder if, as CBS commentator John Madden would say, Reagan's elevator goes all the way to the top. □

A FAULTY ELEVATOR?
Only Ronald Reagan could see foreign policy possibilities in the Los An-

geles Raiders' Super Bowl victory.
Reagan called winning coach Tom Flores to say he

After a 23-day occupation, auto workers at Peugeot's Talbot-Poissy plant near Paris were evicted from the plant by riot police after a day-long battle on January 5.

By the end of the attack, 55 workers were injured, 3 of them seriously.

DISPUTE

The dispute started in December when Talbot's Peugeot group announced 2,905 layoffs at the Poissy plant. The Communist Party-led CGT—the main union in the factory—and the pro-Socialist CFDT called for an immediate strike, demanding negotiations on the layoffs, a reduction in working hours and guarantees on the future of the plant.

In the last six years the workforce has been slashed from 28,000 to 16,000.

Three cornered negotiations between the unions, the government and Peugeot management ended on December 20 with the announcement of a compromise deal. The number of layoffs was to be decreased from 2,905 to 1,905, and any employers who hired laid off workers were to be paid 20,000 francs (about \$3,000). The government agreed to funding a retraining scheme for the laid off workers.

Both the government and the union bureaucrats welcomed this deal, and were proud of themselves for so skillfully dodging a confrontation with the workers. Socialist prime minister Mauroy announced that the deal could be used as a "model" for future layoffs throughout the industry.

The workers, 70% of whom are immigrants, responded by holding a mass meeting at which they voted to stay out on strike. When the CGT secretary tried to tell them about the deal, she was shouted down. Many workers shouted, "1,905 layoffs is 1,905 too many."

They understood that they had little option but to fight for their jobs.

On December 27, Peugeot turned to the courts. The judges immediately granted the management an order that the workers leave the premises or "face expulsion by the police."

In the early hours of January 5, a 100-strong, heavily armed group of thugs stormed into workshop B3 on the Poissy site. Some carried revolvers, while others were armed with metal bars. The attack had been thoroughly planned by the right-wing, company controlled union, the CSL.



Striker battles it out with foreman

THE BATTLE OF TALBOT

CHRISTINA BAKER AND LINDSAY GREIG REPORT



Scabs shoot at strikers in Talbot workshop B3

Bitter and bloody fighting followed the raid—with cars being used as barricades and with strikers grabbing anything at hand to defend themselves. The running battle lasted an hour. Outside the factory, a crowd of CSL supporters jeered at the strikers.

THUGS

As the armed thugs withdrew and the injured were taken off to the hospital, the strikers began to barricade the workshop entrances. Jean-Pierre Noual, branch secretary of the strikers' union, the CFDT, said, "You journalists are witness that we have suffered a military style attack!"

Around 9 a.m., the crowd outside the factory launched a hail of metal parts and stones at strikers standing outside the workshop. Noual, fearing another all-out assault, appealed to the management to call in the riot police to protect the strikers.

Two hours later, a thousand riot police arrived outside the factory, but the strikers refused to end their occupation before receiving a guarantee of safe passage for all.

For 6 hours the strikers watched and waited behind their barricades. At 5:30 p.m. negotiations started with the local chief of police. An hour later strikers lined up behind the leaders of the main union in Poissy, the CGT, and marched out of the plant.

The jeering crowds of CSL supporters outside had been replaced by some 300 CGT members from other Paris auto plants. With cries of

"Talbot will live!" and "We have won!" they marched off into the night. But for many who had already received their layoff notices, it will be their last words at the Talbot-Poissy factory.

This hard and bitter fight to stop the 1,905 layoffs is an example to workers throughout Europe. The "Battle of Poissy" holds both a bloody warning and a sign of hope.

It demonstrates the bankruptcy of "left" governments. The Socialist-Communist coalition led the drive for layoffs to "revitalize" French industry. It demonstrates again that union bureaucrats will capitulate rather than risk confrontation with such governments.

ORGANIZATION

But it also shows that where shop floor organization is capable of organizing and acting independently of these leaders, a real fight is possible.

The heart of the resistance came from the assembly line where unofficial shop stewards' organizations had been built up in last year's series of strikes.

The largely north African immigrant workforce bore the brunt of the layoffs and was at the center of the fight.

Management denunciations of the strikers were colored with more than a hint of racism. The pro-Communist CGT did little to dispel this racism when they capitulated and called for an end to the occupation.

FRANCE'S TRADE UNIONS

The trade union movement in France is divided into two major trade union federations. The pro-Communist CGT, which is the larger, and the pro-Socialist CFDT. About 25% of the workforce is unionized.

There are other, smaller union federations, and company unions are fairly widespread. In Peugeot, the right-wing company-controlled union—the CSL—dominated the Talbot-Poissy plant until last year. After last

year's strike wave in the automobile industry, the CGT became the largest union in the factory. In union elections they won 42% of the votes compared to 34% for the CSL and 8% for the CFDT.

Five unions are planning a general strike in the state-owned coal mines to begin on February 17—with 6,000 layoffs expected this year in the mines and up to 20,000 job losses protected for the next three years.

MITTERAND ATTACKS FRENCH WORKERS

PARIS—In response to the "socialist" government's new austerity measures, social unrest is on the rise throughout France.

The government plans to lay off between 200,000 and 500,000 workers this year.

On January 24, more than 300,000 shipworkers marched through Paris in protest of a plan to eliminate 6,000 jobs. In northern France, farmers parked trucks and tractors across railroad tracks, blocking traffic to Paris. In the week of January 17-24 they smashed local government offices, battled with riot police and hijacked trucks bringing in pork sausages from other countries.

STRIKE

Five unions are planning a general strike in the state-owned coal mines to begin on February 17—with 6,000 layoffs expected this year in the mines and up to 20,000 job losses projected for the next three years.

Steelworkers have fought with police in Alsace-Lorraine over the planned layoffs of 35,000 workers. And government workers plan a "week of action" to include work stoppages and slowdowns to protest the freeze on their wages.

After nearly three years of Mitterand's brand of "socialism," the economy is in crisis and workers are paying the price.

In May, 1981, Francois Mitterand was elected as the first Socialist president of the Fifth Republic. He promised to create 400,000 new jobs and to reduce the work week from 40 to 35 hours. He promised to increase state pensions and family allowances by 50% and to raise the minimum wage by 25%.

In the early months of his regime, Mitterand mushroomed government spending and bought out, or nationalized, many private firms which turned out to be lemons.

In a number of instances, plant owners were paid more for their shares than they would have received if they had sold them on the stock market before Mitterand took office.

LEMONS

As the New York Times reported last summer, "France's embarrassed Socialists are finding that the mighty bastions of French capitalism they pledged to harness for the service of the state look suspiciously like a row of corporate lemons."

The combined losses of the newly nationalized companies totaled about \$900 million in 1981 and shot to \$1.4 billion in 1982. All of the newly nationalized firms except one lost money in 1982.

It is also in these firms that massive layoffs have occurred with further cutbacks expected.

In sharp contrast with Mitterand's campaign promises, 1.7 million were unemployed when Mitterand took office and over 2 million are unemployed today.

AUSTERITY

The most recent austerity measures are even worse. If the new plan is enacted, the French Industry Ministry projects that between 130,000 and 200,000 industrial jobs will be lost annually over the next few years, leaving an estimated 3 million people unemployed in 1984.

Mitterand's government has only one answer to the crisis: restore profitability at the expense of France's workers. Those workers have major struggles ahead of them. □

CRISIS IN HOUSING

CHICAGO, January 23—They started lining up the night before. Some slept in cars, others huddled in the freezing cold on the sidewalk.

They were waiting for applications for federal-subsidized housing.

By 6:00 a.m., 2,000 people were in line. By 8:00 a.m. there were 5,000.

But only 200 got what they came for. The rest got nothing.

At 9:30 a.m. Chicago mounted police charged the crowd, dispersing it through the streets.

Glenn Perusek and Ahmed Shawki of Socialist Worker talked to Ida Lambert and Anna Griffin, two of the women who waited in line for housing applications.



*Mounted police clear applicants.
At right: Chicago's Cabrini-Green housing project*

IDA LAMBERT:

"We just want a decent place"

“ We saw a big crowd of people lined up to apply for housing when we got there at 7:30 a.m. We thought we still had a chance so we stayed. We just waited and waited—nothing happened. People started pushing and shoving.

I saw a lot of people down there that I know. It was like a reunion. I saw second and third grade classmates—people I haven't seen in years. Because, you know, a lot of Black people were brought up in Cabrini Green. We got a chance to see people who have been living there all this time.

HARDER

Cabrini is terrible nowadays. People hate it. It seems like you could just get up and move, but it's harder than that. It is horrible.

My aunt lives in Cabrini Green, and she's like a prisoner now. She doesn't go out of her place in case she couldn't make it back up the stairs. A lot of times you go out, and by the time you come back the elevator's not working.

People want a decent place to live, especially with kids.

Our landlord will probably sell this building to the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). He'd make some money on that, but he's already rich.

It's cold in this apartment—I guess the landlord thinks that because it's 30 degrees today that it's too hot to have



the heat on.

But I don't understand why we have to move from here. A lot of the people in this building are the so-called working poor, unemployed and welfare recipients. We've got minorities on this block—this building is all Black except two families and those are Spanish.

I used to work at St. Elizabeth Hospital—doing house-keeping, but I was laid off in 1982. When I had my baby they wouldn't let me come back to work. It was in the booklet that they gave

us—if they don't have any place to put you after a maternity leave, they don't have to hire you back.

People say we should get a union. Since I got laid off everybody said, "You should have been in a union." Maybe so.

PAY

We pay \$292. I have five rooms. I don't see why we would have to give up an apartment to somebody else who is already paying low rent. I don't understand it.

We asked the owner—

we tricked him—we called him up and pretended like we were someone else to see if he would rent the apartment to us. He said, "Yeah, I'm going to rent the apartment."

We were reading about the scattered housing sites. It'd say turn to page 37 and it would list all the apartments and we looked and it had our apartment there.

FOOD

Now I get food stamps and I have six kids. It's real tight. We have to get care packages. We go over to California Avenue where they give out free groceries. But, you know, you can't go there every time.

The last time I went there the lady had a fit. She said, "You can't come here again." She said they didn't want you coming all the time.

So I said, "What if I need it all the time?"

She said, "Well, I don't want you to make a habit of coming over here all the time."

I told her I have to pay \$2 just to get over there. The food is free, but you got to pay a dollar there and a dollar back.

They talked about all the food they gave away at Christmas time. I didn't see any of that. We had food 'cause I had my food stamps already. But if I had needed some, I wouldn't have known where to go.

I really can't tell the difference with Harold Washington in. It was always screwed up to me, and still is—even though I voted for him.

ANNA GR

7 MORE

“ I applied for Section 8 housing in 1978 and this year is 1984 and I'm still on the waiting list—for seven more years.

Section 8 works like this: once you get it you can get an apartment, and the government subsidizes the rent. You look in the paper and you see ads that say they prefer Section 8 because since the government subsidizes the rent, the landlord knows they'll get their money.

Every regular apartment you go to now they want a month's rent and two months security. I'm on a fixed income and I can't pay one month's security. I can just barely pay one month's rent.

But if I had known there were going to be that many people down there to apply for housing, I never would have gone. People were fighting down there. People got hurt. Some of the women had little kids out there. Maybe they didn't have a baby sitter. Sometimes people have to do things they don't want to do.

CALLED

Somebody said they called Harold Washington and he said to get the people off the street because they were blocking traffic. Now they say they'll be notifying us through the media about where we're supposed to go. I'll just have to wait, you know.

In 1975 I lived in Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) housing—at 29th and Dearborn. My oldest boy and my

Recovery: for workers still a crisis

"America is back," rattled Ronald Reagan in last month's State of the Union address. Above all he could point to the present economic recovery for proof.

American bosses have a somewhat brighter outlook for 1984—even if there are more poor in the country than at any time since 1964.

Overall, pre-tax profits jumped 42% in 1983. In real terms, profits were up 16% in 1983. By the fourth quarter, pre-tax profits were estimated at a whopping \$237 billion.

But even after the unexpected surge of 1983, real profits in the U.S. were still only 75% of what they were in 1980. The figures appear much healthier than they really are because the recession was so deep.

And the recovery was fuelled by defense production—based on massive borrowing by the federal government. Defense production is 23% higher than it was in 1981.

But the recovery sees the continued squeezing of American workers. Instead of making up for what they lost over the last three years, workers still face a concerted attack from the bosses.

From December, 1982 to October, 1983, production increased by 14.5%. But employment rose only 3.6% in that period. The big increase in production has not been matched at all by the increase in the numbers of workers.

During the recession, a much higher percentage of workers lost jobs due to "permanent separations" as opposed to "layoffs" than is usually the case.

RECESSIONS

In past post-war recessions, permanent separations—job loss with no chance of return—accounted for 36-37% of unemployment. But in the 1980-1982 recession, permanent separations expanded to 53.1% of all those out of work.

In manufacturing overall, the number of workers reached its peak of 21.3 million in 1979. By October, 1983 the number stood at 2.3 million less—19 million. Even with the effect of the recovery, the number of manufacturing jobs in the U.S. will not return to the peaks of the 1970s.

While the official number of unemployed is down by about 2 million—from a high of 12.03 million in December, 1982 to 9.88 million by October, 1983—the average duration of unemployment is up to over 20 weeks at present. This is compared to 13-16 weeks during 1982 and 13-14 during 1981.

For those who are un-



NOTES ON THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

by GLENN PERUSEK

employed, many fewer receive benefits today. In the 1975 recession fully 78% of the officially unemployed received benefits. By 1982 only 38% did, and in 1983 the figure dropped to 28%. Of course, the number would be even lower if "discouraged workers" who are no longer on the unemployment roles were added.

LOOMING

While capitalists find solace in a brighter economic picture at home, looming over them is the gloomier condition of the world economy as a whole.

Growth and profit rates remain stagnant in most of Europe, and the burden of massive debt has not been lifted from the Brazils, Mexicos and South Korea of the third world. The present recovery is a temporary respite—confined to the U.S. □

GROCERY STRIKE IN NEW JERSEY

As of January 29, the two-week-old strike of 7,000 butchers, wrappers, deli and seafood workers at four large New Jersey grocery chains was still in progress.

The strike of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 464A began on January 15 against 334 Pathmark, Foodtown, Grand Union and Shop-Rite stores in New Jersey. The chain, negotiating as a unit, had demanded a large array of give-backs, claiming "economic difficulties."

WISH

Most New Jersey residents only wish they had such difficulties: Pathmark made \$51,225,000 last year. Its president, Leonard Leberman, made \$401,000.

The picketers have not only had to face the worst east cold spell in years, but also the cold shoulder of their fellow workers. The front-of-store workers, members of UFCWU 1262 have generally crossed the lines, as have the Teamster drivers of Joint Council 73.

This breach of solidarity, encouraged by Local 1262 president Sam Kinsona, has not only reduced the effectiveness of the present strike. Local 1262's contract is up in April, and that local could find itself as isolated as the butchers are today. □

— DAN CAPLIN



FFIN:

YEARS OF WAITING

daughter—I didn't have a problem with them, but my youngest boy—he couldn't handle the projects. He got in with the wrong crowd. I had to get away from there.

I was scared to come in at night, and it's not just at night. It's the daytime, too.

Now I hear on the news that ladies are wading through water to get to their apartments. They have to walk up thirteen flights of stairs. I know what it's like.

LOOKING

Now I'm looking for housing for myself and my children. They aren't staying here with me now. We've had to break up.

My daughter is eighteen now—she gets general relief. She gets \$144 per month. I don't see how they think you can do it on that.

You can't even find one room for that—one room runs well over \$100 a month.

And they give you about \$75 worth of food stamps, and this is supposed to last you for a month. It ain't funny.

Even a working person today, with the price of food going up—you know, it takes two people to make it today.

Used to be a time when the husband and wife would be together, and the husband could work and the wife would stay home.

Well, you can't do that no more. It takes two incomes to try just to pay rent. So, I know a lot of people that have three or four families staying in one place, you



know, trying to survive.

In the building that I was staying in, the man who owned the building said there were too many of us staying in the apartment, and I had to move. He said he only wanted three people in the apartment.

It was a four-room apartment with just one bedroom. It had been me and my mother and my children and my brother—6 of us. You had to sleep anywhere you could. Then the landlord kicked us out.

People just can't keep on

living like this. Reagan had this thing that people weren't starving in America. You go over to Mount Episcopal's on the third Thursday of every month at 6:00 in the morning and people are lining up in the 10 or 15 degrees below zero weather.

STANDING

They're not just standing out there for the fun of it. They need the food. And the stuff they give you—it ain't nothing.

Things have got to change. " "

"I will try to spread the word"

Dear Socialist Worker,
I am writing from within the Ohio prison system. In December we inmates being held in Mansfield—waiting to be transferred to our parent prison for three months—went on a hunger strike.

Our "in transit" status meant that we were unable to work, get health care or get educational or social services that are otherwise provided.

When told we would have to wait yet another month before being transferred, we couldn't face the poor conditions and boredom any longer. It started with only 15 in-

mates. There were talks of unity—us being a whole. We wanted changes that would put us on equal ground.

By the end of the day we had 310 inmates on our side out of 322. The ones that ate because they were on special diets, but their support was with us.

The reason I write and tell of our small story is to express that although I am not one of you all, fighting physically, I am spiritually.

A lot of us had never met before, but we became one. We shared all we had. Not one of us was better or had more than the others. We were the same regardless of color or religion. We had no leaders and no followers. It is a beauti-

ful feeling to be united, to be equal to the next person in line. I truly believe in your cause. I know that at times it may look as if your goals cannot be reached, but they can.

What you are doing is right. Please continue as you are.

I hope that this small letter brightens your day and informs you that there is a socialist in prison who cannot print a paper or give speeches. I am here and cannot do much until I am released, but until then I will let others know of your group and try to spread the word—as I do your paper when I receive it.

Thank you for the space in your paper.

JR
In LCF—Lima, Ohio

CUBA: A BEACON OF SOCIALISM?

ANALYSIS BY PETE BINNS

When Castro and his guerrillas took power in 1959, sweeping a pro-American dictatorship from power, they hoped to create a new Cuba. A Cuba which could be free from control by the U.S. or any other power.

During the 1960s, Cuba was a focus of struggle in South and Central America—a focus which is still alive, maintained by both verbal and material aid to Nicaragua and the guerrillas in El Salvador.

Fidel Castro has joined with the leaders of the Sandinistas, and the late Maurice Bishop, whose overthrow as prime minister of Grenada launched the events which triggered the invasion, in denouncing "Yankee imperialism."

But from the very earliest years of the Castro regime, Cuba has been forced to pursue policies which contradict the real aims of socialism both in Cuba and overseas.

Castro discovered that a poor island, dependent on one major crop—sugar—couldn't develop in isolation. Faced with a boycott by the U.S. and its allies, he was forced to turn to Russia for aid. Today Cuba's economy is totally dependent on Moscow.

TRADE

Around 80% of Cuba's trade goes to the Eastern European Comecon bloc countries.

Cuba gets its oil through a favorable oil-for-sugar barter agreement with Russia, and no less than \$1,800 million of hard currency aid and credit was granted to Havana from Moscow last year.

On top of that, the whole economy is directed by a series of planning committees in which Russian personnel are responsible for 50% of the decisions.

The aid is crucial. Per capita, it represents one of the highest to be found in the world today—comparable only to the sums provided by the U.S. to its watchdog in the Middle East—Israel.

As a result of such economic dependency, Cuba's foreign policy is also dictated by the needs of the Russian ruling class, with whom it is closely connected. There has not been a single issue in international politics since 1968 in which Cuba has failed to support the Kremlin.

The list is a formidable one. Castro has, for instance, steadfastly supported the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Russian troops in 1968, the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the suppression of Solidarity in Poland in 1981.

ADVANCES

Within Cuba significant advances have been made in the areas of literacy, health care and the standard of living of the bottom 20% of the population (mainly the rural working class) since the 1959 revolution.

But even here the results are mixed. The bulk of the working class has not made significant gains in living standards.

Elsewhere there have been notable failures.

The second biggest export, tobacco, suffers from chronically low levels of production and productivity. And the housing stock has hardly been added to since 1959, as the crumbling multi-occupied tenements in Havana can testify.

With a 20% increase in the population, it is almost impossible for young married couples to get even the smallest apartment for themselves.

Almost-but not quite. For certain channels do exist for a minority to get access to an apartment, a better job, scarce goods and so on.



If you do a lot of "voluntary" work for your local neighborhood committee, if you succeed in joining the Cuban Communist Party or in increasing your own and your fellow workmates' productivity in the factory, then you stand a chance of advancing up the hierarchy and gaining such privileges.

Even if the prospects of an ordinary worker rising very far in the hierarchy are strictly limited, most workers do, in fact, look forward to a better job or a better apartment at some point or other. They are therefore prepared to participate in such bodies as the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) and the other "mass bodies" that exist in Cuba today.

But the fact that such "mass bodies" exist and that contested elections are now built into the structure of Cuban society does not imply the existence of political freedom.

For the fact is that the CDRs are exclusively bodies for carrying decisions downwards from the bureaucracy to the workers.

Their leadership is not elected but appointed by the central bureaucracy working through the Communist Party.

As for the elections for Cuba's parliament (the National Assembly of Popular Power), there too political freedom is more apparent than real.

The Assembly has no real power and the elections cannot be based on politics as the candidates are elected on the basis of biographies drawn up by the appropriate Communist Party body.

FAILURE

The complete failure of Castro's Cuba to be able to tolerate opposition—above all from the working class—was made graphically clear last year when five workers were arrested for the crime of arguing for the need to set up a Cuban version of Solidarnosc.

Although it is not clear exactly what has happened to them, recent reports suggest that they have been given life imprisonment for their pains.

There is no doubt Castro is a highly charismatic leader and a brilliant speaker. Most of his attacks on American imperialism we heartily endorse.

At the same time, however, we must be quite clear that Castroism is not the answer to Reagan and the other imperialist warmongers. Only a genuinely working class revolution—in the imperialist countries and elsewhere—can take the power right out of the hands of these warmongers.

Letters



STOP THE "RIGHT-TO-LIFE"

Dear Socialist Worker,

About 25 pro-choice counter-demonstrators faced off against anti-abortion demonstrators picketing the Concord Medical Center in Chicago on the weekend of the 11th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

The clinic provides many health services for women, in addition to abortion, but the anti-abortionists regularly picket the clinic, harassing and bullying the women attempting to enter.

On January 21, they toted giant crosses attached to baby dolls smeared with red paint and a garbage can full of similarly "bloodied" baby dolls. They have no symbols for the countless women who have died at the hands of backstreet butchers. Their concern is limited to fetuses. It does not extend to adult women.

"You just can't argue with them," said Jill Schacter, one of the pro-choice picketers.

"They hold their crosses and they try to connect god with abortion."

Ruth Osgood, Director of Educational Services for the clinic, said, "They talk in very emotional terms like 'Don't kill your baby' and 'Stop the murder.'" What they say "is basically slanted towards scaring people. They try to lay a guilt trip on a lot of people."

A gesture of international solidarity

Dear Socialist Worker,
Thank you for your letter of December, 1983 appealing for financial support. I read your letter at the Oxford branch of the SWP, and we agreed that as a gesture of international solidarity we should send you 20 pounds to be raised by a collection among the

The anti-abortionists "feel they have the right to interfere with men and women making responsible personal and moral choices at a very difficult time in their lives.

Despite 20 degree below zero weather, it was nice to see 25 pro-choicers come out to defend abortion rights.

Andy Thayer
Chicago, IL

membership.

We wish you every success in building an independent Marxist organization in the U.S.A.

I am looking forward to receiving the next copy of Socialist Worker.

Yours fraternally,
Martin Gregory
Oxford, Britain

1934: The year American workers turned the tide

ON STRIKE!

The initial militancy and solidarity shown in various cities during the Greyhound strike showed just a murmur of the potential power of American workers. The defeat of the strike, the ability of the ATU leadership to convince the membership to accept drastic concessions, on the other hand, demonstrate clearly the weak state of American workers today.

This and the long series of defeats—from the busting of PATCO to the massive concessions in the auto, rubber and steel industries—raises the question of when American workers will be able to emerge from the doldrums and begin to turn the tide of the employer's offensive.

Joe Allen looks back at a high point of workers' activity fifty years ago—1934.

As the depression bottomed out in 1933, the bitterness and militancy of workers began to burst through. Strikes exploded from one industry to another—but most lost.

1934 was to be the turning point. The economy showed signs of improvement, and over 1.5 million workers went on strike for union recognition. The three most important strikes that led the way were the Toledo Auto-Lite strike, the Minneapolis truckers strike and the San Francisco longshoremen's strike.

Socialists played a critical role in these struggles. Their long years of organizing, even during the period of the downturn of the struggles of the 1920s, meant that these ideas could take root among workers in a period of rising class struggle.

In the early 1930s, the American working class was in a far weaker state. In 1929, before the Great Depression hit, the bureaucratic, craft-dominated American Federation of Labor (AFL) had less than 3 million members. The AFL had actively sabotaged the organizing of industrial workers whom they saw as a threat to their privileged position.

The high unemployment of the depression decimated the working class—unemployment soared from 3.2% in 1929 to 24.6% in 1932. Nearly 18 million people were out of work. The last great struggles of industrial workers was in the post-World War I period 1919-1921. Centered in the steel industry, they were crushed by state repression.

The 1920s saw a continual decline in union organization and an erosion of workers' standard of living.



TOLEDO

Toledo, Ohio was an industrial city hard hit by the depression. In 1933 the followers of socialist intellectual and leader of the American Workers Party (AWP), A.J. Muste, founded the Lucas County Unemployment League to fight for relief of the unemployed. The AWP and the League promoted the unity of the unemployed and employed workers. They mobilized the unemployed to support—not to scab—on strikes.

On February 4, 1934, newly organized workers at the Electric Auto-Lite Co. went out on strike for union recognition. The strike was quickly called off by AFL officials who agreed to negotiate through the National Labor Board set up by Roosevelt. The company then refused to negotiate and started harassing union supporters. The workers struck in defense on April 13. A court injunction limited picketing, and when the strike began to weaken, some of the Auto-Lite workers went to the AWP for support.

One historian describes the critical role of the AWP in the Auto-Lite strike: "The dynamic intervention of a revolutionary workers organization, the American Workers Party, seemed to have been required before the outcome (a union victory) could be achieved. The officials in the Federal Automobile Workers Union would have lost the strike if left to their own resources."

The AWP organized a picketline of 10,000 workers and unemployed that laid siege to the Auto-Lite plant. They fought off the company's police and the state National Guard. Support for the strike spread to Toledo's other unions by way of the AWP. Over 40,000 workers rallied in support of the strikers, and with a general strike looming, the company capitulated to the union's demands on June 4.



Minneapolis—1934.

The willingness of the Auto-Lite workers to go beyond the limits of the law and the AFL bureaucrats to win the strike was due to the role of the AWP during the strike. Its many years of work among Toledo's workers and unemployed gave it the credibility to intervene at a critical moment to change the course of the strike.

MINNEAPOLIS

Simultaneously, in Minneapolis, truck drivers and warehouse workers were battling the city's trucking industry for union recognition. A small group of socialists in the Trotskyist organization, the Communist League of America (CLA) spent many years organizing among Minneapolis' truck drivers and warehouse workers—preparing to unionize the city's trucking industry.

The Trotskyists, according to one historian, "organized rank and file coal yard workers and drivers to launch the first successful strike Minneapolis had experienced in decades. Sixty-five out of sixty-seven coal yards were shut down with precision and military efficiency on February 7, 1934."

This was the first step in organizing the entire trucking industry. Farrell Dobbs (a CLA member and an important future leader of the Minneapolis truckers strike) said it was "to show in the opening clash with the bosses that a strike could be won."

Soon all of Minneapolis' truck drivers and warehouse workers were out on strike for union recognition. They organized themselves into the old Teamster Local 574. The rank and file of Local 574 set up an organizing committee to bypass the old AFL executive board of the local. Dan Tobin, the arch reactionary International President of the Teamsters attempted to sabotage the strike many times.

Tobin's efforts got nowhere since the entire rank and file of the local were organized against him.

Farrell Dobbs explained the role of the local CLA branch during the strike: "The CLA branch played an important unity role. Their efforts were critical around work in other unions than Local 574, among the unemployed, and in the women's auxiliary. They strived to build up the *Militant's* readership (the CLA's national paper) . . . among the workers by means of the paper's political analysis of the union struggle."

After a long battle, the Minneapolis' trucking industry conceded to Local 574's demands.

Dobbs and the CLA played such important roles in the Minneapolis truckers strike by arguing for the necessity of rank and file organization and championing the needs of all workers connected to trucking.

Not only was the CLA successful in winning workers to rank and file union politics—it also won a number of workers to socialist politics. The Minneapolis CLA grew from 40 to 100 members because of their role in the strike.

SAN FRANCISCO

In San Francisco, longshoremen were confronting the united employers of the West Coast's largest port, even though most of them were unorganized. A group of Communist Party members led by Harry Bridges in the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) met regularly to discuss strategy for organizing the entire waterfront. The Communist Party's rank and file paper *Waterfront Worker*, edited by Bridges, became the vehicle for organizing the waterfront.

In response to the firing of several ILA members at the Matson Navigation Co. and the

failure of the company to recognize the union, delegates representing over 14,000 waterfront workers met in San Francisco in February, 1934 to draft a uniform West Coast contract. They overwhelmingly voted to strike if their demands weren't met.

William Lewis, the national president of the ILA, was brought in at the last moment to make a deal with the waterfront employers behind the ranks' backs. Lewis' deal amounted to nothing. Harry Bridges took the lead in denouncing Lewis.

Several weeks later, following Bridges' lead, almost all the major West Coast ports were on strike. Bridges was elected the chair of the rank and file strike committee. The Communist Party played an important role in the strike—its regional paper, *Western Worker*, became the daily strike paper.

Support for the longshoremen spread to San Francisco's other unions. The rank and file voted against their AFL leaders for a general strike. The general strike, however, was soon called off by the AFL leaders. Under intense pressure from the strike, the waterfront employers conceded to the ILA's major demands.

The Communist Party built a strong base among San Francisco's longshoremen. The leadership they exercised during the strike was crucial because they argued that rank and file organization and the solidarity of other workers was needed to win.



The existence of a socialist current rooted in the American working class was an essential ingredient in the victory of these three struggles. Socialists organized in the workplace even during the lowest period of workers' struggles. Socialist arguments about the necessity of rank and file organization, solidarity with other workers and defiance of the law to win workers rights were key to winning these struggles. These ideas were tested in practice and proved right—they are just as valid today.

Not only were socialists able because of their ideas and activity to assume the leadership of strikes, but they also won workers to socialist ideas. This didn't happen overnight. Socialists spent many years patiently relating to struggles no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, and patiently convincing the people around them to become part of revolutionary organization. It was because of this that they played a leading role when the upturn in the class struggle occurred. □

WHERE WE STAND

WORKERS' CONTROL

Workers create all the wealth under capitalism. A socialist society can only be built when workers collectively seize control of that wealth and democratically plan its production and distribution according to human needs instead of profit.

The working class is the key to the fight for socialism. Freedom and liberation will only be achieved through the struggles of workers themselves, organizing and fighting for real workers' power.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The capitalist system cannot be patched up or reformed as some union leaders and liberal politicians say. Capitalism is based on the exploitation of workers. No reforms can do away with this exploitation. The only way workers can come to control society and create a system based on freedom and a decent life for all is by overthrowing capitalism and replacing it with revolutionary, democratic socialism.

A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

The present state apparatus (federal and state governments, the courts, army and police) was developed to maintain the capitalist system. This apparatus cannot be taken over as it stands and converted to serve workers. The working class needs an entirely different kind of state based upon mass democratic councils of workers' delegates.

Supporting the present state apparatus is a vast network of propaganda—newspapers, radio, television, movies, the education system. Workers are bombarded daily from all directions with capitalism's point of view. The working class needs its own sources of information. To help meet this need, we are dedicated to building a newspaper that the working class can trust and use in the fight against the present system.

FIGHT OPPRESSION

Capitalism divides the working class—pitting men against women, whites against Blacks. Capitalism fosters and uses these divisions to block the unity necessary for its destruction. As capitalism moves into crisis, oppressed groups—Blacks, women, Latinos, Native Americans, gays, youth—suffer the most. We support the struggles and independent organizations of oppressed people to strengthen the working class struggle for socialism.

BLACK LIBERATION

Our support for the struggle against racism is unconditional, and we oppose any attempt to subordinate this fight. We fight racism in all its forms, from institutionalized "legal" racism to the activities of groups such as the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

We fight segregation in the schools and in housing, we support affirmative action, and we oppose racist firings and harassment. We support armed self-defense in the face of racist attacks. We support independent self-organization and the right to self-determination of the Black community. We demand freedom for all political prisoners.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

We fight for women's liberation. We support equal pay and equal job opportunities for all women. We demand free abortion and an end to forced sterilization, and quality child care. We oppose all forms of violence against women including sexual harassment at work. Under capitalism the state intervenes to maintain women's subordination within the family, to maintain oppressive sex roles and her exploitation at work.

We support lesbian and gay liberation. We demand quality sex education in the schools; we are for lesbian and gay custody rights and the right to be open lesbians and gays at work, home and in school.

RANK AND FILE ORGANIZATION

The unions today are largely business machines that long ago stopped truly fighting for the interests of the working class. Business union leaders act either as brakes on workers' struggles, or as cops, delivering workers into the hands of the bosses. We fight in the unions to put an end to this.

To make the unions fight for workers' interests, workers must organize their power on the shop floor. This can only happen if the rank and file organize themselves independently of the union bureaucrats. We work to build rank and file organizations in unions and companies wherever we are employed.

INTERNATIONALISM

The working class has no nation. Capitalism is international, so the struggle for socialism must be world-wide. A socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation.

We champion workers' struggles in all countries, from Poland to Puerto Rico, from Palestine to El Salvador. We support all genuine national liberation struggles. We call for victory of the Black freedom fighters in South Africa and Namibia. We oppose all forms of imperialism and oppose sending U.S. troops anywhere in the world to impose U.S. interests.

Russia, China, Cuba and Eastern Europe are not socialist countries. They are state capitalist and part of one world capitalist system. We support the struggles of workers in those countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The activity of the ISO is directed at taking the initial steps toward building a revolutionary party in a working class fragmented and cut off from socialist ideas. Revolutionaries must be involved in the daily struggles of workers and oppressed groups at the workplace, in the unions and in the communities. We build every struggle that strengthens the self-confidence, organization and socialist consciousness of workers and the oppressed.

As the working class movement gathers strength, the need for revolutionary leadership becomes crucial. We are part of the long process of building a democratic revolutionary party rooted in the working class. Those who agree with our stand and are prepared to help us build toward revolutionary socialism are urged to join us now.

For more information about the International Socialist Organization (ISO) please write P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616



What's ON

BALTIMORE

Barri Brown on **Jesse Jackson and the Black Democrats**. February 11 at 7:30 p.m., L-V Room, Johns Hopkins University.

Film: **Ten Days that Shook the World**, followed by discussion. February 23, Johns Hopkins University. Call 235-4620 for more information.

BLOOMINGTON

Glenn Perusek on **The Politics of the ISO**. Friday, February 3, 7:30 p.m. Call 332-6682 for more information.

BOSTON

Day School on February 4. George Axiotis on **What is Marxism?**, Paul D'Amato on **Lenin and the Bolsheviks**, Celia Petty on **The Roots of Women's Oppression** and Dan Caplin and Susan Arnott on **Building a Revolutionary Organization**. 2:00 p.m.-on. Call 427-7087 for details.

CHICAGO

Lindsay German on **The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament: Which Way Forward Against the Bomb?** February 16 at 7:30 p.m. Call 878-3624.

Ben Blake on **Reform or Revolution?** February 22 at 4:00 p.m. Call 288-7572.

Lindsay German on **The European Disarmament Movement**. February 15 at 4:00 p.m. Call 288-7572.

ISO FUND APPEAL

This winter, the ISO is conducting a fund drive to raise the amount of \$5,000. This money will make a big difference for our group—in helping us finance the cost of producing *Socialist Worker*, as well as our other political activities.

ISO branches will be organizing fund-raising activities to help raise money, as well as digging into their own pockets.

But we are also asking you, a *Socialist Worker* reader, to help us out, if you can.

Can you make a donation, large or small? Anything you can give will help us to achieve our goal of \$5,000.

Checks can be sent to either the ISO or to Sharon Smith, P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616. Thank you.

Study group: **Marxism and the Party**. February 3: Rosa Luxemburg. February 10: Trotsky and Gramsci. Call 878-3624.

CINCINNATI

Anna Palmer on **Blacks and the Democratic Party**. February 18 at 7:30 p.m., University of Cincinnati.

Study group: **Marxist Economics**, February 2 and 9. Call 871-1371 for details.

Study group: February 8: Steve Stewart on **Exploitation**. February 15: Celia Petty on **Oppression**. February 22: Jerry Nuckols on **Why the Working Class?** February 29: Bill Roberts on **The Need for a Revolutionary Organization**. Call 871-1371 for more information.

CLEVELAND

Dena Magoulias on **The State of Black America**. February 12 at 7:30 p.m.

Dave Scubby on **The Struggle in Southern Africa**. February 26 at 7:30 p.m. Call 651-5935 for more information.

MADISON

1984 and the Future for **Socialism**. February 21 at 7:30 p.m. Call 256-8196.

NEW YORK

Eleanor Trawick on **Lavender and Red: Gay Liberation and Socialism**. February 3 at 4:00 p.m.

Ahmed Shawi on **Is there a Future for Marxism?** February 13.

ROCHESTER

Day School: Mike Ondrusek on **Introduction to the ISO**. Brian Erway on **Socialism from Below** and Dave McNally on **1984 and the Fight for International Socialism**. February 4. Call 235-3049 for details.

SAN FRANCISCO

Movie: **Finally Got the News**. Saturday, February 18. Call 285-1908 for more information.

Study group on **The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx—Workers Power**. Sunday, February 19. Call 285-1908 for details.

SEATTLE

Scott Winslow on **Global War Economy—War Atlas**. Friday, February 10 at 7:30. Call 722-4133.

Steve McFadden on **Black Democrats**. Sunday, February 26.

"The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it."

— Karl Marx

If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us. There are ISO members and branches in the following cities:

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- Chicago, IL
- Cincinnati, OH
- Cleveland, OH
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- Minneapolis, MN
- Muncie, IN
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- Rochester, NY
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SILKWOOD

Were it not for the vague ending of Mike Nichols' latest film, *Silkwood*, the movie would constitute a praiseworthy effort of political filmmaking for mass distribution in this country.

Silkwood is a fine sensitive example of acting and direction—but unfortunately weakens in its most critical moments.

The film dramatizes the events leading up to the death of Karen Silkwood (played by Meryl Streep) a worker and union activist in the Crescent, Oklahoma Kerr-McGee plutonium recycling plant.

Silkwood had joined union activities in anger over the government-contracted plant's inadequate safety and quality controls, and eventually discovered that she herself was extremely contaminated with plutonium.

In 1974 she died in a mysterious car accident while driving to make a report about the safety violations to the *New York Times*.

DOCUMENTARY

The film is not intended as a documentary and clearly takes a few liberties in order to dramatize the personal lives of Silkwood and her friends. Nichols is very careful about not saying any more than he can get away with against Kerr-McGee, because many of the facts of the case remain unknown. But the film does, at some level, seem to be about workers' struggles, and it is on those issues that the film leaves the viewer stunned and

REVIEW BY DEANNA SHEMEK

perplexed.

At movie's end we see Meryl Streep as Silkwood, in slow motion review of the last moments of her life: Saying goodbye to her lover as she heads to work going to her union meeting and driving away in her car.

For all its beauty, this ending implies that the force in Silkwood's story lies in her strength as an individual heroine who was able to battle and bravely endure the hostility and isolation waged at her because of her high ideals.

Nichols could have been just a little more brave and reminded us here of what he'd shown all along. That solidarity could be more amazing than individual heroism.

BRILLIANCE

And yet the film has a brilliance about it.

Silkwood struggles to see her children who live with their father. The film shows the financial binds that prohibit her from keeping the children with her. It shows her relationship with her lover—Drew, played by Kurt Russell—and with her lesbian housemate—Dolly, played by Cher. It forms a depiction of personal life real enough for any of us to identify with.

At work, the tensions among employees who worry about the threat of contamination and cancer, but are too afraid to protest and don't realize their own collective

power—creates bitter conflict between people who had previously been friends.

The movie even has some delightfully funny moments which save it from the overpowering suspense that could ruin it.

Certainly, then, the film is worth seeing, for it portrays with rare sensitivity the life and pressures of the isolated worker in struggle. Nichols' himself has spoken of the film as being about people asleep in their lives and waking up: "How did I get here?" The pity is that the film, like the workers it portrays, is asleep at its most crucial moment. □¹⁰¹

KAREN SILKWOOD

1946-1974



DEAD BECAUSE SHE KNEW TOO MUCH?

CONCESSIONS ONLY LEAD TO MORE CONCESSIONS

Paul D'Amato reviews *Concessions and How to Beat Them*, by Jane Slaughter. Published by Labor Notes. \$4.50.

The announcement of 15,400 layoffs at U.S. Steel this April is no longer a shocking event. It is the reward that steelworkers are receiving for giving up over \$6 billion in concessions—\$2.9 billion in wage concessions at U.S. Steel last month alone.

The practice of companies demanding—and getting with very little resistance—concession after concession, has become the norm. In return, workers have earned lower wages, fewer benefits, and in many cases layoffs.

Chrysler Corporation's workforce has shrunk from 273,000 in 1973 to under 100,000 today. In 1980 alone, Chrysler workers gave up over \$1 billion in concessions.

At the McLouth steel mill in Detroit, under the threat of bankruptcy, workers gave up three holidays, one week's paid vacation and a \$125 wage cut in January, 1982. Ten months later they accepted a six-year no strike clause, a \$156 cut in pay, loss of one more week's vacation and a 25% reduction in sick benefits.

CULPRIT

The trade union leadership has been a major culprit in getting workers to swallow concessions without a fight.

Doug Fraser, the former president of the UAW, convinced the rank and file to accept concessions in return for a seat on the Chrysler board of directors.

During the Greyhound strike, the Amalgamated Transit Union discouraged militant picketing and agreed to limit pickets to an ineffectual level. They finally convinced Greyhound workers to accept a package of conces-

sions that was very similar to the one they had previously voted down.

The picture is grim: employers taking advantage of high unemployment to seek concessions. The trade union bureaucracy discouraging militant response from the shop floor, and rank and file workers left feeling disorganized and with no sense of power.

Under these circumstances, an analysis of the concessions is very welcome. *Concessions and How to Beat Them*, written by Jane Slaughter and published by Labor Notes, attempts to do just that. The book provides a wealth of examples to show that concessions don't save jobs—they only lead to more concessions.

DESIGNED

Unfortunately, the book is not designed as a handbook for the rank and file worker. It is an appeal to trade union leaders to take a stand—to "adopt a national policy against concessions."

Slaughter advocates that "determination and an informed membership can make the difference," and that there should be "trust between the leadership and the rank and file."

The solutions that the book offers reflect the audience that the book aims to convince. Striking is ninth in a list of ten suggestions on how to resist concessions. Number seven in the list advocates putting forward "suggestions on how the company could run its business better" and developing plans for "redesigning the industry." These are essentially strategies which keep the initiative in the hands of the bureaucrats.

Another strategy that the book applauds is the "corporate campaign" which the IAM conducted at the Brown and Sharpe strike by 1,500 machinists in Rhode Island.

Diverting workers' attention away from strong, effective picket lines, union leaders had workers picket Brown and Sharpe's largest creditors—the Rhode Island Hospital Trust Bank's 20 offices—every day. While many union sympathizers were convinced to withdraw their money from the bank, this tactic had no real effect on Brown and Sharpe's position at the bargaining table.

FAILURE

The book attributes the failure of the bank boycott to the fact that the campaign was started too late into the strike to be effective. In reality, the campaign should not have been the focus of the strike.

It helped to divert activity away from the plant gates, deflating the real militancy at the plant gates during the first six months—when workers and their supporters held mass rallies and battled the Rhode Island state police.

The president of the IAM, Winpisinger, never set foot Rhode Island during the strike, but still he wrote the preface to this book.

The book draws the wrong lessons from the experience of the last five years. The trade union bureaucracy has not been able to resist concessions because it is not willing to help the rank and file organize a real fightback.

It cannot be convinced with an argument. The layer of union bureaucrats in the U.S. plays the role of mediators between rank and file workers and the employers. Because it can only guarantee its own privileged position by maintaining labor peace, it can never be relied upon to lead a fight against the employers.

The fightback against concessions must come from rank and file workers who are willing to go beyond their timid and complacent union leadership. □



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on the picket line

Kroger workers defend their jobs

PITTSBURGH, PA—Kroger workers, the victims of a raging price war between food stores here, voted 20-1 to "shut 'em down" rather than give in to the company's concession demands. Soon after, the area's 2,800 Kroger workers established 24-hour picket lines, and vowed to stay out in spite of company stonewalling and sub-zero temperatures.

The company demanded an average wage reduction of \$4 an hour, a reduction of the company's share of Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage from \$250 to \$139, cuts on paid holidays and overtime, the elimination of restrictions on part-time workers at the expense of full-timers, and virtual elimination of the seniority system in favor of a merit system decided on by Kroger management.

Still reeling from givebacks less than two years ago,

by **TY MILLER**

Kroger workers said, "No more!"

DEFENSE

The company's intention was clear: union busting. When the contract expired January 9th, they simply laid their demands on the table and walked away. Negotiation was out of the question. Most picketers described the strike as a *lock-out* and their strike activity as a *defense of their jobs*, their wages, and their union.

Kroger justifies this abominable contract with appeals to "the need to remain competitive" with other area food stores. In particular, Kroger claims that the nine million dollar concession package its rival food store Giant Eagle wrung out of its workers gives Giant Eagle an "unacceptable competitive

edge." Giant Eagle workers (like Kroger's workers, members of UFCW Local 23) gave in to company demands after a 19-day strike in November petered out.

Since that defeat, the Giant Eagle company has pursued an aggressive pricing and advertising campaign to undercut its local rivals.

CLIMATE

Kroger evidently hopes for a similar lack of support for its workers. For its part, the company has done everything in its power to exploit the economic climate and the hardships for most people of the severe winter. A particularly cynical example of this manipulation is its use of laid off steelworkers as security guards. As one ex-mill worker, now security guard, told a striker, "Man, I'm sorry to say this, but I hope this goes on for a while. I need to feed my family.

Sorry."

And if the union bureaucracy has its way, Kroger concession hopes may become a reality. Rank and file picketers had no doubt that lack of solidarity caused the loss of other anti-concession strikes in the area and this forced them into their present situation. They cited examples in recent Foodland and Giant Eagle work stoppages where appeals for help went unheeded.

LESSONS

In spite of these hard lessons, and despite several other local strikes (including teachers, telephone workers and construction workers) and other sources of potential solidarity, the union has no plans to link up with other workers. They have so far proven incapable of seeing past the negotiating table to the picket line—where the strikes are really won.

HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTES

by **MATT FILSINGER**

Juiced . . .

Tropicana, the orange juice company, juices more than oranges. In the last two years, four people have died due to electrocution. The last death, a person working alone in an unsafe area, wasn't discovered until nearby workers smelled the burning flesh.

This same plant, the largest orange juice bottling plant in the world (with 2,000 workers), has been exempted from OSHA inspections. This is because it was accepted into a state consultation program designed for companies with less than 50 employees.

A Ford by any other name

The new head of the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is David Zegeer. Though his name isn't as catchy as that of the guy he replaced, Ford B. Ford, he does have typical Reagan appointee credentials.

Zegeer is a former official of Bethlehem Mines Corp. and Consolidated Coal Co., two major companies which are supposedly regulated by MSHA.

Whose health is at stake?

A federal appeals court in New Orleans has dealt a heavy blow to unions. When an OSHA inspector finds a health or safety violation, the company can sit down with OSHA and negotiate a settlement, often avoiding any penalty whatsoever. The court has stated that the workers or union have no right to participate in the negotiations, and can't appeal the settlement. The court case involved American Petrofina which was exposing workers to asbestos, a known cancer-causer. OSHA agreed to call the violation "non-serious," and the court stated that the workers represented by the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW), had no right to contest this. □

TALKIN' UNION BY JOHN ANDERSON

UAW LEADERS: GIVING IT ALL AWAY

What took almost fifty years to gain, the UAW leadership is prepared to give away in the 1984 negotiations. Having no clear objectives of their own, the union leadership joins the employers in their drive for record-breaking profits. Instead of an adversarial relationship, the UAW leadership have become part of the corporation's family.

Instead of waiting for the termination of the contracts in September, negotiations have begun on a local basis to take away the hard-won gains of the workers.

Workers in Flint Locals 581 and 599 were asked to vote to give up premium pay for overtime. Had they done so GM was to put a third shift to work employing 1,700 of the unemployed. When the workers voted against giving up their premium pay they were held responsible for these workers not being called back.

VOTE

In permitting this vote the UAW is allowing GM to pit the unemployed against the employed workers. This is where the union is left because it failed to fight for the shorter work week and against the long term contracts.

UAW Ford Local 898 has been voting on a local agreement to eliminate ten classifications in the skilled trades. Lines of demarcation are being eliminated. Carpenters are to become painters, millwrights are to be welders, etc. This same local has been voting on

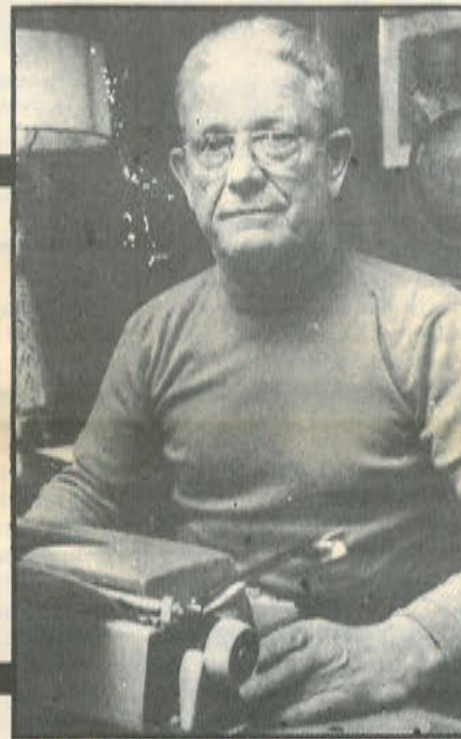
a lifetime security clause. Employment in the plant has been reduced from 6,000 to 2,600. The question arose as to how lifetime security can be given with a three year contract? While the workers vote on these fraudulent schemes, the employers aim is obvious: Divide and rule.

Recently when Ford announced plans to invest \$400 million in a Mexican stamping and assembly plant, the UAW stated this would cost 25,000 American jobs. In response Ford and the UAW leadership held a meeting for local leaders in Fairland Manor where Ford president Philip Caldwell explained the necessity of building plants in Mexico.

After the meeting UAW president Owen Bieber said the meeting had been "productive." Bieber further stated, "I did say to Phil that I would see him in September." To cement their family relationship they call each other by their first names.

GM Chairman of the Board Roger Smith says he does not expect a strike as a result of company and union differences. With GM preparing to import more than 600,000 Japanese cars, and the GM-Toyota joint venture in Fremont, California, Ford's ties with Togo Kogyo and Chrysler's ties with Mitsubishi, American Motors' ties with Peugeot of France, the auto makers are in a strong position to demand further concessions from the UAW.

The rhetoric of the employers—telling the workers they are a part of one big family and "WE ARE ALL IN



John Anderson is a lifelong militant and socialist. He was formerly president of UAW Local 15 in Detroit.

THE SAME BOAT"—is a smoke screen to justify their huge profits at the expense of the workers. As for being in the same boat—the employers have thrown the unemployed overboard and are preparing to do the same with many of the now employed. Their new plants in "Buick City" in Flint and the GM Poletown plant in Detroit will eliminate thousands of workers by robotics and other "efficiency" methods.

"FAMILY"

Having joined the employers in their quest for profits, the UAW leadership thinks their "family" relationship with the bosses and their services to the employers should earn them enough so that they can continue to serve the corporations by keeping the workers on the job. We must brush this smoke-screen aside. Every UAW member, including those in the Big Three, must learn to practice job action like that which brought victory for the members of UAW Local 1760 in Rolla, Missouri, and in Local 282 at Moog Automotive in St. Louis.

We should not wait for the International Union to inform the workers of these ideas for they threaten the power of the bureaucracy and the employers over the workers. We need an international opposition caucus to spread these ideas.



SALERNO PLANT: "IT'S LIKE A PRISON"

CHICAGO, IL—When workers at the Salerno-Megowan Biscuit Co. grudgingly accepted a 15% wage cut in average wages in December following a two-month strike, union bureaucrats tried to console them.

"The company wanted to break this union, and we didn't let them," Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers International union president John DeConcini told workers at the December 23 ratification meeting.

by LEE SUSTAR

"And we still have seniority rules," DeConcini said. "Your jobs are protected."

But when workers returned to their jobs at the cracker and cookie plant on January 3, supervisors disregarded all seniority rules and demanded military discipline on the shop floor. Worse, there are rumors of 35 layoffs soon. So much for "protected jobs."

"It's like a prison," relief operator Rosie Babulic said.

BCT shop steward Chris Tavares agreed. "It's like going to a concentration camp every day."

Under the contract that expired late last year, workers were transferred from job to job on the basis of how long they had worked on a particular production line. Under the new, concessionary contract, workers agreed to be shifted to different jobs according to how long they had worked in

the plant.

Supervisors are taking advantage of the confusion about the new work rules. Union officials have complained to the company, but there is little reason to believe that the union bureaucrats will fight for Salerno workers in the future. Just ask Maxie Hill, president of BCT Local 1.

that the workers take the 15% cut in their average wage of \$11 per hour.

LAYOFF

The union is still negotiating a layoff agreement for the new contract. How can it protect jobs when the contract permits the company to recall laid-off workers or hire new ones at 25% lower wages? And how will the union organize them?

Hill has no idea. "There's nothing we can do. We've lost a lot of jobs and membership, and we'll lose more. I just hope that in two years we're not talking about severance pay, if you know what I mean. Concessions don't guarantee anything. Look at the U.S. Steel plant closings."

Rosie Babulic has a different answer: the rank and file. "We're going to have to stick together in the plant. Some people wanted to walk out when Frankie Longo was suspended."

SPIRIT

"We're going to have to keep that spirit and fight back some day." □



BCT President DeConcini

"I don't think there's anything we can do," Hill said when asked how workers can regain their losses to Salerno. "The company was losing money, and our first priority is to keep that plant open." That's why he recommended

PRESSER'S THUGS ATTACK TDU

by SHARON SMITH

DETROIT, MI—When Detroit TDU (Teamsters for a Democratic Union) members arrived at their December 4th meeting, they were met by a squad of 25 thugs trying to disrupt their meeting.

TDU is a reform group within the Teamsters union, and yet the fiasco was funded entirely by union dues.

And a Teamster business agent—cruising in a union car—watched the whole scene.

SQUAD

But the "BLAST" squad, which stands for "Brotherhood of Loyal Americans and Strong Teamsters" was started by Jackie Presser and is funded by the Teamster Union treasury. Hired by the union, they made their first appearance at the 1981 IBTU convention. Sporting white shirts saying "Proud to be a Teamster," they went around the convention, harassing and picking fights with TDU members.

Some of the leading members of "BLAST" are notorious for some of their "outside" activities. There's Roby Smith, business agent for Michigan Joint Council 43. Smith was convicted in 1979 of taking payoffs from employers, but until he began serving



Detroit TDUer Pete Camarata

his sentence this month, he remained on the union payroll—spending much of his time over the last year working for BLAST.

Then there's Richard LeBove, former staffer for the U.S. Labor Party, a group which used similar thug tactics to break up left meetings in the 1970s. He's now on staff with Teamsters Local 337 and an active member of BLAST in Detroit.

TDUer Pete Camarata estimates that BLAST now numbers some 200-300 members, with chapters mainly in the midwest—in Ohio, Indiana and Michigan. 150 of them showed up at the 1983

TDU convention last October, and, as the Detroit experience shows, some of their local chapters are becoming confident enough to stage their own attacks on local TDU meetings.

ORGANIZE

It's becoming clear that TDU members are going to have to organize some kind of defense to break the confidence of the BLAST goons before they do more damage. Some of the Detroit TDUers are discussing organizing their own defense squads for the next time the BLAST thugs show up at one of their meetings. □

Hilton strikers win small victory

ANNAPOLIS, MD—On January 13 and 14, many government officials, including Vice President Bush, met in Annapolis to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Paris. This treaty finalized American independence from Great Britain.

But 36 Marylanders were not invited to the festivities, even though they were fighting for some independence, too. They were members of the Hotel, Restaurant and Cafeteria Employees Local 36 AFL-CIO who had been on strike against the Annapolis Hilton for nine months. Twelve of the union brothers and sisters were also on strike for higher wages at the Pikesville Hilton.

by KATHY OGREN

The strike has been largely ignored by the press, and scabs have replaced the strikers. But this January, when the Maryland General Assembly opened the 1984 legislative sessions, strikers and AFL-CIO supporters from other unions increased their picketing and prevented many delegates from staying at the hotel or attending meetings or social functions there.

Union president Paul Richards estimated that 40 legislators usually stay at the Hilton and another 30 go in every night. Yet only five crossed the picket line. And "massive cancellations" were reported at the hotel.

Finally, on January 14, hours before the big ball at the Hilton to celebrate the Treaty, the hotel management agreed to settle the strike. Employees will receive a raise of .15/hour this year and .20/hour next year. Strikers will be rehired when jobs are available, and it will take several months before they all get their jobs back.

PERSISTENCE

The Hilton strikers won a very small victory. But their persistence did pay off—especially when they got help from other union members. It's the Hilton Hotel workers victory that should be celebrated—not some 200-year-old piece of paper. □

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CASTLE SAYS YOU'RE: "TERMINATED"

CHICAGO, IL—Take a temporary 15% wage cut, and we'll pay you back—later. That's what Castle Baking Co. told its workers a year ago. The 22 workers are still waiting.

And since November 16, they've been waiting on the picket line. That's when Castle locked out members of the Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers Union Local 2 when the workers refused to surrender their entire health insurance, pension plan and vacation pay.

"Obviously they're trying to break the union like Greyhound and Salerno," said Edgar Harris, a mixer at the plant. Harris made a little more than the average \$10 pay before the cut.

"They told us last February that the pay cut would only last for 90 days," he said. Then the union agreed to extend the cut, and finally the contract expired on June 1, 1983."

Negotiations dragged on for the next few months, and Castle refused to contribute to the benefits or to pay workers for their unused vacation time.

TERMINATED

Finally, on November 15, lawyers representing Castle wrote Local 2 president Al



Trinkl a letter declaring that "all present contractual relationships and agreements between Local 2 and the company are hereby cancelled and terminated."

Workers arrived at the west side plant the next day to find that scabs had taken their place.

"Some of the scabs are laid

off from a Wonder bread plant in Indiana," Harris said. "I used to be in Local 1 with a couple of them."

"They took jobs with the title of 'foreman' so they wouldn't break union rules," Harris said. "But, of course, they aren't foremen. They're scabs."

Workers crossing their own union's picket line severely damages solidarity. But one of the union-member scabs, Eura Brown, Jr., tried to do worse.

"He came up behind our shack, poured gasoline on it and tried to set it on fire. And he knew one of us was inside."

The shack survived that attack. But another scab managed to destroy it by running over it with his truck on New Year's Day when the picketers took a night off.

"All the truck drivers are scabbing on us too," Harris explained. The drivers, members of Teamsters Local 734, are breaking the rules of their own union by crossing the picket line.

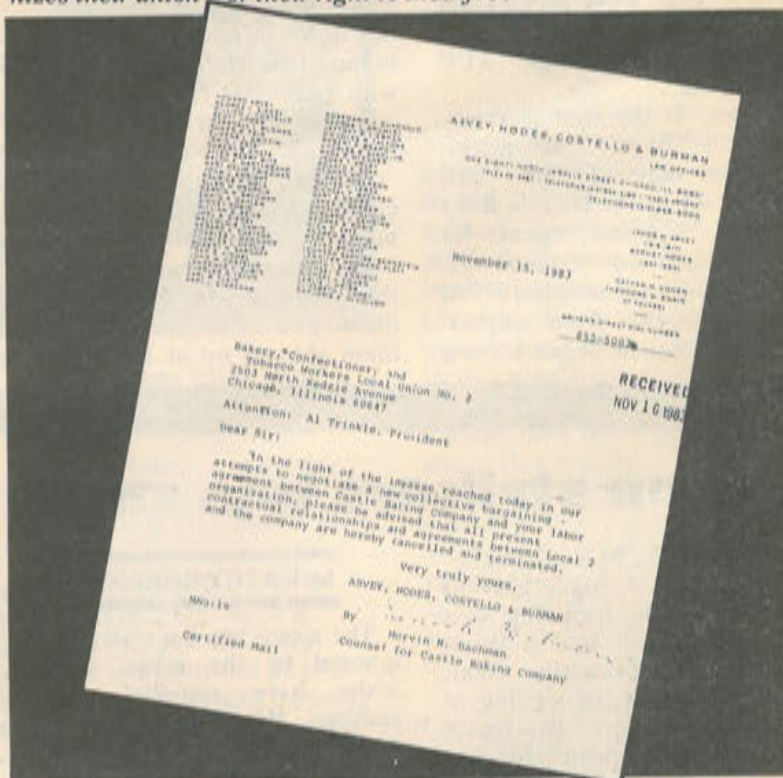
HARASSED

Pickers were further harassed in late January when Chicago cops forced them to give up their trash-can fire.

"They said we needed a permit," said relief worker Johnny Harris, who has been at Castle for 21 years.

"But who are they trying to kid? City workers were repair-

Castle wrote its employees announcing that it no longer recognizes their union—or their right to their jobs



ing the sewer a couple of blocks away, and they had a fire in the trash can to keep warm." The Castle workers now have only a small electric space heater to fight this winter's intense cold as they maintain 24-hour pickets.

Strikers say they are waiting for a judge to decide whether or not the company had the right to void its relationship with the union. In any case, the company owes the workers thousands of dollars in bene-

fits and vacation pay.

A final court settlement could be months away. If the Castle workers have any chance of winning their strike, it will be on the picket line.

Solidarity and the support of other unions are essential to keeping scabs out of the plant. Castle is paying the scabs about \$4 per hour, according to Edgar Harris.

"You know, they did offer us our jobs back," he said. "At minimum wage." □

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