

# Socialist Worker

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British Miners' Strike

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# IMMIGRANTS ARE NOT THE PROBLEM



The Simpson-Mazzoli bill is an attack on all workers—especially Hispanics, and its effects will not be limited to undocumented workers.

### BI-PARTISAN

The Democrats and Republicans are arguing over the details of the proposed law—a bi-partisan bill—amidst loud cries of the need to “stem the tide” of immigrants who “steal American jobs.”

Reagan, of course, chipped in to raise the level of racist xenophobia. “The simple truth is that we’ve lost control of our own borders,” he said. “And no nation can do that and survive.”

But this is only an attempt to find scapegoats for a system that simply doesn’t work for the mass of workers. Immigrant workers are not the ones to blame for unemployment. In fact, immigration does not cause unemployment.

In periods of boom, there is a practically unlimited number of jobs—regardless of the level of immigration. During an economic slump, however, unemployment grows massively.

But it is the bosses and their system that cause this unemployment. Immigrant workers don’t close steel mills. They don’t layoff workers. They don’t hire “labor-management consultants” to

bust unions.

Even Business Week admitted in May: “But new economic evidence suggests that, on balance, the nation benefits more from the increased economic growth and lower inflation stemming from illegal immigration than it loses in jobs, lower wages and welfare costs.”

And immigrants do not “steal” government benefits. A University of Texas study showed that undocumented workers in Texas pay between \$157-277 million in state taxes, and receive only \$50-97 million in state services.

### LOW-PAID

To boot, undocumented workers generally occupy the dirtiest, most arduous and low-paid jobs that no one else will take.

The attack on undocumented workers is only a first step—with all immigrants next on the list, and then even some sections of the “native workforce.”

The AFL-CIO has clamored for immigration controls, but this is racist nonsense—diverting attention from their failure to fight on any front.

As socialists, we have to argue against all immigration controls. The problem in the U.S. is not too many workers, but a system which puts profit above need. No immigration controls. Defend all workers rights! □

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# THE BOSSES ARE



MCI pickets in New York.

## MCI workers take on anti-union giant

**NEW YORK**—Four hundred striking communications workers are gearing up for a confrontation with corporate giant—MCI-Western Union International—and the Los Angeles Olympic Committee. Teamster Local 111, striking against MCI-WUI since April 1, is planning to picket at the Olympic Games, to pressure MCI into renewing its contract with the local.

"The notoriety of skinning the workers' wages before a world audience" at the Olympic Games could be "advantageous to us," said

Local 111's Harry Perdon. "We have pledges of 150,000 Teamsters in California alone who will refuse to cross our picket lines. It will tie up the Olympics," he said. But Local 111 has backed off from early pledges to picket Olympic events and will instead throw picket lines around Southern California MCI-WUI offices.

### EXCLUSIVE CONTRACT

MCI holds an exclusive contract with the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee to manage the telecommunications network that will wire the Games into the world media.

Teamster Local 111 struck MCI-WUI on April 1 after the employer refused to extend the expiring contract and broke off negotiations with the union.

"On April 1, we were still willing to negotiate," said Perdon. "Mediators forced MCI to sit down and bargain, but they were stalling. Our objective is to gain a decent contract for wages, pension, seniority and fringes."

MCI dropped the previous pension plan, cut wage increases in half, and telescoped job classifications. But as the strike has lasted on, the main issues have shifted to MCI's hiring of strike-breakers.

MCI says it will keep the forty strikebreakers it has hired, forcing the layoff of forty strikers at settlement time. The union has refused.

### PICKET LINES

Since then, the Local has maintained picket lines at MCI-WUI offices on 43rd

Street and the Battery Line in Manhattan and at Fort Lee, New Jersey.

MCI is a notoriously anti-union company. Of the 9,000 workers for MCI in the U.S., only the 400 in New York are organized, primarily because Local 111 has maintained a contract with Western Union for 36 years. When MCI bought Western Union in July, 1982, it made clear that it was after a "union free" environment.

Pledges of support from communications unions in the U.S. and other countries have rolled in. Glenn Watts, president of the Communication Workers of America, has pledged his support. The Australian Telecommunications Employees Association lobbied the Australian government to impose a ban on MCI in Australia.

### PLEDGES

But pledges of support from union leaders are not enough to win the strike. And a strategy of placing all their eggs in the Olympics basket is a recipe for defeat.

Strike leaders are more likely to find themselves in jail before MCI gives in to their demands.

This is why the Teamsters leaders, by moving their picket lines from the Games to MCI offices, are robbing workers of their strength.

The simple truth is that any publicity the union could receive is not enough to force MCI to a settlement. Too much money and corporate power is tied to the Olympics to prevent the show from going on—short of massive solidarity from all workers involved in the Games. □

## PUSHING CAFFEINE: A PROFITABLE BUSINESS

Like the tobacco and alcohol industries, the coffee industry is making millions on a product known to be harmful to health.

Caffeine is a stimulant which causes nervousness, irritability and heart palpitations. Just two cups of coffee is enough to cause irregular heart beats. Pregnant coffee drinkers may increase their risk of bearing children with birth defects with every cup they drink.

Coffee drinkers also have 5 to 11 percent more cholesterol in their blood than nondrinkers, and high cholesterol is linked to heart attacks and strokes. Other studies have shown that caffeine may cause benign breast lumps. It has also been shown to cause pancreatic cancer.

With all these adverse effects, coffee is still being drunk by half of all Americans over the age of ten. But there is concern among coffee producers that pub-

Dr. Dena Magoulias examines the effects of coffee and those who profit from its use.

licity about the effects of coffee has been hurting their business. Teenagers and young adults are less hooked on coffee than their cohorts twenty years ago were. In 1962, 81% of 20-year-olds drank coffee, while today only 43% do.

### COMMERCIALS

To combat this decline in coffee consumption, the National Coffee Association spent \$20 million on television commercials aimed at bringing these abstainers into the coffee drinking crowd. The commercials

use pop music and stars like David Bowie to promote their brew. The number one coffee producer, General Foods, maker of Maxwell House, Sanka, Brim, etc., spent \$35 million on ads. The ads give a view that drinking coffee makes one successful and coerces people to "join the coffee achievers."

Coffee has long been pushed on workers in the form of "coffee" breaks. The bosses are eager to supply coffee to workers, seeing it as a legal stimulant which will keep workers awake and make them more productive. It would be much more healthy if work breaks were used to relax instead of drinking stimulants.

However, the National Coffee Association, the coffee corporations and the bosses are working together to keep you strung out so they can make money—at the expense of your health. □

## R.O.T.C. OUT OF SCHOOLS

**CINCINNATI, OH**—The NAACP class action suit filed 10 years ago against the Cincinnati public schools, charging racial isolation, is drawing to a close. A settlement agreement has been reached whereby the state of Ohio, which through its state board of education was made a party defendant in the suit, has agreed to spend \$35 million dollars over a 7-year period on programs to redress racial isolation of Black students.

With the lack of employment opportunities under capitalism, not only for Black high school students but also for Black high school graduates, the Cincinnati board of education has been hard put to

come up with educational programs to spend the money on. Among the programs recommended by the School Board is a Junior R.O.T.C. program price-tagged at \$410,000 for the 1985-86 school year; \$605,403 for 1986-87; and \$800,292 for 1987-88.

### IDEA

The idea behind the program evidently is that if quality educational programs won't help Blacks obtain jobs in the private sector, they can be trained for military combat. Then they can be sent where employment opportunities lie: to third world countries in order to fight and kill people even more impoverished than

American Black youth—and perhaps lose their lives to boot.

The Cincinnati community has been alerted to the Junior R.O.T.C. program plans and is mobilizing to thwart the instigation of militarism in the public schools.

A similar Junior R.O.T.C. program was instituted in Louisville, Kentucky (and surrounding Jefferson County) at the close of the racial segregation suit there. The school board actually approved the program and put it into place, but community efforts subsequently forced disbandment of the program. □

—MARY HESSEL

## LINDA RONSTADT: "YOU'RE NO GOOD"

**ROCHESTER, NY**—On June 11 and 12, 30 protesters picketed a performance of Linda ("You're No Good") Ronstadt. Last year Ronstadt performed in South Africa for \$500,000 and has been placed on a blacklist with many other prominent performers and artists.

The boycott is designed to show solidarity with South Africa's Blacks and to raise the issue of apartheid policy—a policy which promotes violent repression and white supremacy against the country's 20 million Blacks.

The picket urged that Ronstadt make a public apology for her trip and urged those arriving at the concert to join in and

not attend.

Here in the U.S., we can actively show our solidarity for workers in South Africa by participating in boycotts of these "artists" who have been bought by the South African regime—giving that racist state the appearance of legitimacy through its support of "culture." □

—MIKE ONDRUSEK



# Reagan, the recovery, and the working class

Enjoying more than a year of their celebrated recovery, Ronald Reagan and his administration are confident. Opinion polls show Reagan ahead of his main Democratic challenger, Walter Mondale.

## REWARDED

And America's bosses have rewarded themselves handsomely for their recovery—with record salary hikes. Recovery, after all, is measured in terms of profits.

Forget that there are still 8 million officially unemployed. Forget that 15% of Americans live below the poverty line. Forget the plight of unemployed Black youth in every American city.

The lack of working class struggle leaves the bosses confident. The Wall Street Journal smugly notes that hourly compensation is up a meager 4.7% in the first quarter of 1984. It is the smallest year-to-year increase in nearly twenty years, and down sharply from a 10.7% rise just three years ago. "Wage restraint is likely to persist," the journal predicted of this year's 3 million workers whose contracts expire.

The employers are confident that they can continue the wage-slashing, union-busting strategies that have destroyed the standard of living for millions of workers.

## B-TEAM

And their confidence does not depend on Reagan remaining in the White House. Even if Reagan is not re-elected this fall, the bosses' B-team—the Democratic Party—stands ready to continue to try to make American capitalism work for them.

But Reagan's recovery has a dark side. The U.S. is virtually alone in its recovery. The rest of the world absorbs the economic crisis that has dragged on for more than a decade. In Europe, unemployment rates have continued to climb.

And last month's near collapse of Continental Illinois Bank and the growing \$800 billion world debt shows that the U.S. rulers' success is

## Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

fragile. Workers in debtor nations like Brazil and Argentina are beginning to resist the wage cuts and unemployment imposed by the U.S. bankers. The danger of default lingers on.

The level of working class struggle is low today, but it will not remain so forever. Individual firms will continue to squeeze workers' living standards in their drive for ever greater profits. Eventually, workers will be forced to fight back in large numbers. Sooner or later, the system will create working class militancy.

Jack Lavery, the chief economist at Merrill Lynch and Co., expects strike activity to rise from its recession low. But he adds that "the extent of strike activity should still fall well below its previous heights."

## EXPLOSION

Socialists, though, and other militants cannot sit back and wait for the explosion of mass struggles. It is crucially important that we relate to the small minority of workers who are willing to fight back today. It is there that a credible alternative to Reagan can be built.

And it must be remembered that the employers and Reagan are not invincible. Indeed, many of today's strikes could be won—if different tactics were adopted.

Take the case of the AP strike in Toledo. The mass picket which shut down the plant in May was organized by rank and filers. But it was immediately denounced by union officials who wanted a "compromise settlement." "We're not going to win this on the picket line," the local union president Oscar Bunch said.

Instead of an example and inspiration which could have boosted workers' confidence, we now have a situation in which the strike—unless the mass picketing is repeated—is almost certainly doomed. An independent rank and file current does not exist among the

AP workers. It is therefore unlikely that the officials will be challenged.

The pattern is repeated again and again. PATCO was allowed to stand alone and other strikes are left isolated, without leadership and support.

## INDEPENDENT

Until rank and file organization which is independent of the union officials is built, workers' ability to challenge the officials will be limited to spontaneous outbursts.

And such rank and file organization will be built with the active intervention of socialists and socialist ideas. That is why we must take the opportunity today to relate socialist ideas to workers in struggle—even in the smallest struggles, and even if the successes today are few.

Whether or not there are strikes later this year—among miners and auto workers whose contracts expire in September—there is always a small minority willing to fight.

It is in this minority that the potential for a larger socialist current lies. □



## California lumber mill scabs decertify union

**OROVILLE, CA**—In what a union official called a "defeat for all American workers," scabs in 10 California and Oregon lumber mills voted June 23 to decertify a union whose picket lines they crossed.

The National Labor Relations Board approved scab participation in the vote, which comes exactly one year after 1,650 workers in 20 Louisiana Pacific facilities struck over a pay freeze and a two-tiered wage scale. The Western Council of the Lumber, Production and Industrial Workers Union led the walkout.

## IMPACT

"Despite the small number of workers involved, this strike will have an impact across the United States," said David Bigby, union chairman at the Oroville mill, 50 miles north of Sacramento. He said the vote will encourage lumber companies and other bosses to slash wages and bust unions.

The union leader blamed the decertification on ques-

tionable legal maneuvers by Louisiana Pacific and blatantly pro-management rulings by Reagan appointees to the NLRB.

## VOTE

"This decertification vote should never have been allowed to happen," Bigby said.

Louisiana Pacific forced the strike when it demanded less pay for new hires in order to "meet competition." But Bigby pointed out that the company's closest rivals in the west agreed to a 7-8% wage increase.

At the outset, strikers battled scabs in lumber plants across California and Oregon. But the walkout waned months later as workers drifted back to their jobs, and the company launched the decertification campaign among the scabs—who were hired as permanent replacements.

Strikers were outraged that the NLRB permitted scabs to vote for union decertification. "There's talk of violence," Bigby said.

"These guys are angry. But

they want to get on with their lives. People have lost their families, their houses. Some cannot face their brothers or uncles because they stayed out. You just can't minimize the amount of trauma that this has caused.

"Other companies will now seek the kind of concessions that Louisiana Pacific got," Bigby said. "It struck at the heart of what's important to blue collar America.

"We have no choice but to carry on, and fight tooth and nail wherever we can. If that happens, it will be Armageddon." □

## FIGHTING WORDS

*"To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament (the government)—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism. The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the elective principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into 'working' bodies . . . We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and must imagine democracy without parliamentarism, if our criticism of bourgeois society is not mere words for us . . ."*

Lenin, *The State and Revolution*

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Nurses walk the picket line.

# TWIN CITIES NURSES STRIKE

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN**—In the largest nurses strike in U.S. history, 16,300 members of the Minnesota Nurses Association are staying on the picket lines for job security, defense of seniority and changes in the layoff procedure.

On June 1, 16,000 registered nurses walked off the job in 15 area hospitals. 300 more from another hospital struck three days later.

The nurses are literally fighting for their jobs. As recently as two years ago, hospitals in the area were actively recruiting RNs, but the more recent trend has been cutbacks and layoffs. This is largely because the federal government and private in-

surance companies have been cutting costs by limiting hospital admissions and shortening stays.

The hospitals have responded to the cutbacks by laying off nurses and hiring a rapidly growing number of part-timers. Immediately preceding the strike, only about 30% of the area RNs were working full time.

## LAYOFFS

In the face of increasing layoffs, one of the main demands of the strike is the removal of a provision in their contracts since 1972 which gives management wide latitude in deciding whom to lay off.

Hospital administrators

claim they need full discretion in order to maintain the "proper mix" in staffing. The nurses are demanding layoffs by seniority, with a guarantee that laid off RNs will get the first chance at openings. They are also asking for increased training time when they are transferred to new positions.

The hospitals are crying poverty, but the strikers don't buy it. "How are we pushing up the cost of health care, when hospital expenses are going up much faster than wages?" asked one health union official.

Some negotiations have taken place, but the two sides remain far apart on all the central issues. As the strike con-

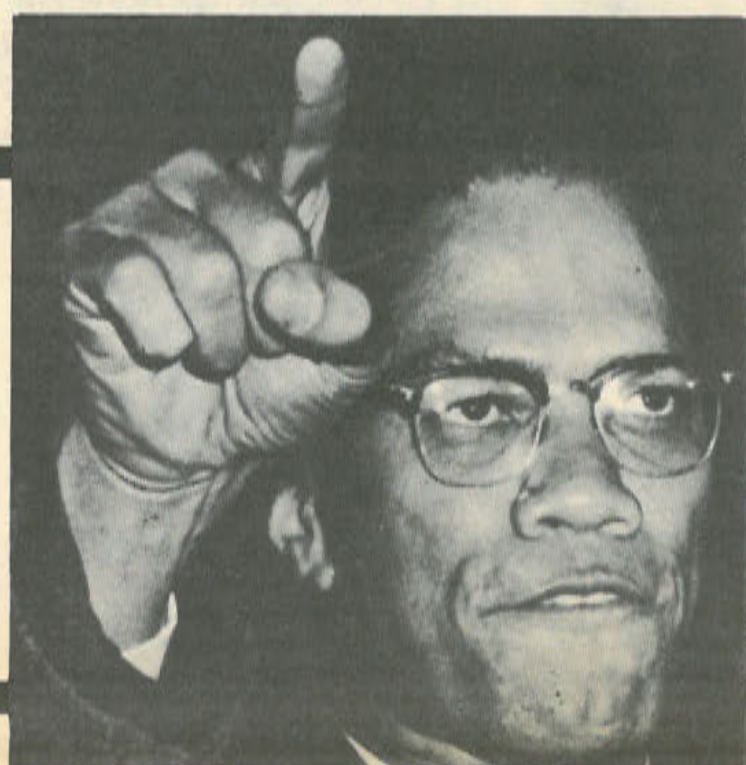
tinues, the need for the nurses to gain the support of other workers will become increasingly important. As in all such strikes, the media plays up the image of "Florence Nightingale turned selfish and greedy."

## IMAGE

The RNs reject that image absolutely. Mary Foreman, an RN for 12 years and a licensed practical nurse for five years before that said, "I don't feel what we're doing is unprofessional. For years there's been this image of nurses as angels of mercy, but I don't think the public realizes that we have to eat too. We can't live on air." □

## BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY: BLACK POLITICS IN AMERICA

# Court ruling an assault on affirmative action



Once again turning back the clock on the hard-won rights of Blacks and women, the Supreme Court on June 12 placed its stamp of approval on the time-honored practice of "last hired, first fired."

The anti-labor Court hypocritically used the pretext of defending union seniority as its rationale for placing another nail in the coffin of affirmative action.

Now, to justify any modification of seniority, each individual involved must prove actual discrimination against him or herself and also prove that the discrimination was intentional. The fact that Blacks and women are hardest hit by layoffs will no longer be considered.

## JUBILANT

According to a jubilant William French Smith, Reagan's attorney general, the ruling means that "federal courts cannot impose quotas based on racial considerations . . . We think this is a correct decision. We have maintained all along that quotas are a device for discrimination."

The case involved court enforcement of a job-discrimination consent decree won by Black firefighters in Memphis. Before the 1977 decree, only 4% of the firefighters were Black, in a city where Blacks constitute 37% of the work force. The consent decree required the Memphis fire department to up its quota for Black firefighters to 11.5%.

Then in 1981, the city's planned layoffs would have meant that the gains won

by **CHRISTINA BAKER**

would be wiped away. So a federal court ruled that the city had to modify its cutbacks so that the current percentage of Blacks would be maintained. As a result, three white firefighters were laid off for one month.

Now, three years later, the Supreme Court has decided that the temporary layoff of three white workers, rather than three Blacks, was in violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act! And they decided the case even though it was moot, since the white firefighters are back at work.

The decision opened up a frontal attack on past affirmative action decisions. Within 24 hours of the ruling, the Justice Department's civil rights division announced its plans to review all the job-discrimination decrees involving the federal government. At least 50 court orders are expected to be overturned.

## REVIEW

Also within 24 hours, the president of Newark, New Jersey's firefighters union asked a federal district court judge to review his May ruling which gave an affirmative action plan precedence over seniority in determining the order of layoffs of Newark's firefighters.

On June 21, the judge reluctantly reversed his short-lived order as inconsistent with the Supreme Court ruling. He commented that "cities or states bent upon dis-

criminatory practices" will now be free to "continue to do so under the guise of economic reduction," and that "women and minorities will be the first to go."

Women and Blacks are indeed the first to go. Of 1100 police officers recently laid off in Detroit, 800 were Black. The effect of the "last hired, first fired" policy, particularly in cities facing financial crisis, is nothing short of disastrous.

## GAINS

Affirmative action gains were won by the women's and Black liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s as a way of opening up doors formerly closed to Blacks and women. But as those movements subsided, and as the economic crisis deepened, many of those gains have been eaten away. And even where affirmative action programs remain in effect, layoffs on a strict seniority basis will make those programs meaningless.

Leaders of Black organizations, civil rights and women's groups slammed the Court ruling as an erosion of these hard-won gains. Althea Simmons, director of the Washington, D.C. NAACP said that "The Supreme Court has just added grist to the mill of the Reagan administration's attempts to curtail civil rights."

Judy Goldsmith, president of the National Organization for Women, said the ruling "certainly represents a weakening and an erosion of affirmative action as a remedy against race and sex discrimination."

Some labor bureaucrats

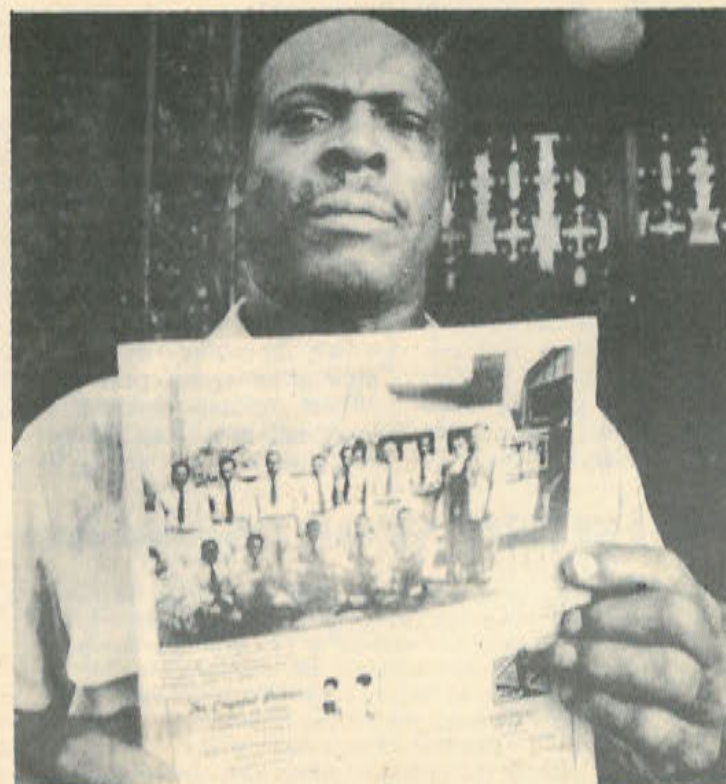
welcomed the decision. Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, a member of the AFL-CIO executive council and a long-time opponent of affirmative action, dodged the real point by saying, "We believe seniority rules are good in the long run for minorities because they're objective." He was joined in this sentiment by the Wall Street Journal which hailed "this outburst of good sense on the court."

Seniority is one of the most powerful defensive weapons the working class has. Strong seniority systems protect workers against company decisions based on favoritism,

convenience or whim. But in a society and work force in which the doors of opportunity have been locked to Blacks and women, the winning of affirmative action programs in the 1970s was a big step forward.

## SENIORITY

Seniority must be protected, but not in a manner which preserves the "last hired, first fired" tradition. Affirmative action should be used to supplement systems of seniority to insure that workers are not only protected against company decisions based on favoritism or whim, but also decisions based on racism or sexism. □



Carl Stoltz with picture of fellow Black firefighter.

# "If we go back now, our jobs are as good as gone"

**DANLY WORKERS FACE AN UPHILL BATTLE AGAINST A DETERMINED EMPLOYER. BUT NEARLY TWO MONTHS ON STRIKE, THEY ARE STANDING FIRM. LEE SUSTAR REPORTS.**

**CICERO, IL**—"Hey!" Don May waved to the pair of security guards. "It's show time again!"

## CUE

As if on cue, the guards raised their 35 mm and video cameras and began to photograph strikers outside Danly Machine Corp. "They've been doing this since we walked out (May 1)," May said. "You should have seen them when we had our mass pickets (in June). They had their hands full—there must have been over 400 people here."

May is one of about 400 workers who struck Danly over the metalworking company's demands for a wage freeze, lower pay for new hires and work rules abolishing seniority rights and mandatory overtime. Another 500 workers were on layoff when members of the United Steelworkers of America Local 15271 voted 617 to 19 to reject Danly's proposal.

"Things have quieted down since they got the injunction," May said of the court order limiting pickets to groups of eight workers standing 100 feet apart.

"But now they pick us off one by one. One guard calls the cops, and when they get here she points us out, 'Him, him, and him.' You don't find out what you're charged with until you get to the station."

"I got a termination notice for 'harassing a Danly employee,'" May laughed. "They say I spat on a scab truck. Several other guys were fired for similar reasons. They want to wear us down. They want to break this union."

Bill Budenz, an electrical assembler at the plant, agrees. "The issue in this strike really isn't wages (about \$12 per hour on average). Our jobs are at stake."

"Under their contract proposal, foremen could transfer you from one job to another, whether or not you know anything about it. If you refuse, it's a 'voluntary quit.' Meaning: 'you're fired.'"

## SKILLED

"This is all very skilled work; it takes a year to learn some of these jobs," Budenz said. "They want to be able to fire us at will. And with new hires making \$1.50 to \$3.00 an hour less than us, you can bet they would."

Budenz and May said only a handful of union workers have crossed picket lines, and dismissed 200 or so scabs in the plant as "worthless" when it comes to producing heavy machinery such as auto presses.

"It's a waiting game," Budenz said. "Danly knows that a lot of guys on layoff for the past few months are about to lose their union eligibility, and they've been sending

foremen around to their houses to invite them back to work. They've called people on the phone to tell them they'd 'protect' them if they crossed picket lines. And everyone's gotten letters telling them how to resign from the union."

Strikers say Cicero police and the *Cicero Life* newspaper have lined up with management against them. "The cops got \$16,000 in overtime guard duty before the injunction," May said. "Now they hire moonlighting Chicago cops as muscleheads."

"The newspaper reporters never talk to us, and in their editorials they say we should be grateful to have any job at all and to go back to work. It's had some effect: some people riding by in cars give us the finger and yell insults at us."

Cicero has been declared an "enterprise zone," a federal program that promises tax breaks for business and low wages for workers in this depressed industrial suburb of Chicago. "They want to push us back a hundred years in this town," one worker said.

## LETTER

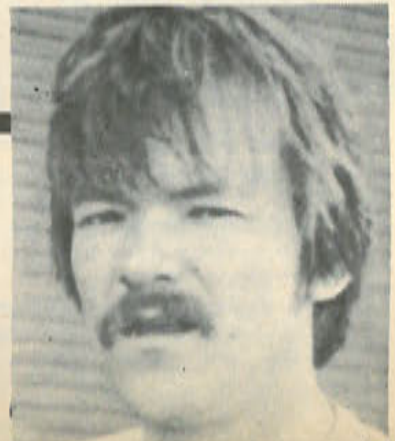
But Danly workers aren't buying their bosses' arguments. They ignored a letter from company executive vice president Eugene Finkin that threatened to turn away a \$15 million auto press order from Chrysler Corp. unless workers returned to their jobs by June 20. Neither are workers bothered by Danly's hints that it may close the 60-year-old plant rather than settle the strike.

"It's really simple," Budenz said. "If we accept their contract offer, we'd just be training our replacements, new guys working for less money."

"Sure, they could close the place. But if we go back now our jobs are as good as gone anyway." □



## UNION BUSTING DANLY STYLE



Don May.

**CICERO, IL**—The 1982 recession ripped through the metalworking industry, leaving Danly Machine Corp. millions of dollars in the red and over half its 1,000 workers in the street.

To protect Danly's profit rate, Larry McDonald, Eugene Finkin and Gary Lorenz rushed to Cicero.

## AIM

Their aim? Destroy Local 15271 of the United Steelworkers of America.

The union-busting trio came to Danly from the Ogden Corp., the huge multinational which bought the Cicero plant last year. Danly executive vice president Finkin led the assault on working conditions which culminated in a 97% strike vote on April 30.

"They boarded up the

windows while we were voting on the contract in an auditorium just across the street from the plant," said Bill Budenz, an electrical assembler at the plant.

"They've planned this strike for the past year." Danly workers will remember 1983 as a year of speed-ups, harassment and pressure for mandatory overtime while hundreds of laid-off workmates watched their unemployment benefits expire.

Finkin's campaign was celebrated in *Iron Age* magazine, and the metalworking industry trade journal outlined events at Danly as a "how to" guide for boosting productivity (read: bleed your workforce dry.)

## DINNERS

First, Finkin scheduled weekly seminar dinners to school plant supervisors on questions such as "what is your job and how to do it;" how to "properly discipline an employee;" "management rights(!)" and the "actual details of our labor union agreement."

The supervisors' seminars prepared them to launch Finkin's "action oriented labor reporting and productivity control system"—corporate code words for making workers raise their hands before using the bathroom, demanding that they work out of union job classification. Shop stewards filed over 200 grievances in the six months before the strike, and Danly sent virtually all of them to arbitration.

"Arbitration is very expensive. They're trying to

break us financially," machinist Don May said. Local 15271 represents only Danly workers, and its resources are limited by its small size.

"Then they started whining, 'competition, competition, competition,'" said grinder Cliff Mounts, shaking his head in disgust. First they said we had to change work rules to compete with Verson Allsteel (a Chicago metalworks plant).

## CONTRACT

"But then (local union president) Joe Romano got a copy of the Verson contract and waved it in their faces. They make more than we do! The next thing you know, they've got a huge banner hanging over the street that says, 'We want more jobs in Cicero, not Tokyo!' All of a sudden it was 'foreign' competition, not Verson."

"What a load of bull." As the contract neared its April 30 deadline, management distributed buttons that read "No more dinosaurs." The slogan supposedly referred to Danly's aging equipment, but veteran workers saw it as a company threat to toss them in the street if they did not accept management's contract proposal.

"We had to reject that contract," crane operator Giovanni Prestia said. "They wanted to take away seniority rights, hire new workers for less money, and have mandatory overtime. That's almost slavery."

"All Danly cares about is having fewer people doing more work for less pay," Prestia said. "Even it if kills you." □



# "Rise like lions: we are many, they are few"

"Ye are many, they are few," wrote the poet Shelley in 1819, when urging workers to "rise like lions" against their oppressors.

What was true in Shelley's time is true today. The rulers—bankers, industrialists, major stockholders and key government officials—make up a tiny fraction of the population.

So how does this small minority of exploiters maintain its power over the vast majority?

Control of the repressive apparatus—the police and army—is one way they remain in charge. Control of education and the media also plays an important role in maintaining their legitimacy in people's heads.

Their control is effective because of the divisions within the working class—divisions of craft, nationality, race, sex and so on.

## PERSISTENT

In the U.S., racial division is the deepest and most persistent of divisions of the class. For generations, Black and white workers have been pitted against each other.

An elaborate ideology about Black inferiority supports the real discrimination and perpetuates the division.

There is a long history of employers attempting to use Blacks as strikebreakers, like the stockyard strikes of Chicago at the turn of the century and some of the big labor battles of the 1930s.

The division between men and women also has deep roots. The stereotype of the woman as housekeeper, child-raiser and husband-supporter helps draw a division between the working husband and his home-working wife.

This division is most clear in a strike situation. Where the wife has been excluded from the job situation, she may well see the strike as a threat and be more easily influenced by anti-strike arguments of the ruling class dominated media.

There are hundreds of ways these divisions are used. But what are their roots? And what can be done to overcome them?

Today, capitalism is the root of the divisions. Capitalism is driven by competition between all its units, whether small shops, multi-national corporations, or even nations.

As Marx pointed out, this competition "separates individuals one from another, not only the bourgeois but still more the workers, in spite of the fact that it brings them together."

## LABOR POWER

Under capitalism, labor power becomes a commodity which every worker must sell to live—making every other worker a potential competitor. As long as this is a perception, the prejudices about rival—Blacks, women, Japanese—workers, who are said to "take jobs," continues to divide workers.

The recent Supreme Court

by BILL ROBERTS

ruling upholding seniority as the only criteria for layoffs continues to build on the divisions. In a period when jobs were more plentiful and there was a fight, mainly by Blacks and women, for more opportunities to enter the work force, "special" considerations were made to help overcome the generations of discrimination keeping them behind whites and males at all levels.

During the recent slump of capitalism, most of the gains won in the previous period, and even many of those won decades ago, became targets for the bosses to overturn.

"Affirmative action" for minorities has now been dealt a serious blow by the Court. Unfortunately, the unions have supported a strict seniority right—first hired, last fired—as the only way to deal with layoffs.

Instead of fighting for no layoffs, union leaders have helped the bosses determine the method for reducing the work force. Blacks and women are more often than not the first victims of slump, and this division makes every worker's job that much less secure.

Socialists must oppose all divisions in the working class, pointing out how these divisions weaken the struggle—even for reforms. Socialists need to take up the interests of oppressed groups, like affirmative action, and argue the case for unity based on equality, to be paid for by the capitalists, not the workers.

But socialist propaganda by itself cannot defeat the propaganda of the system. It must be connected to workers' actual experience in struggle to change people's perceptions.

One of the best ways to illustrate the value of unity is in a strike situation involving Black and white workers. It is not an overstatement to say that most white workers are racist in some sense—not like the Ku Klux Klan or Nazis—but resistant to Blacks in many ways.

## BOND

Once a strike begins, it is clear that to win, a bond must be built between every worker if they are to have any chance of winning their struggle. A picket line is only as strong as its weakest link, and if prejudices are not overcome, the line is doomed when the army of scabs comes forward.

This unity in struggle is the kind of concrete example socialists must build on as they propagandize for class solidarity.

Of course, divisions are not always overcome, and often workers are defeated because of them. Until the majority of the working class understands the need to defeat the divide-and-rule tool of capitalism, the old ways will perpetuate. But the moment the class unifies as a whole is the moment of its victory, because "We are many, and they are few." □

# MON VALLEY NETWORK LACKS DIRECTION

by TY MILLER

People used to refer to the expanse of mills and factories between Pittsburgh and Cleveland as the "industrial heartland." But in the late 1970s, this industrial heart began to fail.

Workers, especially in steel, found the jobs they had held for 20 years suddenly taken from them. In 1980, 20,000 workers still held jobs in U.S. Steel's six Mon Valley plants. Now the numbers have dwindled to less than half.

First savings ran out, then benefits. Workers lost their houses, their cars, and all too often their self-respect.

But at the same time a core of union, community and church activists began to organize to fight back. Several groups sprang up, including the Lutheran-based Denominational Ministry Strategy (DMS), and its outgrowth, the Network to Save Mon Valley.

The latter group, one of the most consistently radical and activist, is mainly a church-union coalition including about 30 churches and 15 union locals.

## ACTIVISM

The group stressed the need for activism in the fight to save Pittsburgh jobs. Ron Weisen, a Network leader and president of USW Local 1397, ran for the USW presidency on a renegade ticket.

He was eliminated before the final ballot, but his calls for rank and file democracy, hard line confrontation with the corporation, and solidarity with other sections of workers struck a new chord in a union

that has not been on strike since 1959-60.

The Network held large demonstrations and won real victories, but then it began to flounder. Part of the problem is the group's character. It was a creation of the DMS, a program of the Lutheran church designed to bring back into the church-fold working class members disaffected by unemployment.

To do this they had to speak a language the workers wanted to hear: of fightback, of the evils of the profit system, of workers against the big money of the corporations.

The higher circles of the church soon realized their mistake and cut off DMS's funds. The radicalized DMS clergy—now deeply involved in the Network—used the group in their fight against the church bureaucracy. Churches were picketed, services disrupted and letters sent to congregations denouncing their pastors as "allies of the banks."

## TACTICS

Along with these tactics, the group has engaged in "petty terrorism," such as putting fish in the night deposit boxes of Mellon Bank. This act was meant to illustrate the bank's "smelly foreign lending operations" and unwillingness to invest in Mon Valley.

Unfortunately, such tactics have done little more than give the group bad publicity, alienating both potential supporters and some group members. Leaders like professional

organizer Chuck Honeywell have turned a deaf ear to all criticisms of these tactics.

"Christ was hated by the majority," he responds, indicating a serious problem in the group's direction. Fifty or sixty people cannot substitute themselves for a movement, no matter how devoted and militant they may be. Needless divisions and faltering support are a death sentence to a movement.

And the struggle of the unemployed is not just a moral battle against the evils of money. It is a fight for social power. Moral battles—exposing corporate executives by disrupting their church services or picketing their houses—does little to win real power.

However irritating to individual capitalists these antics may be, they leave the real power unchallenged.

## DIRECTION

A new direction is needed—one based on the need to organize workers' power. The real power of the working class lies not in the church or the community, but in the workplace—where the chains of capitalism are forged.

This new direction would call for new tactics. Numerous strikes have been fought recently in Pittsburgh. The Network could help provide the added forces and militancy to win these strikes.

And with greater numbers and the combined strength of employed and unemployed, the Network would have the power not just to make demands, but to win them. □



## Salaries and Benefits . . .

While union workers were taking it on the chin last year, union officials were taking it to the bank.

Heading the list is Reagan's favorite union bureaucrat—the Teamsters' Jackie Presser. Presser, who appointed himself to five Teamster jobs, made \$512,331 in 1983.

William Wynn, president of United Food and Commercial Workers, raked in \$215,819. Wynn's pay was only fair, said the UCFW's spokesperson.

"We are a growing union, not a dying union. We have to pay top dollar for top executive officers," said UCFW's Allen Zack.

Maybe Zack forgot that the UCFW lost tens of thousands of jobs in the meat-packing industry in 1982-1983.

Even self-described socialist William Winpinger, the Machinists' president, cashed in. Last year, he made a hefty \$97,737.

Overall, rank and file pay

increased 11.3% between 1981 and 1983, according to Business Week. At the same time, union officials' pay increased 22%. □



Jackie Presser, Teamsters' President.

## Tell It Like It Is . . .

When Lee Iacocca assumed Chrysler Corp.'s presidency five years ago, he tightened his belt with a \$1 a year salary. By the next year, he dropped his \$1 pledge and started to rake in millions in salary and stock. To those who criticized Iacocca's raise, he replied: "Drop dead! I'm not a socialist, you know." □

## Madison Avenue Man . . .

The advertising firm that created the flashy Pepsi Cola commercials has a new project, packaging and selling Ronald Reagan.

The Reagan commercials show happy, white, middle-class people going to work, reverently raising the flag, getting married, waxing their cars. These are the scenes Madison Avenue wants Middle America to associate with Reagan, the former pitchman for General Electric and Chesterfield Cigarettes.

"That is what we have done in the past with Pepsi, to elicit a sense of feeling," said Phil Dusenberry, an executive for the firm, Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn.

Another ad man described the commercials thus: "That's like a perfume ad." □

## ROGUE'S GALLERY



Lee Iacocca: "I'm no socialist."



# THATCHER ATTACKS MINERS

Last month saw the worst strike violence of Britain's post-war history. More than 5,000 miners clashed with 2,000 police at the Orgreave coking plant for 10 hours on July 18. The miners were attempting to stop the shipment of coal to the nearby Scunthorpe steel mill.

## CONFRONTATION

The confrontation was provoked by the police, who charged the miners' pickets with riot sticks and several "cavalry" charges. But the miners fought back.

British miners have been on strike since April, in the biggest challenge to the Thatcher government—Britain's counterpart to Reagan—since she took office in 1979.

The stakes in this strike are very high—and the Thatcher government is digging in, saying they will not back away from their plans to close down 20 coal mines and lay off 20,000 miners. In 1974, the victory of the miners rank and file forced the Conservative government of Edward Heath from office. Margaret Thatcher does not want to meet the



same fate.

The government has talked about using various industrial relations laws to try to force the miners back—like Taft-Hartley in this country—but they are afraid that this might lead to support of the strike by other sections of workers.

Negotiations between the National Union of Miners and the government broke down last month as the government tried to lull the mineworkers leaders into accepting closures. Since then, the government has sent letters to individual miners trying to encourage a back-to-work movement.

The danger is that the strike has been at a logjam for some weeks—and this might lead to a sellout of the miners. While Thatcher has followed a determined strategy, the miners have not.

## KEY

The key to winning the strike is stopping the shipment of coal to steel mills—to make the strike hit the bosses in their pocketbooks.

And the miners will have to organize themselves, as the regional strike leaders have proved incapable of organizing the pickets necessary to win this strike. □

The battle at the Orgreave coking plant in Britain on July 18. Photos by John Sturrock (Network).



## U.S. MINERS: BATTLES AHEAD

While their British counterparts remain on strike, American miners are gearing up. Their current contract expires on September 30, and negotiations between the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) are well underway.

Working conditions for miners have steadily deteriorated since the wild-cat strikes of the 1970s. Today only 40% of miners are covered by union contracts, and health and safety conditions—which led to the

rank and file revolt of 1973—are worse than ever.

## ALARM

Only last month, the federal government, expressing alarm over the recent rash of coal mining deaths, ordered that the regular operations of several mine safety agency district field offices be suspended and that inspectors "conduct special safety meetings at as many individual underground coal mines as possible."

So far this year 48 miners have died in coal

mining accidents, as compared with 70 deaths in all of 1983.

In light of this situation, it would seem inevitable that the UMWA would wage a determined and militant strike to win back the right of miners to safe working conditions.

There has been no settlement of a miners contract without a strike since 1964.

Rank and file miners should learn the lessons of the British miners' strike—which illustrates the importance of organizing on the strength of the rank and file. □



# THE DEMOCRATS ARE A BOSS



The economic crisis is caused by the system we live in—not by who's in the White House.

Mondale and other Democrats position themselves as "peace" candidates against Reagan's militarism. But their peace talk is more rhetoric than reality.

- Every major war in this century began with a Democrat in the White House: World War I (Wilson), World War II (Roosevelt), Korea (Truman), Vietnam (Kennedy-Johnson).
- Since Democrat Truman ordered the 1945 atomic bombing of Japan, Democratic presidents have threatened to use nuclear weapons six times. Republican presidents have threatened it five times, according to anti-nuclear activist Daniel Ellsberg.
- After defeating Goldwater as a peace candidate in 1964, Democrat Johnson escalated the Vietnam war. Within two years, troop levels jumped from 16,300 to 184,000 (to a high of 535,000 in 1968) and U.S. war dead increased 30 times. The U.S. dropped a greater tonnage of bombs on Vietnam—most of them in the Johnson years—than in all other U.S. wars combined.
- Declining after the Vietnam war, U.S. military spending began its upward climb in 1977, when Jimmy Carter was president. Spending on nuclear missiles increased from \$45.8 billion in 1976 to \$69 billion in 1979. Carter's budgets, even accounting for inflation, set the stage for Reagan's military buildup. □



The U.S. dropped more tonnage of bombs on Vietnam—most of it under Johnson—than in all other U.S. wars combined.

**THE DEMOCRATS SAY THEY ARE THE PARTY OF PEACE, LABOR, BLA... A LIE. WE NEED TO CHANGE THE... CAROL SIDDLE AND DAVE SIDDLE**

Ronald Reagan is a vicious enemy of working people. His Republican administration has clobbered workers on all fronts. From PATCO to abortion rights, and from civil rights to the build-up of the war machine, Reagan has opposed workers' interests. He is, of course, the darling of many bosses who run our lives because of the skillful way he has fulfilled their needs.

The Democrats are trying to convince us that they would represent workers' interests if allowed to rule us. At the same time they promise to make America safe for profit making.

Naturally, after four years of Reagan, many want to be rid of him. Mondale does not offer an exciting vision of a new America, but many are supporting him as the "lesser of two evils." But this is an old argument proven wrong by experience. It is also basically a way of supporting the status quo: Johnson v. Goldwater, Humphrey v. Nixon, Carter v. Reagan—we've heard it again and again.

It is argued that Fritz and the sweet-talking Democrats wouldn't use the state against labor and the law against women's or Blacks civil rights. Surely Fritz wouldn't have U.S. boys die in Central America. Maybe he would talk friendly to the Russians.

But a look at the actions of previous Democratic administrations reveals the bitter truth that Democrats and Republicans are on the same team.

## Labor

Reagan may have been the actor that butchered PATCO, but the script was written by Carter and Mondale. They drew up all of Reagan's battle plans while in office.

Carter was quite prepared to use the law against militant labor. During the miners' strike, he and Walter Mondale resurrected the Taft-Hartley act to cripple the strike.

And Reagan's economic programs are hardly original either. Lest we forget, it was Carter who began the policy of cuts in social programs in 1977. Highlights of his years in office were in 1978, which included the elimination of 20,000 federal jobs, restrictions in OSHA, reductions in social services, and public service wage restrictions.

In the past two years, Democratic mayors all over the country have cut back city jobs after beating Republicans for office on the unemployment question. Harold



Carter used Taft-Hartley against the miners.

Washington of Chicago is a prime example of this, cutting 900 jobs in his first week in office.

Democrats in office at any level have been thoroughly anti-labor unless pressured by strong workers' opposition or at election time.

In 1982, Massachusetts Governor Edward King threatened to fire striking transit workers and fine their union \$1 million per day.

Even radical Democrats can be anti-labor when the political situation allows them to be. For example, Jesse Jackson opposed two Chicago strikes—the 1980 firefighters' strike, and last year's teachers' strike. His Operation PUSH led a law suit to force teachers back to work.

Labor leaders have often given Roosevelt credit for the great organizing drives of the 1930's. This is a fallacy. Roosevelt was quite prepared to endorse violence against militant workers. For example, in the Flint strike of May-June, 1937, National Guardsmen were called in to break the sitdown strike.

It was the workers' own organizing efforts and victories such as those at San Francisco, Minneapolis and Toledo which scared the hell out of the old union leaders and the Democrats.

Violence was generally not effective in stopping the workers, but government concessions did contain the scope of the struggles. Limited social programs and double-edged union legislation were enacted.

The lesson is clear. Both Democrats and Republicans are in the business of managing the state for the bosses. If workers are winning strikes or the economy is improving, both parties offer concessions. But when profit rates are sagging, both try to make workers pay through the nose.

## Civil Rights

The Democrats would have us believe they are the party of civil rights. Historically, they are *nothing of the kind*.

They were the party which supported slavery and opposed Reconstruction. In the South, they championed Jim Crow laws. They sponsored the continuing poverty and segregation of Blacks. In the 1930's, Roosevelt's public aid programs paid Blacks less than whites. Even in that decade the Democrats refused to pass anti-lynch laws.

The Democratic attitude towards Blacks and civil rights changed in the 1960's. Blacks organized themselves into a tremendous movement against segregation, racism, and inequality. In 1963 alone there were over 800 boycotts and demonstrations in 115 separate cities.

Faced with this, the Democratic Kennedy/Johnson administration had a two-pronged strategy.

The Democrats are trying to create "interest groups"—unions, poor. But they are no friends.

- The Carter administration Mondale looking on, invaded the 1977-78 miner strike. The Democrats backed Reagan against the railroad workers.
- The plans the U.S. got the air traffic controllers' strike. The Carter administration.
- Under Reagan, a sign of the Democrats—the key to passage of the 1981 budget. The deepest cuts in social government social programs.
- Carter's 1978 "anti-inflation" about \$5 billion in cuts in social services. A similar boost in military spending.
- Jimmy Carter opposed abortions for poor women. He was accused of being unresponsive: "Life is unfair."



# BOSSSES' PARTY

THE ALTERNATIVE TO REAGAN-  
BACKS AND WOMEN. THIS IS  
SYSTEM, NOT THE PRESIDENT.  
EXPLAIN.



## War

If we elect the Democrats as the way to avoid war, we must have pulled several sheeps' worth of wool over our eyes. During World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam war, a Democrat was in the White House.

Nuclear weapons were used for the only time in war by a Democratic president. The last Democrat, President Carter, maintained he was a man for peace, yet he spearheaded the development of the Rapid Development Force for foreign adventures. He sponsored development of the neutron bomb which destroys people and leaves intact property and machines. It was Carter who brought back selective service registration—the mechanism to draft young Americans and send them to their death.

## A Jackson Alternative?

The Democratic Party has been no friend to Blacks and to poorer workers, but Jesse Jackson claims this can be changed. He has signed up millions of Blacks and poor people on the promise that they can win the Democratic

Party to fight for them.

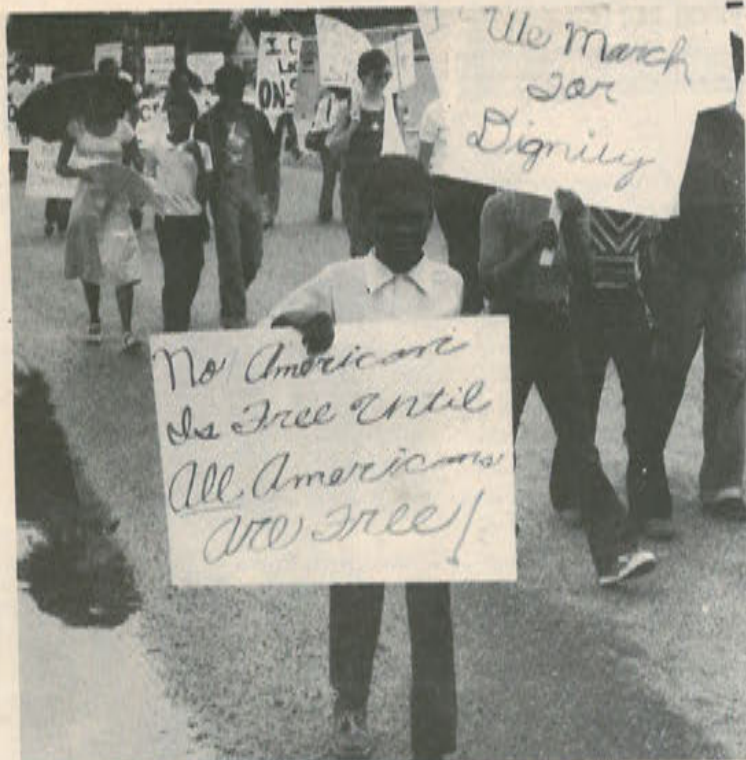
But the Democratic Party has been the political graveyard of millions of militant workers and Black freedom fighters when they have placed their aspirations in its care.

What chance, then, have Jackson's voters to use the Democratic machinery to fight for them? It's much more likely that the Democrats will try to use their votes to oust the other bosses' party.

What can we expect in return? Maybe a cabinet post for Jackson and a few more Black officials at best, and possibly the "lesser of two evils" once more.

## No Short Cut

There's going to be no short cut to a better society. People have to organize themselves primarily at work to win political power. This won't happen without people who see through the Democrat and Republican illusions getting together. We must begin to build a new party. One that learns and spreads the lessons of working people's struggles. One that shows a path to a better world—through workers' power and genuine socialism.



"A vote for a Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat," said Malcolm X in 1964.

Malcolm X, from the speech "The Ballot or the Bullet," 1964.

"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? . . . 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 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 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 since the Civil War. You just can't belong to that party without analyzing it . . .

"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."

The first was familiar—violence against Blacks. For example, Attorney General Robert Kennedy refused to call out troops to protect Black marches from racist mobs. The FBI was used to trail Martin Luther King and to infiltrate the Klan, taking part in racist murders.

The second approach was to coopt the Black leaders and draw the teeth of the militant Black movement. Legal reforms were granted in exchange for the Black leaders' electoral support.

These reforms, such as the end to legal segregation were triumphs for the people who fought and died for them. However, the Democratic Party stifled and disarmed further mass movement. This is why they are viable to the capitalist system. They offer a way to contain radical movements and give concessions that the profit system can absorb or use to its advantage.

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## THE ARGUMENT FOR SOCIALISM

Many people are fed up with Ronald Reagan. They see him, quite rightly, as an enemy of working people. Reagan is an unabashed friend of the rich and powerful.

Reagan's 1980 election slogan "are you better off now than you were four years ago?" leaves only a bitter taste. And he threatens to be re-elected this November for another four years of his program of give-aways to the rich and austerity for the rest of us.

It is therefore no surprise that the Democrats are trying to present themselves as an alternative to Reaganism. They want to channel this sentiment behind their candidate—most likely Walter Mondale.

But they don't provide a real alternative. They, like Ronald Reagan, are out to maintain and defend the system that is at the heart of our problems—capitalism. Only they propose to do it slightly differently. In power, they will be faced with the same imperatives that face any ruling party—how to maintain a system that is inimical to the interests of the vast majority.

### PROFIT MOTIVE

The central principle of cap-

italism is that what we produce should be decided by the law of the market and the profit motive. Now this benefits some—a small minority—but the last 150 years of capitalism has been a history of booms and busts—enormous riches for one class and poverty and unemployment for the other.

Nothing shows more clearly the absurdity of this system than a look at one of the most basic things human beings need to survive—food. One person in nine in the world today suffers chronic hunger. Tens of millions starve to death.

At the same time, Reagan is paying farmers not to produce food on millions of acres of land every year because profits aren't high enough.

In the same way thousands are laid off in essential industries—steel, auto, construction—not because there is no need, but because the bosses cannot make enough profit.

And as the system stumbles from crisis to crisis, the world draws closer and closer to war as more and more terrifying weapons are produced to defend the wealth and privilege of the few.

The socialist argument is

that this will continue until the means of production are used to meet human needs, not to produce profits.

### SOCIALISM

Socialism is the only way to end this madness. In 1984, this may seem far off for the U.S., with the drift to the right over the last 10 years and the current low level of struggle.

But workers can, do and will resist. And they will become most open to socialist ideas when they themselves are struggling. The low level of struggle will not last indefinitely. The very nature of capitalist society continually undermines the system.

In periods of crisis, workers are forced to change their ideas about the whole way society is run. And it is important to remember that even in times like these that there are always people struggling around a myriad of issues who are open to socialist ideas.

The most important task facing those activists who want to see Reaganism defeated is not to place hope in the Democratic Party, but in workers' self-activity. Moreover, we need to start now to build a socialist alternative.

Too many times in the past, activists have accepted the "lesser of two evils" argument and put off the building of an alternative. The Democratic Party became the graveyard of all the social movements of the last decade.

### CHOICE

The choice between the Democrats and the Republicans is not a choice at all. The real choice today is between electoralism and building a working class, a socialist alternative. This alternative requires rejecting decisively all Democratic politicians and instead basing ourselves on independent working class struggle.

There is little that socialists can do to determine the outcome of the elections in November, but much can be done to put forward the basic arguments in favor of an independent working class alternative.

The system needs changing—not mere cosmetic tinkering. Think of a poker game with someone who has the four aces up his sleeve. Do you just shuffle the deck more carefully—or do you stop playing the game?

## WHAT WE THINK

# THE CIVIL WAR IN FRANCE

The Paris Commune was living proof that socialism—the control of society by workers themselves—was possible. It had a huge impact on Karl Marx, who defended the Commune even though he understood it had little chance to succeed. His book, "The Civil War in France," was written shortly after the fall of the Commune. Eleanor Trawick examines this work.

The idea that working people should be the ones to run society—and not the bosses and stockbrokers who live off their labor—makes sense to a lot of people. But when, one might ask, have workers actually taken control?

There have been a number of instances in the twentieth century where just this did happen. The best-known was the Russian revolution of 1917.

An even earlier revolution than this, however, was the 1871 Paris Commune, which was established when the working class of Paris, France, angered by the brutality and corruption of their government "leaders," took matters into their own hands and set up a democratic, egalitarian system—socialism.

## PROOF

The Paris Commune was living proof of the ideas of Karl Marx, and it substantiated his earlier writings. In a later piece, *The Civil War in France*, Marx discusses the Commune and draws certain lessons from it.

The immediate cause of the Paris Commune was the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. Both France, under Emperor Napoleon III, and Prussia, under Otto von Bismarck, were bent on expanding their wealth and territory at the expense of the surrounding nations. Bismarck maneuvered France into war with Prussia so that South Germany would

allow itself to be absorbed by Prussia—both out of fear of France and out of German nationalism and a wish for a united German state.

The Franco-Prussian War has been called the dress rehearsal for World War I. And just as World War I led to the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, so did the Franco-Prussian War lead to the Paris Commune.

In order to fight against Prussia, France had to arm its workers. The wealthy are usually clever enough not to fight their own wars, because all the money in the world is no use to a corpse. The same people who create the capitalists' wealth are the ones who are sent out to die defending it—the workers.

But workers had revolted in 1848—a rebellion put down only by extreme brutality on the part of the ruling class—and, as Marx remarks, "Paris armed was the Revolution armed."

When the great superiority of the Prussian army—and the great stupidity of the French government—became obvious, an angry bourgeoisie deposed Napoleon III and set up a provisional government led by Louis Adolphe Thiers.

Thiers surrendered to Bismarck in January of 1871, secretly heaving a sigh of relief that at least now the National Guard, the workers' army that had been defending Paris, would be disarmed and disbanded.

Unfortunately for Thiers, the workers had no wish to submit either to the authoritarianism of Bismarck or to the corrupt opportunism of the new French government. Instead, they declared the Paris Commune and proceeded to set up a workers' democracy in place of the old bureaucratic state.

## DESPOTISM

Marx writes, "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes," because under capitalism the state represents "the national power of capital over labor, of a public force organized for social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism."

Once one understands the state to be, not neutral in the ongoing war between the employers and employees, but a protector and supporter of the few rich capitalists, it is obvious that this state cannot be used by the working class once it has taken power.

One ruling clique does not merely take the place of a previous one after a socialist revolution. Rather, the entire system of ruling cliques is abolished.

The standing army and the police are, under capitalism, the muscle-men of the ruling class. Under the Commune, the army was replaced by a group of armed workers, with interests the same as the other workers. The police were responsible to all the other Parisians, and could be recalled at any time by them.

The elected representatives could likewise be recalled by their constituencies at any time. Thus, they truly represented the interests of the people at all times. Representatives' wages were no higher than those of other workers. And the same elected body was at once legislative and executive—office-holders had to carry out their promises, and make the government work not only in theory but in practice as well.

In many instances, decisions of policy were made by direct referendum rather than by the elected representatives. Quite a contrast with the old system! Marx writes: "Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to misrepresent the people in Parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people . . .



Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit of the Commune than to supersede universal suffrage by hierarchic investiture."

## NATIONALIZED

The Commune nationalized the vast property of the Catholic Church. Separation of church and state became the rule. And education was set apart from all religious organizations.

Most important, production in the Paris Commune was socialized. Profits were divided among all those who contributed to production, and no longer went to a tiny minority who supposedly "owned" the factories, but who did not lift a finger to help in the creation of the profit.

In Marx's words: "The Commune intended to abolish that class-property which makes the labor of the many the wealth of the few. It aimed at the expropriation of the expropriators. It wanted to make individual property a truth by transforming the means of production, land and capital, now chiefly the means of enslaving and exploiting labor, into mere instruments of free and associated labor."

Obviously, the state of affairs in France could not continue long. Paris was the only city to reject the capitulation to Prussia, and the only city to refuse to acknowledge the Versailles provisional govern-

ment under Thiers.

The Versailles army launched a bloody attack on Paris. Instead of defending the enemies of his enemies—namely the Commune, enemy of the Thiers regime—Bismarck and the Prussian army stood by, and even urged Thiers on in the attack. In the heat of class struggle, nationality becomes irrelevant and the ruling classes of even enemy nations become allies.

## BRAVE

Although the men and women of the Commune bravely defended Paris, they were slowly beaten back by the stronger forces of the Versailles government. The workers of Paris were brutally punished for having dared to defy their "superiors," the "rulers" of France. Over 17,000 Parisians were slaughtered indiscriminately by the invading troops—young children as well as adults—shot down unarmed.

Marx's closing paragraph from *The Civil War in France* is a fitting epitaph for the men and women of the Paris Commune. "Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society."

There will be other Paris Communes—and "American Communes" and "European Communes"—leading some day to international socialism. □



Communards at the barricades.

# DEMOCRATIC PARTY SHOWED ITS TRUE COLORS

When the Democrats meet at their national convention later this month, delegates will likely remember famous leaders like Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Baines Johnson and Hubert Humphrey.

One group of Democrats who won't be mentioned in San Francisco are Fannie Lou Hamer, James Forman, Bob Moses and the other delegates of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). Kate Green explains.

Twenty years ago, these civil rights activists and their supporters challenged the Dixiecrat control of Mississippi's Democratic Party. The MFDP exposed the activities of the "regular" party, which had prevented Blacks from registering to vote and endorsed racist violence against civil rights demonstrators.

In 1964, the Democrats don't want to be reminded of the MFDP activists who risked their lives to travel to Atlantic City only to discover that Dixiecrats controlled all of the Democratic Party—not just Mississippi—and that they were expected to stay on the back of the party bus.

The MFDP was born out of the civil rights struggles in the South. Fresh from the 1963 March on Washington, civil rights activists from several organizations including CORE and SNCC established a Mississippi Summer Project in 1964 that they hoped would force open what many called the "Closed Society" of Mississippi.

## DISENFRANCHISED

The idea for the MFDP came from the Freedom Election of November 1963 in which 80,000 disenfranchised Blacks voted for their own candidates rather than party regulars. Most Blacks had been barred from registering and voting in the regular election. In fact, only one out of 20 adult



Above: One of the many police attacks on civil rights demonstrators. Below left: the 1963 March on Washington. Below right: Fannie Lou Hamer.

Blacks could register in the state of Mississippi.

Leaders of the Freedom Summer Project expected a difficult and violent time in Mississippi. Many volunteers had been beaten and shot at. Bob Moses from the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) warned, "The guerrilla war in Mississippi is not much different from that in Vietnam."

His words proved especially true for James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner. These three civil rights workers were brutally murdered in Philadelphia, Mississippi in late June 1964. Their deaths brought national publicity and scores of FBI agents to Mississippi. The agents investigated the murders, but left civil rights activists unprotected in the face of continued beatings and threats.

The deaths of these civil rights workers radicalized many activists. President Johnson's promises to protect them proved to be a lot of hot air. Usually govern-

ment officials just shrugged their shoulders and claimed they could do nothing. This prompted one organizer to ask, "How come the government tries to protect the South Vietnamese from the Vietcong and tells us that it will not accept the moral responsibility of protecting the Black people in Mississippi?" By the middle of the summer, most SNCC workers in Mississippi armed themselves in self-defense against attack.

These events preceded the trip by 68 MFDP delegates to Atlantic City in August. They hoped to be seated, instead of the regular all-white delegation from Mississippi. The MFDP reasoned that they would get support because they had an open party, supported the platform of the national Democratic Party, were willing to sign an oath of loyalty to the party, and would actively campaign for the nominee.

## DIXIECRATS

The Dixiecrats, by contrast, opposed much of Johnson's domestic program and openly declared their support for Republican candidate Barry Goldwater. In July 1964, they passed a resolution opposing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and declaring, "We believe in separation of the races in all phases of our society . . . We express our admiration and appreciation of Governor Ross B. Barnett and Governor George Wallace of Alabama for their able, courageous, patriotic and effective work in awakening the American people to the utter necessity of the return of this country to true Constitutional Government and individual freedom."

The MFDP delegates testified before the Credentials Committee and explained exactly what the "courageous and patriotic" efforts of the regular Democrats encouraged. Fannie Lou Hamer described how she had been beaten under orders from state highway patrolmen.

Another delegate described similar experiences in voter-registration drives: "I have been imprisoned, I have been beaten, I have been close to death. The Freedom party is an open party. The regulars are a closed party of a closed society."

In spite of some support from northern liberals, the eloquent testimony of the MFDP fell on deaf ears. Johnson did not want "his" convention disrupted, nor did he want the white southerners to bolt from the party. He took the advice of Dixiecrats like John Connally of Texas who warned him: "If you seat those black buggers, the whole south will walk out."

Johnson didn't care about the Black south, and he reasoned that Blacks wouldn't vote for Goldwater instead. His decision was based on what he believed would help him get elected and retain the support of the rich and powerful in the party—not the poor Black sharecroppers from Mississippi.

## COMPROMISE

Johnson sent Hubert Humphrey to offer the MFDP a compromise. They were offered two voting delegate seats, with the delegates selected by the Credentials Committee. The MFDP voted the compromise down declaring, "We must stop playing the game of accepting token recognition for real change and of allowing the opposition to choose a few leaders to represent the people at large." Young radicals from SNCC were more blunt, call-

ing the offer a "back of the bus" agreement.

Freedom Summer marked an important shift in the civil rights movement. Many young activists lost what little faith they had retained in the Democrats. They argued that depending on thinly-disguised Dixiecrats to reform society would never work. Instead, they argued civil rights activists must build their own organizations, defend themselves against racist attacks and fight for political power.

One year later, Malcolm X—who never had much use for Democrats, summed up the lessons learned by the MFDP: "The frustration of these Black representatives from Mississippi thinking, you know, that the Great Society was going to include them—only to see the door closed in their face like that—that's what they're up against. It is this type of frustration that produced the Mau Mau. They reached the point where they saw that it takes power to make power respect you."

Leaders of the MFDP would later compare their own campaign with the "simplistic faith" of the Russian peasants under the tsar: "Caught in the direct kind of oppression and deprivation, the peasants would moan, 'if the Tsar only knew how we suffer. He is good and would give us justice. If he only knew.' The fact was that he knew only too well." The peasants met the tsar's apathy by joining the workers' revolution, and many civil rights activists began to think along similar lines.

1984 is not the same as 1964. Many disenfranchised Blacks (and whites) from the south can now vote—but many are still locked in poverty and unemployment.

## ENDURANCE

Still, it was the sacrifice and endurance of civil rights activists that built the civil rights movement and challenged the Jim Crow South. The Democratic Party was of no help and responded only when forced to act.

The MFDP delegates learned that only their own political activities could bring change. Some also learned that the poverty of Mississippi farmers and workers couldn't be voted out of existence, and that only a revolution striking at the roots of capitalism can end oppression and exploitation.

When we watch the tiresome charade in San Francisco this summer, these are the lessons of the MFDP that we should remember and build on in 1984. □



# 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 source 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**  
Discussion: *Iran Since the Revolution*. Sunday, July 15 at 7:30 p.m. For details, call 235-4620.

**BOSTON**  
George Axiotis on *Permanent Revolution*. Sunday, July 15 at 7:30 p.m. Call 427-4087 for details.

Joe Allen on *Will the Democrats Make a Difference?* Sunday, July 29 at 7:30 p.m. Call 427-7087.

**CHICAGO**  
Joseph O'Sullivan on *Nationalism and Socialism*. Saturday, July 15 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 878-3624.

Andy Thayer on *The African Revolution: Where Has It Gone?* Friday, July 21 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 328-6830.

**CINCINNATI**  
Series on *Socialism and War: World War I and Socialism* on Friday, July 13 at 7:30 p.m. Then every other week to follow. Call 271-3179 for details.

**CLEVELAND**  
Eleanor Trawick on *The Roots of Women's Oppression*. Saturday, July 22 at 7:30 p.m. Call 651-9827 for details.

**NEW YORK**  
Carl Cowl and Frances Witlin on *The Spanish Civil War*. Wednesday, July 11 at 8:00 p.m. Call 624-1698 or 332-8855 for details.

**ROCHESTER**  
Brian Erway on *The Spanish Revolution*. Monday, July 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Mike Ondrusek on *Russia 1917: Workers, Soviets and the Revolutionary Party*. Monday July 23 at 8:00 p.m. Call 235-3049 for more information.

**SAN FRANCISCO**  
*How to Fight Your Boss*. Sunday, July 29 at 6:30 p.m. Call 285-4057 for more information.  
Picnic. Saturday, August 4 at noon. Call 285-4057.

**SEATTLE**  
Picnic Discussion: *Iran-Iraq War*. Sunday, July 8. Call 524-8694 or 324-2302 for details. □

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

— Karl Marx

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# REVIEWS

## EXPLAINING THE CRISIS

*Explaining the Crisis*, by Chris Harman. Bookmarks, 1984. Available from Hera Press, \$6.00.

by DAN CAPLIN

The crisis of the world economy began in 1973. It has continued, despite some ups and downs, until today.

No country has been immune to its effects. Oil-producing states such as Mexico, which for a while escaped the crisis, now face near bankruptcy. Brazil, which was once a model for developing states, has a staggering foreign debt today of \$90 billion.

The economies of Eastern Europe face chronic shortages of consumer goods, high debts, and the lowest growth rates since World War II.

Even the recovery of the U.S. economy cannot end what is a world crisis. Indeed, it has exacerbated the situation. Based on deficit financing, it has pushed up interest rates and the value of the dollar.

This has made it more difficult for states to pay off debts, and has slowed down world investment.

Unable to explain or solve the crisis, economists have been completely discredited. Keynesians believed that high levels of government spending would keep the economy out of recession. Today "pump-priming" only increases inflation and debt, without increasing growth rates.

### MONETARISM

Monetarists, the ideologists of the employers' offensive, held that by attacking workers' living standards and weeding out inefficient firms, an economy could achieve steady growth. One only needs to look at the stagnating economies of Chile and Great Britain to see its effects.



But there is an explanation for the crisis which capitalist economics cannot provide. It stems from the basic analysis Karl Marx provided in *Capital*. In a new book, *Explaining the Crisis*, Chris Harman presents this analysis and then extends it to understand today's economy.

Capitalism, Harman shows, is based fundamentally on competition between capitalists, and the accumulation of capital to enable them to compete. If one does not continually invest in the most modern machinery, one will be driven out by those more efficient. But this has other consequences for the system.

Competition leads to an increase in machinery rather than labor. In Marx's terms, the "organic composition of capital"—the ratio of capital to labor—rises.

But it is human labor that is the source of profits.

**Therefore profits will tend to rise at a slower rate than total capital invested, and the rate of profit to invested capital will fall.**

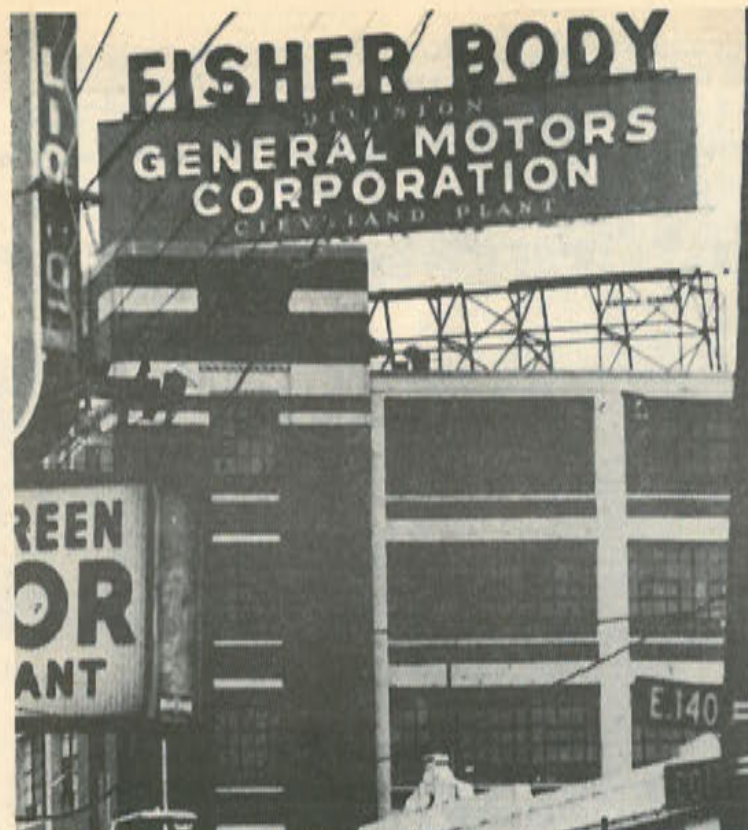
Capitalists, no longer having sufficient incentive, will slow down investment and the economy will stagnate.

### EXPLAINS

The theory explains a great deal. Harman points out that the rate of profit in the U.S. economy was falling until the middle-1920's. This slowed down productive investment in agriculture, steel, auto and other industries.

The stock market crash only confirmed what was already a general depression by 1929.

The world economy pushed its way out of the Great Depression, but only through World War II. The destruction of capital involved was sufficient to raise profit rates for the victors, and begin a new



Fisher Body plant recently closed by GM.

cycle of investment and growth.

The central question for Marxists has been to explain why this upswing lasted 25 years, the most sustained boom in capitalism's history.

### ARMS ECONOMY

Harman argues a variation of what is called the permanent arms economy theory. Military spending remained at very high levels as a result of the Cold War, and according to Harman, this siphoned off capital which would otherwise have been invested in productive industries. Thus, the "organic composition of capital," was tempered, and profit rates remained steady until the 1970's.

Stable growth characterized the post-war economy, rather than spurts of spectacular growth followed by equally spectacular collapse.

The permanent arms economy theory has been criticized on many grounds, and Harman's theoretical responses are not altogether convincing. Yet it does appear to fit reality. High levels of military spending were indeed the major characteristic of the boom years, for both East and West.

Military competition appeared to be superceding economic competition as the motor of the system, and so long as that was happening, the necessary result of economic competition—falling profit rates and stagnation—could be forestalled.

But, as Harman shows,

this did not and could not happen. Worldwide economic competition became fierce by the late 1960's. The low arms spenders, Japan and West Germany, were able to out-compete the high arms-spenders such as the U.S.; and arms spending as a percentage of the world economy fell as a result.

### PROFIT RATES

This reassertion of economic competition led to a falling world rate of profit beginning in the late 1960's.

The post-war boom ended conclusively with the recession of 1974-5. Since then the world economy has sputtered along, with a few upswings and even longer downswings. All of the effects of crisis—unemployment, attacks on living standards, and other attempts to make workers pay—have returned.

The capitalist class has an alternative. They could repeat the crisis of the 1930's, bankrupting large sections of the world economy. They could destroy large amounts of capital through war.

Combined, these would lower the organic composition of capital and raise profit rates.

But this time the scale is much larger. Whole states would have to be bankrupted, especially those which have been forced by the crisis into debt.

If this occurred, it would not only severely impair the world banking system. It could also lead to massive revolt by the working classes of Brazil, Poland and the like.

### STAGNATION

We probably won't see a sudden collapse of the world economy, but it is even more unlikely that we will see a repeat of the post-war boom. The world economy will most likely remain mired in long-term stagnation.

Harman's book is quite good—though at times it is too wordy. It also does not respond adequately to any number of technical controversies surrounding the theory of the crisis.

Along with Nigel Harris' *Bread and Guns*, it provides an excellent introduction to marxist economics. It deserves to be widely read. □

## Russia: the making of the revolution

*Russia: the Making of the Revolution*. SWP pamphlet, 1984. Available from Hera Press, \$1.50 plus postage.

by SHARON SMITH

*Russia: The Making of the Revolution*, by Steve Wright, is an excellent new pamphlet about revolutionary organization and the struggle for socialism in the only glimpse of socialist revolution the world has yet seen: Russia in 1917.

Wright traces the building of the Bolshevik party from its beginning, before the first great working class upheaval in 1905, and through the victory of the Russian working class in 1917. It was through the long years of struggle—the uprisings and the setbacks—that the Bolsheviks learned the hard political lessons which enabled them to transform themselves from a small network

of underground cells into the party which would win the confidence of the Russian workers and lead them to victory in 1917.

One of the most important lessons the Bolsheviks learned was to adapt their outreach and tactics to the political mood of the period, while never compromising on the basic principles of marxism. Because they were operating in tsarist Russia, the shifts were dramatic. During periods of working class upheaval, the Bolsheviks agitated openly and gained a following among the workers, attempting to deepen the struggle—arguing against any alliance with the ruling class parties or parliamentary bodies.

Then, in periods of reaction and defeat, they were again forced underground, many members facing prison terms and exile. In these times, the Bolsheviks were forced to participate in parliament

as their only legal and open activity!

### ORGANIZATION

This pamphlet clearly shows the need for revolutionary organization in becoming the living memory of the workers' movement, in analyzing both the defeats and the victories of the past, and ultimately in winning the leadership of the class to revolution. Wright also shows, however, that the revolutionary party learns its crucial lessons from the workers themselves—their spontaneous activities and organizations.

The Soviets, or workers' councils, were not a marxist invention. They arose as a form of organization in the general strikes of 1905, and proved to be the most truly democratic workers' organizations yet invented. The Bolsheviks were able to embrace this idea and incorporate it into their



vision of socialist society—a society run by workers' councils.

It was the Bolsheviks' slogan, "All power to the soviets," which differentiated them from the other parties and which the vast majority of workers adopted as their slogan in October 1917. □



on the picket line

## Interstate truckers strike for wages

**TOLEDO, OH**—James Crawford has been a driver for Interstate Systems for over nineteen years. Like most of the over 3,600 workers for this large trucking outfit, Crawford considered the wages, benefits and working conditions the best in the industry.

All this began to change last November when Interstate management convinced its employees to take a 15% wage cut below the going rate for the 150,000 Teamsters organized under the Master Freight Agreement. Interstate management claimed that this money was to be diverted into an Employee Stock Ownership Plan and used to modernize and expand the Interstate System.

According to them, Interstate employees' jobs would be protected in an industry racked by bankruptcies since the onslaught of de-regulation. A typical Interstate worker forfeited \$1500 in wages and lost \$3000 into the stock



Interstate Systems workers on strike.

plan in the eight months the plan was in effect.

At the same time, it became clear to Interstate Teamsters that their management was not re-investing this money into the system. Such things as routine maintenance work on its tractors was not being done, creating a dangerous situation for the drivers.

### POCKETED

The money was apparently either being pocketed by management or funnelled into the two non-union divisions of In-

terstate's parent company, IMFS.

Then came the final double-cross. Interstate management filed for bankruptcy on April 11 and on May 14 unilaterally cut wages by a further 35%, eliminated all job guarantees and work rules and instituted 24-hour flexibility on start times.

All told, wages were to drop from about \$14/hour to approximately \$8/hour. Interstate workers were to receive the same wages and work under the same conditions as

non-union truckers.

As this series of attacks developed, Interstate management's aim has become clear to its workers. As James Crawford told Socialist Worker: "All this company is trying to do is break the union."

The Teamsters leadership responded by calling a strike on May 15, but they have not mobilized the necessary solidarity action, such as striking IMFS's operating subsidiaries, to win the battle against Interstate.

It is clear that the initiative to turn this dispirited situation around will have to come from the rank and file.

It is also clear that the fighting spirit necessary to create effective organization and action is there. As one Interstate veteran told Socialist Worker: "It's going to take a whole lot of blood before these politicians and businessmen stop treating us like animals."

—BEN BLAKE

## TALKIN' UNION BY JOHN ANDERSON

# HOW MILITANTS WERE DRIVEN FROM THE PLANTS

Soon after the 1947 Atlantic City UAW Convention—at a meeting of Fleetwood management and the shop committee—a pamphlet put out by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was brought to my attention. It was a formula for driving dissenters out of the unions. UAW President Reuther's supporters joined with management to warn me that if I didn't become a supporter of Reuther, this formula would be used against me.

### SUBSTANCE

The substance of the formula was as follows: Workers in the plant would start a whispering campaign "that so and so was a communist." Dissenters would be kept under surveillance. Every violation of a shop rule or the contract would be made note of. Being absent from work or late would be recorded. All of these, in time, would be used to build a case for a penalty lay-off or discharge.

There were many Reuther supporters in Fleetwood only too willing to destroy my reputation in the plant. There were Association of Catholic Trade Unionists members who felt it was their religious duty to defeat me and to give evidence in support of my discharge. They used this tactic not only against me but against my most loyal supporters. At one time I was informed I would be permitted to see my record. I went to the personnel office where I was given a folder with 30 or 40 pages of information on my activities in the plant. There was a record of my stopping to speak to

people when I was on my way to take up a grievance. It was obvious to me they were using the plan to have me fired. I was once told by an ex-foreman that he had been told not to let me talk with other workers because of my influence over them.

In job assignments, my supporters would get the worst jobs, and my detractors the best. To this must be added the fact that Walter Henderson, Reuther's man of dirty tricks, became the International rep for Fleetwood. He consistently took management's side in arguing grievances.

In 1948, management had a letter-writing contest on the question of, "Why I like my job." The winner of the contest was Delphine Baugh, Walter Henderson's wife. She received a new Buick as a prize.

### FIRED

One of my most influential supporters was the Black committeeman in the paint department, Ernie Dillard. When he was charged with causing a slowdown in the department of wet-sanders, he was fired. When these workers heard of this every one of them came to the union hall and signed a statement saying Dillard had not told them to slow down. Management admitted no production had been lost. Failing to get a favorable settlement on the plant level I tried to have it processed to the umpire. Henderson, in the name of the International, refused to accept the appeal. When we appealed to Emil Mazey, we



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

received the same hostility as we had from the GM Department. His discharge was reduced to a two-week penalty layoff.

In 1951, most of my supporters and I were transferred to the skilled trades where we had worked during World War II. We were isolated from the production workers. One day during my lunch hour I went to talk to Dillard who was working. He kept working during the couple of minutes I spoke with him. When I went back to work after my lunch hour, the superintendent of my department came and said, "You are wanted in Personnel." He escorted me to that office. They gave me a written reprimand charging me with interfering with a worker on production. They kept me under surveillance during my lunch hour.

### CAMPAIGN

During the next 15 years, most of my supporters either quit the plant or became Reuther supporters. Members of supervision have boasted that no worker could withstand the campaign of redbaiting and harassment management was able to impose on them. I have known several of these workers who have developed mental or physical illness because of this harassment. Most of them have quit the plant. □



## HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTES

by MATT FILSINGER

### Carcinogens in Baby Bottles

It has been known for a while that rubber nipples for baby bottles and infants' pacifiers contain cancer-causing substances called nitrosamines. The federal government has ordered the manufacturers to lower the levels of nitrosamines, but they are not required to eliminate the nitrosamines altogether.

### Favoritism for Coors

Coors Brewery, a racist, anti-union employer presently being boycotted by the AFL-CIO has been receiving favors from OSHA.

Former OSHA director Thorne Aughter ordered that two Coors plants be removed from a top-priority inspection list.

When an OSHA inspector showed up at Coors anyway, Aughter became furious and forced the OSHA regional administrator, Curtis Foster, to take a large pay cut or resign.

Joseph Coors, "coincidentally," is a close friend of Reagan, and a member of the President's Kitchen Cabinet.

### It Makes Us Sick, Too

R. Leonard Vance, director of health standards for OSHA, was requested by Congressman George Miller to turn over his logs of meetings he held in connection with the standard for ethylene oxide.

Miller's Congressional subcommittee wanted to determine if Vance collaborated with industry in blocking the standard. Vance refused, saying they were his own private property.

He later changed his mind and agreed to turn over the logs. However, Vance delivered only one of the four appointment books requested.

So sorry, he explained, but he threw the books in the back of his pickup truck when he went hunting.

His hunting dog, he said, got sick and barfed all over the books. The mess was so bad that he threw the appointment books into the nearest dump. □



## CEMENT WORKERS FIGHT FOR THEIR JOBS

SEATTLE, WA—80 workers at Ash Grove Cement are picketing to prevent the busting of their union shop.

Members of United Cement, Lime and Gypsum Workers (UCLGW) Local 47 arrived at work on March 23 only to be informed their plant (formerly Lone Star Cement) had been sold to Ash Grove Cement. They were given two hours notice that they were all fired (even though their contract called for 90-day notice)—and told to “make for the gate like rabbits.”

Later the new company hired “psychologists” to screen them for jobs under new ownership. Only three

by PETER COGAN

were rehired—at about one-half the former pay.

For two months the local pursued legal challenges until they belatedly set up area-standards pickets in early May.

### SOLIDARITY

Solidarity remains high—over 60 workers are manning 24-hour pickets at the plant.

Teamster drivers have refused to pick up cement from the plant, but managers are driving the cement in and out—where Teamsters pick it up just outside the line. The strikers have been getting help from other locals through picketing up spot work from the Longshoremen and Teamsters unions.

Only 12 workers are operating the plant now—with semi-finished products being shipped from Canada for final processing at Ash Grove.

In May, the strikers picketed a boat from Canada bringing in clinker (unfinished product). Plans for a mass picket have been discussed.

The situation at Ash Grove is being repeated across the country as employers “sell” companies, only to reopen them with scab labor.

Ash Grove is now underselling the other cement companies in Seattle by \$15 a ton.

Now, workers at Ideal and Columbia cement—also members of UCLGW Local 47 in contract negotiations—are being asked for concessions to remain “competitive” with Ash Grove.

### CLOUT

Only by striking together can cement workers in Seattle have the clout to defend their wages and jobs—united we stand, divided we fall.

Mass picketing and solidarity from other workers can beat back the employers offensive.

Send donations and messages of support to United Cement, Lime and Gypsum Workers Local 47, 3200 NE 125th, Seattle, WA 98125. □

## MINERS WALK OUT

HARRISBURG, IL—Progressive Mine Workers of America (PMWA) struck the Sahara Coal Co. June 23, rejecting a management contract offer calling for work rules changes.

Workers at four pits in central Illinois voted 262-171 against Sahara's demand for tougher shop-floor discipline.

“The company said a flat ‘no’ to our request for a 30-day extension of the present contract,” PMWA District 1 president Gerald Mahan said.

“We are ready to negotiate at any time, but apparently the company isn't.”

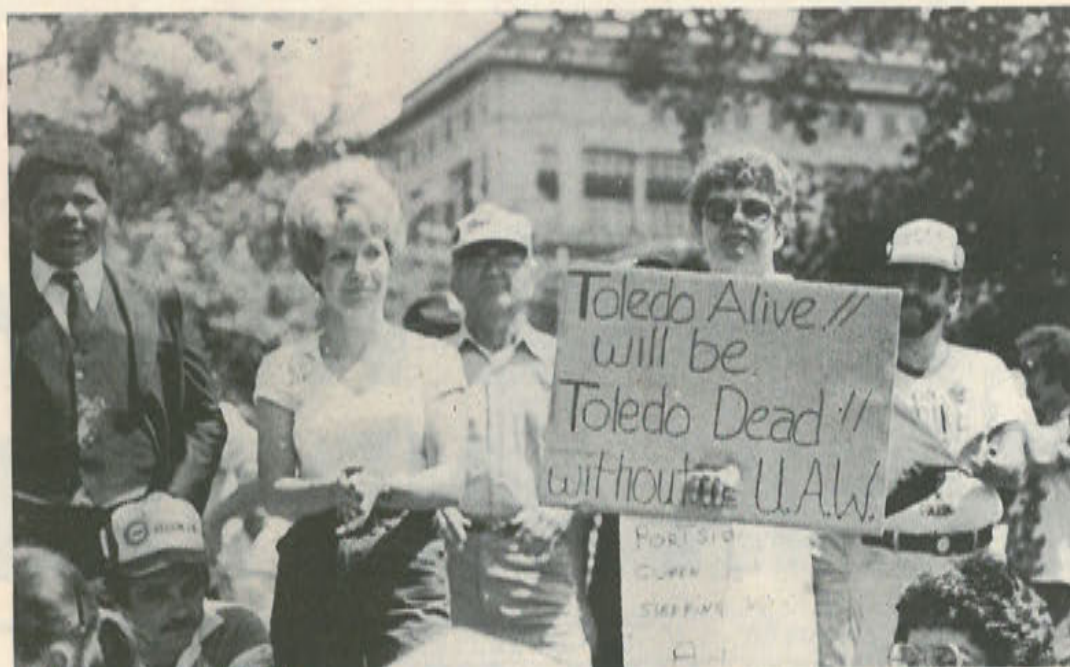
Mahan predicted that Sahara will cut off medical and other workers' benefits.

Sahara wants to tie the PMWA contract to any new agreement between the Unit-



ed Mine Workers of America and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

The UMWA-BCOA contract does not expire until September 30. □



Rally in support of AP strikers.

## AP STRIKE AT CROSSROADS

TOLEDO, OH—Striking workers at AP Parts Company are angry—very angry. “Every day people are getting more and more pissed,” striker John Clarke, a member of UAW Local 14, told *Socialist Worker*. “And our feeling is that if we can't go back to work, no one should.”

AP workers struck after working under new work rules for two months.

Management also tried to reduce wages—from \$14.30 per hour to \$8.37 for production workers. They are determined to

win.

But the courts and company are stacked heavily against them. AP hired the private security force, Nuchols and Associates, to harass the strikers. And the courts have limited picketing to 20 workers.

### NOTHING

And the union officials are doing nothing to win the strike. They have actively discouraged mass pickets like the one that closed AP down temporarily in May. Instead they have called for a boycott of AP products.

But that is ludicrous. AP is an auto parts wholesaler—it sells to other companies, not to consumers. Moreover, it is an attempt to take the strike from where it can be won—on the picket line.

Rank and file AP workers have a choice: let their officials lose this strike, or, as they did before, win support from other area unionists. And this can be done.

Toledo alone has 25,000 UAW members—not to mention the thousands more in nearby Detroit. □

## Maine diggers need unity

WISCASETT, ME—About 400 Maine bloodworm diggers won a pay raise last month for their backbreaking work. But the settlement weakened a strike by 60 sandworm diggers, who were finally defeated when their numbers broke ranks and continued to sell the prized sports fishing bait.

Lincoln County bloodworm and sandworm workers—who have no union—demanded a penny-per-worm increase. While the bloodworm workers' one-week walkout got them an increase to 7¢ per worm, the sandworm diggers' seven-week strike failed to boost the 4¢

per worm rate they have endured since 1978.

The sandworm diggers' strike collapsed when their counterparts in eastern Maine continued to dig and sell the bait, which is shipped to fishermen as far away as California. Strikers said the eastern sandworm diggers augment their income by lobstering and picking blueberries, and were “satisfied” by their pay.

### VOLUME

“For a strike to be effective on the digger level, it has got to practically stop the sale of bloodworms and sandworms,” said Ivan Flye, a worm dealer in Maine's \$4 million per year bait industry. “But they didn't even reduce volume by 10 percent.”

Lincoln County sandworm diggers' attempts to spread

the strike failed. When diggers in neighboring Trenton ignored their appeals for solidarity, the Lincoln County workers raided their mud flat and dumped about 40,000 worms into a river.

News reports made light of the strike, but wormdigging is brutal work. Diggers must stoop continuously and scrape the soil with short-handled hoes, a tool prohibited in the labor contracts of the United Farmworkers of America. Pay depends on the seasons, the tides, the whims of sports fishermen and the profit rate of the bait buyers.

But as long as the bait bosses are able to keep them divided, the diggers will face harsh conditions and low pay. The defeated strikers have learned that without solidarity, winning is impossible. □

## LABOR NOTES MEETING

Labor activists from around the U.S. and Canada met on the weekend of June 15-17 in Ypsilanti, Michigan for the “Building Union Solidarity” conference. This conference, sponsored by the Labor Notes newsletter, brought together 650 union activists, staffers, supporters and socialists for a weekend of discussion on issues facing the labor movement in 1984.

Most of the sessions acknowledged the weakened state of the labor movement today, and sought to present strategies for rebuilding. Much of the discussion centered around building union solidarity and community support for struggles, but the crucial question of rebuilding rank and file organization of the shop floor was largely left unaddressed.

### TOP-DOWN

Some of the sessions actually argued for a top-down strategy for strengthening the labor movement, one based on swaying the union officials and apparatus.

If the labor movement is to be rebuilt, it will not be done by the union leaders, but by rank and file workers themselves, on the shop floor. It is there that union solidarity begins and grows.

And this means building on the ground—not electing local officers or becoming staffers or union organizers.

Socialists have to make the argument that any strategy to strengthen the labor movement begins with a strategy based on rank and file organization. □

—SHARON SMITH

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NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION

## POSTAL WORKERS: USE RANK AND FILE POWER

The contract between the U.S. Postal Service and the four unions representing postal workers expires at midnight July 20. Despite the fact that the postal unions made a surplus of over \$400 million at the mid-point of this fiscal year, they are demanding wage and benefit cuts from the workforce.

The postal board of governors, with five Reagan appointees, say that postal workers are overpaid and want to get the postal pay rates down to the level of the private competition. In actuality, the Postal Service's nearest competitor, UPS, pays its workers 40% more in wages and benefits.

### INSULT

This is an absolute insult to postal workers. Mail volume is up 10 to 20 percent nationwide. Six and seven day work weeks and 10-12 hour days are quite common everywhere. Harassment and spying are constant. Postal management is convinced that letter carriers are not working eight-hour days and are defrauding the government.

The situation is really the opposite as a lot of workers have to skip breaks and lunch in order to get their routes done. The healthy state of the postal service is the result of hard work that postal workers have done over the last five years. It is they who will move more than 130 billion pieces of

by JOHN TRIPPLETT

mail this fiscal year, and they deserve to be compensated.

Some of the concessions the postal service wants are:

- No increase in wages for present employees and a 33 1/3% cut in wages for all new employees.

- A "floor" and a "cap" on Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) and a reduction of the frequency of payments, as well as elimination of COLA for new hires for the first year of the contract.

- Elimination of paid sick leave for the first eight hours of each sick leave usage and a reduction of sick leave earned from four hours a pay period to two hours.

### NEGOTIATIONS

The Postmaster General, in various interviews earlier this year, stated that he thought postal negotiations should run smoothly and that postal workers could expect a modest wage increase over the life of the next contract. As contract talks approached, the postal board of governors decided that now was the time to get tough and told Bolger that he was to demand wage and benefit concessions from the unions.

This is just the latest in a series of attacks the Reagan administration has unleashed on postal and federal workers since he took office. Through the Office of Personnel Management, he has cut health benefits. Through Congress he has cut retirement benefits. Postal workers have conceded enough already and should hold the line right where it is.

The top two union presidents negotiating the contract,



## BOYCOTT SUNOCO

TOLEDO, OH—Sun Oil Company workers have been on strike here since March 21. The strikers, members of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) Local 7-912, are determined to fight off Sunoco's concessions drive.

They are fighting to maintain their seniority rights, to raise their wages

to the OCAW national standard and to prevent the introduction of a two-tier wages plan. This plan would allow the company to pay new hires \$6.00 (rather than \$10.07) and the unlimited use of temporary workers.

### UNABLE

The workers have been unable to stop Sunoco from

producing its 123,000 barrels a day. But they tried to shut down a Leaseway Terminal last month to prevent Teamsters from hauling the oil. Local Teamster officials have done nothing to help. To win, they will have to appeal to Teamsters and other workers to observe their pickets.

The OCAW is calling for a boycott of Sunoco oil. □

Moe Biller of the American Postal Workers Union and Vincent Sombrotto of the National Association of Letter Carriers, have stated they would not sign any contract that had any cut-backs in it. They say they will not necessarily call a strike July 20, but instead will let the delegates for the respective unions decide what to do at their bi-annual conventions in mid-August, a month after the contract expires.

This may sound democratic, but it is quite dangerous. Workers should never work without a contract, even for one month—or one second. This will give the media a full month to convince postal workers that they shouldn't strike; that their contract is pretty good, considering what others are getting; that striking is illegal for federal employees, etc.

### PRESS

Whether or not there is a strike will depend on how far the postal service wants to press these demands. While Biller and Sombrotto wouldn't

call a strike for any kind of increase, if they felt the existence of the union and hence their social positions were threatened, they would be forced to call one.

Even though it is known that most workers don't want to strike, they know that most won't accept too many cut-backs.

A postal strike can be won. It will require solidarity with other workers—a notion that seems to be lost amongst labor leaders today. Mail delivery will have to be stopped, and auxiliary mail services stopped as well.

There are 600,000 postal workers. The power is there and should be used. □

## FIRED PATCO WORKER LIVES ON D.C. STREETS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An air traffic controller Reagan fired in 1981 sleeps outdoors on a steam-grate a few blocks from the White House.

The District of Columbia elections board certified that Raymond Lamb, who made \$50,000 in his last full year of work, lives at the corner of 21st and E Streets—on the grate. The board accepts the grate as Lamb's voting address.

The 48-year-old Lamb joined Washington's homeless after 11 years in the Air Force and 16 years as an air traffic controller and member of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO).

Before Reagan smashed PATCO, Lamb's job had raised his blood pressure, damaged his vision and threatened to shatter his nerves or drive him to alcoholism.

Now he walks the streets and eats at soup kitchens.

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