



Labor And '72

"The Presidential election in 1972 is the most important election of the century." So claims the AFL-CIO in the February 19 issue of *AFL-CIO News*. This issue contains a report on the latest meeting of the Executive Board, during which Board members discussed election strategy. The result was a resolution calling for the "total mobilization" of the ranks of labor to meet "the most serious challenge the trade union movement has ever faced."

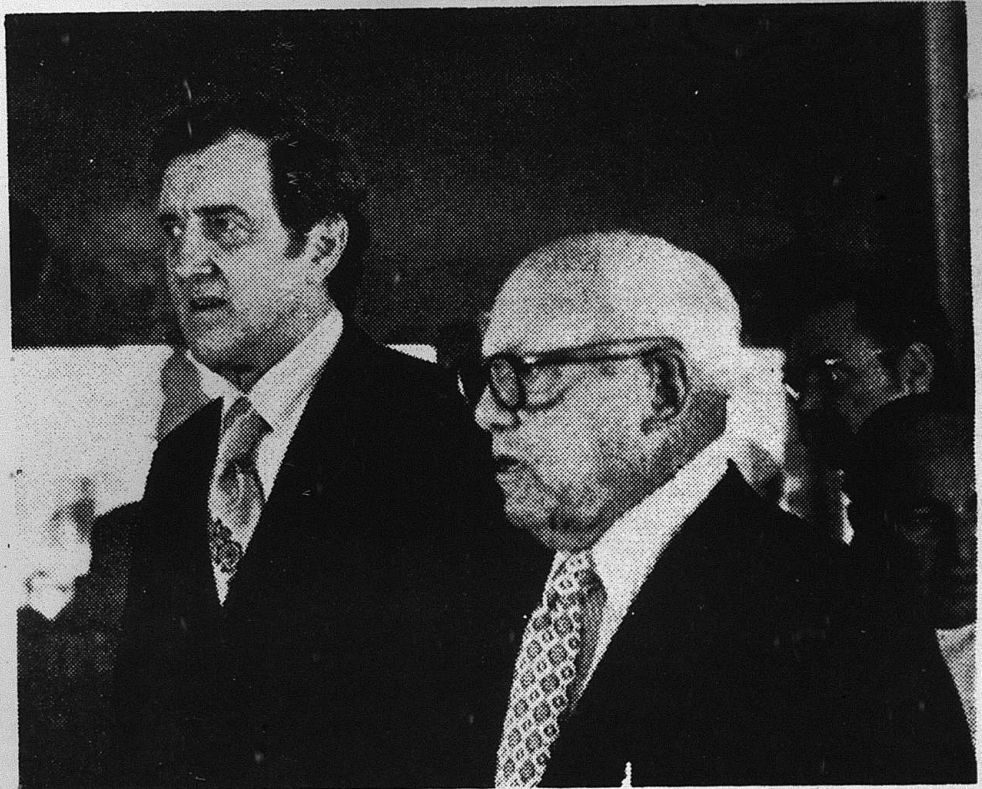
After such a ringing declaration, one would expect the unveiling of a dynamic new strategy to defend the interests of working people. There is no question that labor is under attack. Nixon's New Economic Policy has sharply cut back on wage gains while prices continue to rise, leaving workers holding the bag.

All over the country, plants are threatening to close down and demand that unions accept "voluntary" pay cuts to avoid massive layoffs. Sweeping new anti-labor, anti-strike legislation is in preparation, and members of striking unions (like the Newark teachers) are going to jail for up to six months.

The war in Vietnam continues to bring death and crippling injury to young workers in uniform, and the arms economy drains away the social resources which workers labor to create.

In short, the American working class is under the sharpest attack by the government and the corporations since World War II, and certainly needs

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AFL-CIO President Meany and Democrat Ed Muskie

EDITORIAL

THE TRIAL BEGINS



After endless delays, the trial of Angela Davis began March 2 in San Jose, California. Charged with murder, kidnapping, and criminal conspiracy, for supposedly supplying guns that were used in the attempted jail-break at the Marin County Courthouse in 1970, she spent sixteen months behind bars until finally released on \$102,500 bail February 23.

Davis' release on bail follows a long struggle which began when it became clear that the state of California intended to make sure she never saw the outside of a prison again. Thousands of petitions were circulated and signed to demand bail.

She would still be in prison today --

and throughout the duration of her trial, expected to last for six months -- except for the California Supreme Court's ruling which abolished the death penalty in California. This ruling wiped away the legal figleaf the courts had used to keep Angela Davis locked up -- that if convicted she could be sent to the gas chamber.

The state had other reasons, unspoken but obvious, for trying to keep Davis locked up. The first was to try to create a climate of opinion which believes that a black revolutionary or Communist *should* be locked up as a menace to society, regardless of "innocence" or "guilt." The second was to keep her from speaking out about her

own trial, from appearing in public or even giving interviews. The third was to restrict her ability to prepare her defense, in which she will take an active role.

Thus, her release is a real victory, although the major battles lie ahead.

The trial has entered its first phase, the selection of the jury. After a lengthy process during which low-income and working people were systematically excused from consideration -- because they could not survive six months without jobs at \$5 jury pay per day -- a preliminary panel was seated to be subjected to intensive further questioning.

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Workers' Power

WE STAND FOR SOCIALISM: the collective ownership and democratic control of the economy and the state by the working class. We stand in opposition to all forms of class society, both capitalist and bureaucratic "Communist," and in solidarity with the struggles of all exploited and oppressed people.

America is faced with a growing crisis: war, racial strife, pollution, urban decay, and the deterioration of our standard of living and working conditions. This crisis is built into capitalism, an outlived system of private profit, exploitation, and oppression. The capitalist ruling class, a tiny minority that controls the economy and politics alike, perpetuates its rule by dividing the working people against each other — white against black, male against female, skilled against unskilled, etc. The result is ever greater social chaos.

Workers' power is the only alternative to this crisis. Neither the liberal

nor the conservative wings of the ruling class have any answers but greater exploitation. The struggle for workers' power is already being waged on the economic level, and the International Socialists stand in solidarity with these struggles over wages and working conditions. To further this struggle, we call for independent rank and file workers' committees to fight when and where the unions refuse to fight. But the struggles of the workers will remain defensive and open to defeat so long as they are restricted to economic or industrial action.

The struggle must become political. Because of its economic power, the ruling class also has a monopoly on political power. It controls the government and the political parties that administer the state. More and more, the problems we face, such as inflation and unemployment, are the result of political decisions made by that class. The struggle of the working people will be deadlocked until the ranks of labor build a workers' party and carry the struggle into the political arena.

The struggle for workers' power cannot be won until the working class, as a whole, controls the government and the economy democratically. This requires a revolutionary socialist, working class party, at the head of a unified

working class. No elite can accomplish this for the workers.

Nor can any part of the working class free itself at the expense of another. We stand for the liberation of all oppressed peoples: mass organization, armed self-defense, and the right of self-determination for Blacks, Chicanos and all national minorities; the liberation of women from subordination in society and the home; the organization of homosexuals to fight their oppression. These struggles are in the interest of the working class as a whole: the bars of racism and male chauvinism can only prevent the establishment of workers' power. Oppressed groups cannot subordinate their struggle today to the present level of consciousness of white male workers: their independent organization is necessary to their fight for liberation. But we strive to unite these struggles in a common fight to end human exploitation and oppression.

The struggle for workers' power is world-wide. Class oppression and exploitation is the common condition of humanity. US corporations plunder the world's riches and drive the world's people nearer to starvation, while military intervention by the US government, serving these corporations, awaits

those who dare to rebel. The "Communist" revolutions in China, Cuba and North Vietnam, while driving out US imperialism, have not brought workers' power, but a new form of class society, ruled by a bureaucratic elite.

Whether capitalist or bureaucratic-collectivist ("Communist") in nature, the ruling classes of the world fight desperately to maintain their power, often against each other, always against the working class and the people. Through both domestic repression and imperialist intervention (the US in Vietnam, the USSR in Czechoslovakia), they perpetuate misery and poverty in a world of potential peace and plenty. Socialism — the direct rule of the working class itself — exists nowhere in the world today.

We fight for the withdrawal of US troops from all foreign countries, and support all struggles for national self-determination. In Vietnam, we support the victory of the NLF over the US and its puppets; at the same time, we stand for revolutionary opposition by the working class to the incipient bureaucratic ruling class. Only socialism, established through world-wide revolution, can free humanity from exploitation and oppression; and the only force capable of building socialism is **WORKERS' POWER.**

Muskie Stumbles In New Hampshire

As we go to press, Sen. Edmund Muskie is the reported winner in New Hampshire's March 7 Democratic primary. Sen. George McGovern, long regarded as a hopeless loser in the Presidential race, did unexpectedly well, scoring 34 percent of the vote to Muskie's 46 percent (complete returns were expected to raise Muskie's total a point or two).

On the Republican side, President Nixon received 70 percent and his "anti-war" opponent, Paul McCloskey, received 19 percent, with right-winger John Ashbrook low man with 10 percent of the vote.

The Democratic results were as uninteresting as the race itself has been. Though McGovern did unexpectedly well, his total was not high enough to be considered a major upset. And his showing was due less to any excitement generated by his own candidacy

than to the fact that prolonged exposure to the voters has revealed Muskie's hopeless dullness. With the backing of party pros, Muskie remains front runner, however.

An interesting aspect of the McGovern campaign in New Hampshire, as elsewhere, is that McGovern, with no important backing in high party circles, built his drive by going outside the regular organization and relying on former McCarthy volunteers from 1968. Unlike McCarthy's campaign, however, McGovern's did not even try to project an "image" of representing the young and voiceless.

McGovern used his young campaign workers in a thoroughly cynical way, projecting politics inches to the left of the Democratic midstream and relying on a "lesser evil" appeal in a race no one, not even the participants, can possibly be very excited about. ■



Wizard of Id
Parker Pratt

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Nixon, Mao Draw New Lines in Asia



James Coleman

On February 21, President Nixon and Chinese Premier Chou En-lai toasted each other as 800 dinner guests confronted a menu of 30 Chinese delicacies, including a dozen appetizers, bamboo shoots, egg-white consommé, shredded shark fin, fried and stewed shrimp, boiled preserved eggs, egg rolls, hams, sausages, steamed chicken with coconut, Peking duck, almond junkets, steamed pastries and fruits.

Against this ostentatious backdrop -- the produce of China expropriated from the producers, who eat rice -- the capitalist politician and the Communist bureaucrat exchanged respects. If the banquet and toasts seemed designed to show that they had more in common than in opposition, the negotiations which followed put this to the test. At the week's end they were still toasting, though with strained faces.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the Nixon visit to China and particularly from the joint communique which ended the visit:

(1) Both Nixon and the Chinese government aimed at a limited peace between rivals, not a fundamental settling of differences;

(2) On both sides, the results were smaller than hoped for because of conflicting interests which could not be immediately resolved;

(3) On both sides, the effort was motivated not by desires for peace in the abstract, but from power interests, particularly in relation to Russia; and

(4) The "week that changed the world" brought a lull in great-power rivalry, but one dangerous to the world's peoples.

STRAINED FACES

The hope of both sides was to make progress toward a "normalization" of Chinese-US relations -- the establishment of diplomatic and trade relations and behind this, the removal of differences which have prevented this in the past. Both sides played up the visit for all it was worth -- Nixon with full television coverage and the Chinese, after a day or so of hesitation, with a big play in their press.

But Nixon's visit was not primarily motivated by the need for a big splash to help win re-election, as some American newsmen have argued. At most, this affected the timing of the visit. There were solid power motives behind the election hokum.

The strained faces at the end of the week's negotiations reflected continuing disagreements, based on differing interests. The communique outlined

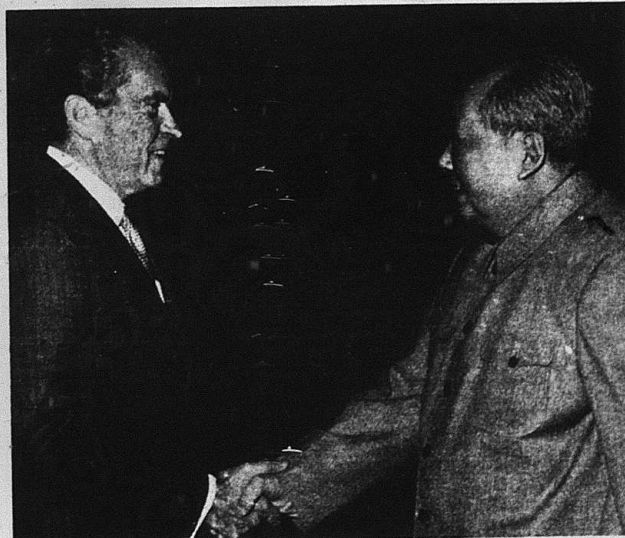
these interests, in the diplomatic language which carries precise meanings for the experts but is designed to confuse ordinary citizens. The communique carried separate, opposing statements on several questions. (These statements themselves, however, were carefully negotiated and adjusted.)

The most obvious areas of disagreement are those, like Vietnam and Korea, where China and the US support different sides. While Nixon and Chou En-lai may have discussed Vietnam, and while Chou may well put private pressure on North Vietnam, nothing could be said about this publicly.

The most important disagreement in the communique is over Japan. China's statement stresses fear of "the revival and outward expansion of Japanese militarism." The American statement simply mentions the US's "friendly relations with Japan."

While concerned about Japan's growing economic power, which it has been attempting to counter, the US is anxious to maintain its alliance with Japan and to avoid driving Japan toward other diplomatic ties -- for example with Russia. Nixon must placate Japan at this point.

But although the US desires no break with Japan at this point, the "thaw" with China signified a real shift in Asian power relations, giving the US room for maneuver and new alliances in any conflict with the more powerful Japan of coming years.



Finally, there are differences in areas where US and Chinese interests do coincide, at least in part, but cannot be expressed openly. China's statement expresses support for "the Pakistan Government and people in their struggle to preserve their independence and sovereignty" -- in other words, opposition to the independence of Bangla Desh. The US followed the same policy in fact, but Nixon is prevented by pro-Indian and pro-Bangla Desh sentiment in the United States from saying this openly or openly joining in China's brutal endorsement of Pakistan.

PAWN IN THE GAME

The second such area, much more important, is Taiwan. Agreement on Taiwan is regarded by China as necessary before full diplomatic relations can be established with the US. This agreement was only partly achieved. China's statement repeats that Taiwan "is China's internal affair," and states its firm opposition to independence for Taiwan.

The US statement contained a major reversal of policy. Nixon acknowledged that "all Chinese" believe "that Taiwan is a part of China." He described peaceful settlement "by the Chinese themselves" (that is, by the two governments, not by the people) as a "prospect" for the future. Behind this language lie the widespread reports of a deal between the mainland and Taiwan governments for re-

unification after Chiang Kai-shek's death.

US support for Chiang was never based on support for Taiwan's rights -- the people of that island were brutally oppressed by Chiang. The policy was based on the need for a pawn to play against "Red" China. The announcement in the communique that the US agreed to "the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all US forces . . . from Taiwan" is the official death notice of this policy.

Though some conservatives have attacked this concession, it is a concession only from their point of view -- one of real loyalty to the gangster Chiang. From Nixon's more sophisticated imperialist point of view, the concession is simply a recognition of the failure of the traditional China policy.

Once US opposition to Mao was ended, "free China's" usefulness was over. The Taiwan pawn is to be sacrificed in the larger game. The people of Taiwan remain the losers as before.

This could not be stated openly, however, and to have done so would have given away a little American bargaining power. Because of this and other disagreements, the China-US "thaw" is less than complete, as reflected in the fact that diplomatic relations were not established.

THE RUSSIAN QUESTION

Nevertheless the shift in Asian power politics is basic. The US-China cold war has "thawed," for the present, as both sides are drawn together by common interests strong enough to overshadow the continuing differences.

For the US government, these common interests relate primarily to the problem of Russia, and secondarily to the US's inability to defeat the guerrilla movements of Southeast Asia. These factors were sketched by the knowledgeable correspondent Max Frankel in *The New York Times* February 27.

According to Frankel, Nixon's moves were designed "to complicate the diplomatic lives of the Russians and force them into new patterns of agreement with him" and "to draw China into the process of finding a new order in the Pacific."

It is becoming plain that the problem of Russia has assumed a more central place in Nixon's foreign policy than had been true for several years previously.

After the Cuban missile crisis

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Women Workers

A History of Struggle

Celia Emerson

On March 8, 1908, the women's section of the American Socialist Party organized a massive demonstration of women garment workers, protesting sweatshop conditions and demanding equal pay, child care, and the right to vote. The impressive showing of working class feminist solidarity inspired Clara Zetkin, revolutionary socialist and leader of the German women's movement, to call upon the Second International to make March 8 a holiday equal to that of May Day, an international working class holiday; this one, International Women's Day, would pay tribute to the struggles of working women.

LOWELL TO LAWRENCE

In the United States, the organization of women workers fighting for women's liberation began in the New England textiles mills. In 1836 in Lowell, Mass., over 800 women went out on strike protesting against speedup and wage reductions. According to one observer, the leader of the strike "made a flaming Mary Wolstoncraft speech on the rights of women and the inequities of the monied aristocracy."

Two years later, when wages were cut another 2½ percent, the women struck singing:

Oh isn't it a pity that such a pretty girl as I

Should be sent to the factory to pine away and die

*Oh! I cannot be a slave
Oh! I will not be a slave
For I'm so fond of liberty
That I cannot be a slave.*

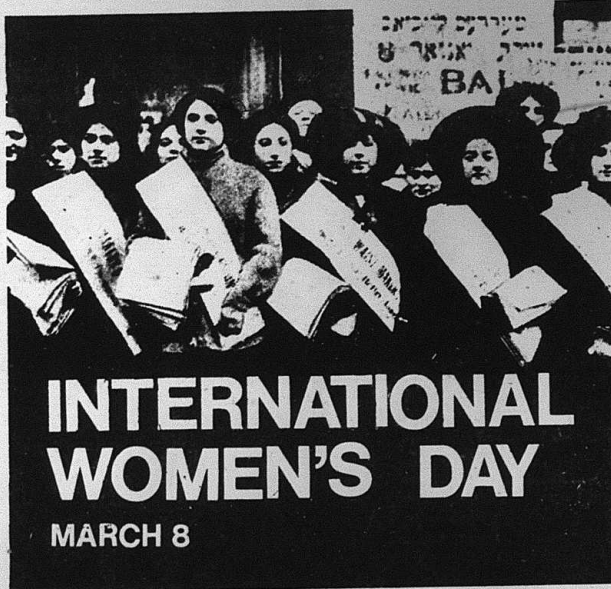
By the 1850's women were involved in a number of important strikes. In 1859, 20,000 shoemakers went on strike in Natick, Mass. Newspapers commented on the role women played and argued that the strike was living proof of the dangerous effects of women's rights. The women were striking for equal pay with the men shoemakers. "What next," thundered one paper, "socialism?"

On March 8, 1959, the women shoemakers organized and led their first demonstration; over 10,000 participated.

In the period from 1890 to the outbreak of the First World War, working women played a leading role in both the labor and feminist movements.

Mary "Mother" Jones was a founding member of the IWW and an organizer of miners and miners' wives. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a Wobbly organizer, was also a militant feminist, as was Kate Richards O'Hare, leading member of the Socialist Party.

Emma Goldman, America's most "notorious" anarchist, worked with garment workers in New York City. She also travelled throughout the country speaking on feminist questions such as prostitution, birth control, love, and marriage. Margaret Sanger, head of the women's section of the Socialist Party, was active in both the Lawrence and Patterson strikes and also led the



Striking garment workers in New York

fight for birth control reform.

The role of these remarkable women leaders is no more important than the activities of the masses of American working women. In 1909, for example, Clara Lemlich, a 19-year-old garment worker, called upon the union to embark upon a general strike in the garment trade. What followed was called "the uprising of the 30,000." This strike, mainly involving young women garment workers, overcame tremendous racial and ethnic divisions, as well as the intransigence of the em-

ployers, to win a major victory for women workers in the garment trade.

Three years later, women also played a leading role in the famous successful strike in Lawrence, Mass. Women, many either pregnant or carrying their children, marched on the picket lines carrying posters which read "We want Bread and Roses too!" The magnificent show of working class solidarity and sisterhood inspired women workers throughout the country.

In other countries as well, working class women were fighting for their

liberation. In England in 1886, for example, Annie Besant, a radical and a feminist, organized over 2,000 young women and waged a successful strike against the Bryant and Mays Match Company. The strike was the first major upheaval by English working women, and was seen as a strike involving women's rights.

In the 1880's Eleanor Marx, a revolutionary socialist and feminist, went into the East End of London to organize working women. Soon Marx became the acknowledged leader of the women workers movement. She helped organize the first women's trade union sections.

In 1913, the East London Federation of the Suffragettes was organized by Sylvia Pankhurst. The ELFS was a working class feminist organization of over 2,000 women, which fought for the vote, equal pay for women workers, the organization of women into unions, day care centers, birth control clinics, and other issues involving working women.

WOMEN AND BOLSHEVISM

In Russia, feminism was an integral part of the working women's movement. In 1903, largely through the work of Alexandra Kollontai, the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party adopted a platform calling for equal rights for women.

Two years later, Matryona Sarmenova organized a textile mill walkout which led to a general strike in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. The next day, she and two other women spoke at a rally of over 30,000 workers. This was the first time in modern Russian history that women addressed a working class audience.

On March 8, 1917, textile workers, munitions workers, and housewives joined together to celebrate International Women's Day. This demonstration touched off the agitation which led to the fall of Czarism.

The Russian Revolution in October 1917 accomplished more for women than any other single historical event. Legislation helped shatter the old family structure; women were no longer subject to men; homosexuality was no longer a crime; abortions were made free and legal. Attempts were made to free women from the home by setting up communal restaurants, central laundries, day care centers, and communal housing.

However, the Bolshevik revolution and the worldwide revolutionary upsurge following World War I were defeated. The feminist movement, like the working class movement, was crushed by the counterrevolutionary forces of Stalinism and fascism.

In Russia, women lost all the rights they had won; International Women's Day became a holiday celebrated the way Mothers Day is celebrated in the United States.

Feminism as a political force remained dormant until the 1960's.



Paterson strikers marching up Fifth Avenue, June 5, 1913.



OFFICE WORKERS PICKETING U.A.W. HEADQUARTERS

However, during periods of working class upheaval, feminism re-emerged briefly. In America, for example, women played an important role during the sit-down strikes in Detroit and Flint. The spirit of women's liberation was rekindled during the sit-down movement.

Under the leadership of Genora Johnson, the women of Flint, Michigan, formed the Women's Emergency Brigade, which engaged in strike activity to help their husbands, brothers, and friends who were sitting in and controlling the auto plants. When the women approached the occupied plants, the men would rush to the plant windows and cheer them on.

In one instance, the Women's Emergency Brigade was involved in mass picketing around a Chevrolet plant when they were tear gassed by the national guard. Calmly, but firmly, the women returned to the union hall where they washed their faces. They marched right back to the plant, wearing their bright red caps and singing "Hold the Fort."

For these women, the strike was a turning point in their lives. "A new woman was born in the strike," one woman exalted. "Women who only yesterday were horrified at unionism, who felt inferior to the task of organizing, speaking, leading, have as if overnight became the spearhead in the battle of unionism."

In the sixties, with the rebirth of the women's liberation movement, International Women's Day and the history of women's struggles were rediscovered. Inspired by the movements of earlier times, feminists are trying to rebuild a massive working class feminist movement.

There have been some successes. In

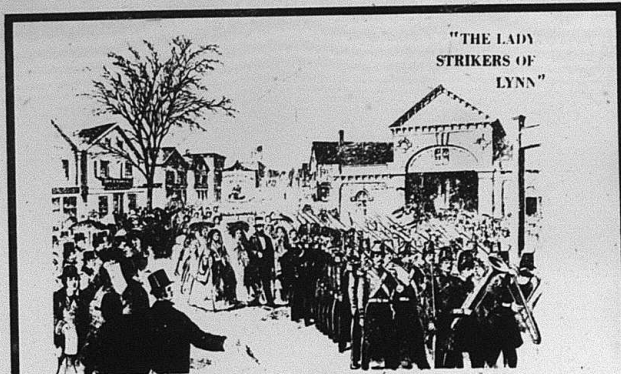
all the capitalist countries, women's liberation groups exist. In Ireland, for example, women have played an prominent role in the struggle against British imperialism; Bernadette Devlin, one of the leaders of the Irish movement, sees herself as also a member of the women's liberation movement.

In America, the ideas of the women's movement have begun to reach working class women. More and more working women are becoming aware of the special discrimination they face on the job and in the home, and are beginning to agitate for equal pay, better jobs, and child care.

Black, Latin, and other non-white women, who face race and sex as well as class discrimination, are also becoming involved in aspects of the women's movement. In industries, such as telephone, and in hospitals, Black and Latin women have been involved in organizing militant strikes.

In order to rebuild a feminist movement on the scale of past struggles, it is essential that working class women's organizations be strengthened. Most working women have not yet been organized into unions. Autonomous women's caucuses must be built in many existing unions, both to fight for the specific needs of women and to join the struggle to democratize and revitalize the union movement.

In building and strengthening working class women's organizations is a key to the growth of the independent women's liberation movement. In this way, the demands of the women's movement -- equal pay, equal work, child care, free and legal abortions, to name just a few -- can be met by those women who have the power to change society. ■



Greer In Australia

Germaine Greer has been visiting her home town of Melbourne, Australia, for the past month. She came here directly from an exhausting speaking tour of Canada, and has consistently declined to speak publicly, on the grounds that this is purely a holiday visit.

Immediately after she arrived, every local newspaper and magazine rushed to print, in the guise of reviews of her book, with articles critical of her, and of Women's Liberation in general.

Greer hasn't hesitated to give a number of exclusive interviews to radical and not-so-radical newspapers. In these interviews she made clear an anti-democratic, arrogant attitude toward the Women's Liberation Movement.

In spite of her self-assigned role of publicity agent for the women's movement, Greer has refused to speak at any public Women's Liberation meetings here, although some people feel that she has a responsibility to the extremely new movement in this country. However, her presence has stirred up an unprecedented interest in Women's Liberation in Melbourne, and there is much discussion of the issues it raises, both in the media and among large numbers of people, as well as a large number of "consciousness-raising groups."

In addition, a mass march has been scheduled for International Women's Day in Melbourne.

The Baby Business

A Rochester, New York newspaper reported recently that the Gerber Products Company, the world's largest producer of baby food products, has recently entered the "day care field." Their plan to open two child care centers in the Rochester area caused tremors among established child care center operators in the area who fear the competition of big business.

For many years the advertising slogan of the company has been "babies are our business, our only business." A company spokesman said that "full commitment to child care" re-emphasized that motto.

A few months ago, Gerber, as well as other baby food producers, came under attack for including monosodium glutamate (MSG) as an ingredient in its food products. The substance was known to cause disorders in animals when fed to them in large amounts. It has no nutritive value, and is included only to improve the taste of food.

What is clear is that profits are the real "only business" of the Gerber Company. Their use of ingredients of

doubtful safety is but one example. As for day care centers, those with real concern for babies and mothers know that day care centers which are run for profit and controlled by corporate officials will never be able to meet the need for quality child care in this country.

According to Senator Walter Mondale of Wisconsin, quoted in the *New York Times* recently, there are some 6 million pre-school children whose mothers are working, while there are only 700,000 slots in licensed day care facilities. Mondale has introduced into the Senate a modified version of a federally-sponsored child care development bill that was vetoed by Nixon in the fall.

But the new bill presents even more restrictions on the number of children who are eligible for the plan, and on the amount of services available to them. The plan is clearly inadequate, by his own statistics.

Women will never get the kind of child care we need by depending upon the good graces of Democratic and Republican senators or the Gerber Company. We must build a movement that can fight for and win free 24-hour childcare, controlled by the parents and staff, that will take good care of our children.

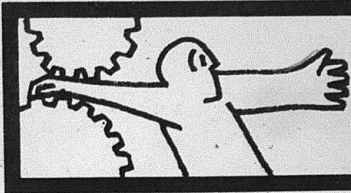


Gerber

Income Gap Widens

The gap between the earnings of American men and women workers has increased by 4.5 percent in the last fifteen years, according to a recent government study. The study of year-round, full-time workers, prepared by the Women's Bureau of the US Department of Labor, shows that, whereas the median wage of a working American woman in 1955 was 63.9 percent of that of a male worker, it had dropped to 60.5 percent in 1969 and to 59.4 percent in 1970.

The median income for women in 1970 was \$5,323, for men \$8,966. 12 percent of year-round, full-time women workers learned less than \$3,000, whereas only 5 percent of men earn that little. Only 7 percent of working women earn more than \$10,000, compared with 40 percent of male workers. ■



Life and Limb

Dr. Alice Watts

The Occupational Health and Safety Law of 1970 supposedly guarantees every worker in America a safe and healthful workplace. The preamble to the law states that its purpose is "to assure so far as possible every working man and woman in the nation safe and healthful working conditions . . ." However, the law is sorely lacking in many respects, and is unlikely to come anywhere near accomplishing its lofty purpose.

The law is based on a series of standards which cover the conditions of the work environment. These standards are to be set by the Secretary of Labor. The secretary derives the standards from the recommendations of such semi-official bodies as the American Conference of Government Industrial Hygienists -- a committee made up of government and business representatives, who decide by "consensus" the maximum amount of poisons to which workers can be exposed in the context of economic feasibility.

DEATH STANDARDS

The noise guidelines provide a good example of how such standards are set. Government officials wanted a standard of 85 decibels, the level above which all scientists agree some loss of hearing occurs among a moderate percentage (about 3 - 6 percent) of the exposed population. General Motors and other companies objected, saying that they could not meet this standard. So, a compromise of 90 decibels was reached.

The difference between 85 decibels and 90 decibels is an increase of about 7 times in noise intensity. *Ninety decibels guarantees serious deafness to a large percentage (15 - 20 percent) of the workers exposed.*

Another interesting aspect of noise is that all other industrial countries but the United States recognize that noise can cause heart disease, hormone imbalance, and other physiologic effects. American workers are somehow "immune" to these effects, according to the government.

The case of the asbestos standard is also illuminating. Asbestos is a substance encountered in almost every industry, since it is integral to the insulation of most industrial plants. It is also used in over 3,000 products made in this country.

For the past 70 years, scientists have known that inhalation of asbestos dust causes severe, even fatal scarring of the lungs (asbestosis). More recently, it has been found that even small exposures to asbestos dust frequently result in cancer (in a large fraction of the people exposed), as long as 30 or 40 years after the exposure.

Because it is so hazardous, the Department of Labor declared that asbestos control was to be a prime target for the new Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA). The first step in controlling asbestos hazard was the publication of an emergency standard on December 6.

A standard of 2 fibers per cubic

centimeter was proposed by labor representatives in Washington. This level of dust has been shown in England to almost completely prevent the disease asbestosis.

The emergency standard accepted by the government was five fibers per cubic centimeter. The permanent standard becomes law three months after the emergency standard is announced. The government will probably adopt the lower 2-fiber standard in April.

However, both the higher and the lower standards were aimed only at prevention of asbestosis, not cancer. There is evidence that cancer has occurred in British workers who have been exposed to no more than two fibers per cubic centimeter throughout their working lives. If health were really the criterion, *no (zero) asbestos exposure would be permissible.*

Businessmen must be forced to design and use equipment which does not allow the release of any asbestos dust into the air which workers breathe. Some equipment which meets these rigorous criteria exists -- and what is more, it is simple and cheap to use. It would be a technically simple task to design more of such equipment.

So far, there are very few standards for workplace hazards. There are over one million chemical substances in use in American workplaces, but there are only 450 substances to which a standard applies. Most of the existing standards are not intended to prevent

chronic disease or illness which becomes evident many years after exposure; they are only "scientific" enough to prevent obvious expensive (compensable) disease.

Even if the law were to set decent standards for health and safety, it would still remain a sham because enforcement is almost non-existent. There are 4.1 million workplaces, and 55 million workers, but only 500 inspectors. There are only 14 industrial hygienists in the country.

Inspectors cannot take the air samples necessary for ascertaining whether a toxic substance in the air exceeds the concentration limit set in the law. This type of sample can only be taken by one of the 14 industrial hygienists.

Even if the 500 inspectors were empowered to give citations and to ensure enforcement of the law, it has been calculated that if they had no paperwork, and continuously visited plants, they would visit each plant only once every 23 years. With paper work, and the frequent court appearances required by the law, they will visit each plant once every 93½ years -- with luck!

The lack of inspectors is a direct result of the lack of money devoted to this problem. As with all programs for public welfare, a small fraction of what is necessary is appropriated for it.

Labor representatives asked for \$150 million for the Occupational Health and Safety program. The program is now functioning with a budget of \$36 million. The result of this asperity is a hiring freeze on all personnel in the program -- including inspectors.

The government has also insured that the overworked inspectors are not sympathetic to working people. It is official policy that inspectors are never workers or unionists. The government claims that only business management has the experience to ensure fair enforcement of the law.

With all these impediments to the

enforcement of the law, it is amazing that there is any enforcement at all. *This is exactly what industry and government officials seem to want.*

As of November, 1971, there had been a total of 10,668 inspections in 9,817 workplaces which employ 1,851,688 workers. Only 23 percent of the establishments inspected were found to be in compliance -- that means that 76 percent of the employers weren't furnishing even the minimal safety and health conditions that the law provides. (Moreover, the compliance officers admit that they are unable to look for violations under each and every regulation of the act during their inspections.)

By November, 1971, the government had issued 7,450 citations for lack of compliance with the law. Of these, over 400 citations were being contested by business. Many companies are even contesting trivial fines of \$20 - \$30, of which there are many.

"DUE PROCESS"

This apparently reflects a determined effort on the part of some business groups to tie up the enforcement apparatus of the law by contesting all citations, no matter how trivial. For businesses, lengthy litigation is an effective weapon against the law. They have control over tremendous economic resources, which allows them to engage in litigation, and the time -- their lives aren't at stake!

The government goes along with industry's wish to continue to exercise its prerogatives without interference from any outsiders. In a behind-closed-doors session for the National Association of Manufacturers, the government stressed its concern for "due process" -- for business enterprises. The businesses will be protected by endless chances for litigation, lasting on the average three to five years.

The "imminent danger" clause of the law furnishes an example of the government's willingness to weaken the law. This clause was the strongest section of the original version of the law which was proposed in the House of Representatives.

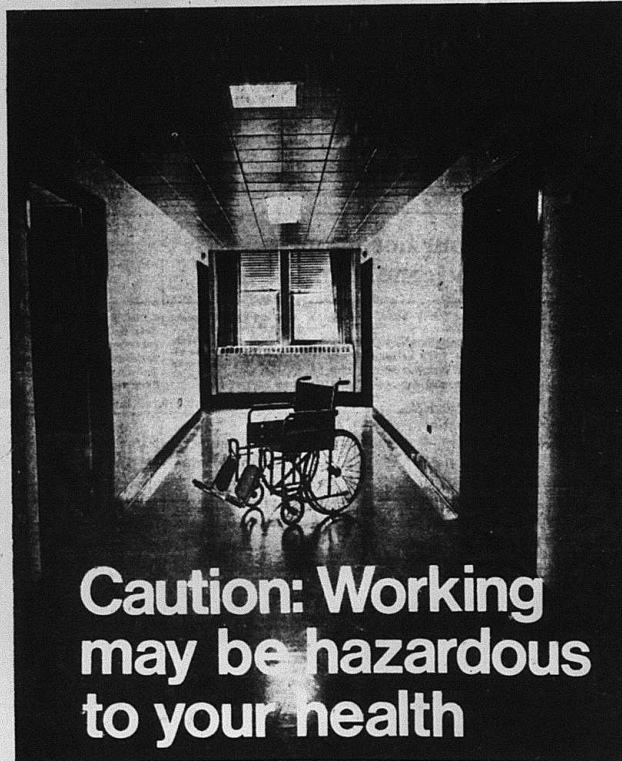
This version allowed compliance officers to close down an industrial operation in which a danger existed which could be expected to cause death or serious injury to workers in the area -- including "danger from substances or conditions which would cause irreversible harm even though the resulting physical disability might not manifest itself at once."

The present law requires, even in cases of emergency (imminent danger), that the compliance officer must go to federal court to stop the process causing danger. Because of this requirement, the clause has become meaningless. You can't save lives from an explosion by discussing it in court.

So far the imminent danger clause has only been applied once! In fact, even when 22 workers were blown up in the Port Huron Tunnel in Michigan on December 13, it took the government eleven days, until December 23, to post the notice of imminent danger at the tunnel site.

The imminent danger clause has been weakened further by the interpretation given it by the Department of Labor. What is an "imminent danger?" This question was raised by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) in a test case on the clause.

OCAW asked if an obviously ha-



zardous condition which will cause irreversible damage or illness to workers was an imminent danger. The union claimed that pools of mercury on the floor of the Allied Chemical Factory in Moundsville, West Virginia, represented an imminent danger - that is, a situation in which gradual toxic build-up (of mercury) occurred in the workers in the plant.

The union showed through its own investigation that at least twenty-five workers in the cell area of the plant had symptoms (tingling in the extremities, tremors, irritability, drowsiness, loss of memory and sore gums), and/or chemical evidence of mercury poisoning.

The Labor Department, however, stated that imminent danger only applied when there was a "... risk of sudden great physical harm ... like a boiler explosion ...". The Labor Department refused to consider that gradual illness, even from what is generally recognized as an obvious and serious hazard, was an "imminent danger."

(The company, whose annual profits are around \$40 million, was fined \$1,000 for a "serious hazard" and told to abate the hazard by June 2, two days after the citation was issued. A repeat inspection on June 18, however, still showed excessive mercury exposure in the plant.)

This clause which could have been an important defense against dangerous working conditions has thus been weakened so much by the government that it is irrelevant.

In other serious areas, the law is equally weak. Under the definitions of the law, willful negligence resulting in the death of a worker (read: murder), is subject to only a \$10,000 fine and/or a year's imprisonment. In fact, those fines that have been imposed have been much less than \$10,000 in most cases.

A \$600 fine was imposed for a death which occurred in the US Steel plant in Denver. A worker fell into an open hearth furnace because of an absent guard rail. A similar accident occurred last year in the same plant. Life is cheap -- for giants like US Steel.

BASIS FOR STRUGGLE

Even though the law cannot be relied upon by workers to prevent hazardous working conditions, it can be used as a basis for struggles over working conditions. It purports to offer workers some new rights - which can be made real if they are fought for.

Since the law guarantees a safe and healthful workplace to all working people, it is now even more legitimate than before for workers to demand working conditions which will fulfill that guarantee. Any refusal by management to obey the law and to grant improved working conditions can be made a focus of local union and rank and file publicity and activity.

The law can also be used to win concrete improvements in working conditions, since most unpleasant working conditions are also in some way hazardous to health or safety. (Although the law covers nowhere near all the possible hazards found in industry.) Issues concerning working conditions and job safety and health can be powerful organizing tools for rank and file workers.

Also, use of the law's provisions can offer some protection to militants. There is a clause of the law which prohibits employers from discharging or



otherwise discriminating against employees who are exercising their rights under the law. Alleged acts of discrimination against employees are entitled to rapid investigation by the Department of Labor. (Although this clause has not yet been tested, so its interpretation is not yet established.)

The actual process of filing a complaint is fairly simple. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) of the Department of Labor must be notified in writing of a "violation of a standard which threatens physical harm." (There are forms put out by OSHA for this purpose.) In the case of an "imminent danger" telephone notification of the hazard is acceptable.

However, the subsequent course of a complaint may involve long legal battles. Workers must be able to defend their own case, through lawyers, their own scientists and doctors, union representatives and/or by themselves.

If there is an inspection, either as the result of a complaint or initiated by the OSHA, workers in the plant and their representatives have the right to accompany the compliance officer at no loss of pay, and to point out areas of possible violation.

A technically skilled representative of the workers may also accompany the inspector and point out the hazards and their implications for health and safety. Workers have a right to copies of any inspection reports or complaints concerning their workplace.

The law gives workers a number of additional rights: the right to have dangerous substances identified; the right to have records made and kept of

his or her exposure to all dangerous substances; and the right of access to these records and any other company records concerning health or injuries on the job.

It is obvious that reliance on the law will not provide a safe and healthful workplace. Additional and alternative means will be needed to insure that goal. For one thing, collective bargaining agreements can be used to win protection from hazards.

An unusual contract of United Steel Workers Local 2698 with Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel Corporation allowed workers to walk off the job and receive unemployment compensation. The contract allowed workers who believed conditions to be "unsafe or unhealthy beyond the normal hazard inherent in the operation" to either file a grievance or be relieved from the job without loss of pay. Workers who were relieved were to be reassigned to other jobs. The strike occurred when 63 workers were laid off instead of being reassigned.

Contracts can incorporate specific health and safety standards, either existing government standards, or more stringent levels. Contracts can provide for the right to have a plant safety committee with the power to monitor plant conditions; to take their own air samples and measurements; and if necessary to shut down plant operations which violate contract standards. Contracts can allow union members to bring in their own consultants to determine the safety of the plant.

So far, an important management weapon has been their ability to keep workers totally ignorant about the ha-

zards of the processes with which they are involved. Workers in most factories do not even know the names of the substances they are handling, much less the possible health effects. Neither the federal law nor contract provisions can be utilized effectively by workers who do not recognize the hazards around them.

One model program for the education of workers is being developed in New Jersey. A group of scientists and doctors called the Scientists Committee for Occupational Health has been teaching shop stewards and safety committee members from chemical factories, oil refineries, cosmetic and pharmaceutical plants about the hazards in their shops.

Forty-five workers, members of District 8 of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, attended a 12-week course covering the chemical and physical hazards of their industries and the means of measuring and preventing these hazards. The workers are now attempting to bring instruments into their workplaces to monitor hazards.

The Scientists Committee is planning a similar course in March for metal workers in the UAW, USW, and other unions.

While workers can still use what few rights the law grants, there should be no illusions that the law itself will win any broad or lasting improvements in their working conditions. The Occupational Health and Safety Law does more to protect the "health and safety" of business profits than that of the working people who produce the goods of the country. ■

labor in brief

Ted Farrow

Amalgamated Transit Union Strikes NJ bus line

One of the largest private bus companies in the country, Transport of New Jersey, has been struck by the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). The company is New Jersey's largest bus company.

The negotiations before the strike began reflected the company's new get-tough stand. Transport of New Jersey says that it hasn't made a profit since 1967. When a new chairman was appointed a year ago, he began by saying that the ATU would have to sacrifice or the company would go out of business. The company now wants to cut back on fringe benefits, but the union wants to increase both wages and benefits.

One rumor which has appeared in the news is that company officials might prefer a state takeover if there is a long strike. The company has not been profitable, but a takeover would be very profitable to the owners, who would get a generous condemnation price from the state of New Jersey.



Opposition grows among NY postal workers

Rank and file opposition to the conservative officials of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) has been gathering steam over the last few months. The opposition is centered in the 8,000-member New York Branch 36 and organized by the Rank and File Committee.

Branch 36 has a militant history. The 1970 nationwide postal strike began there, and the Branch stayed out after all others went back to work. After the strike was sold out, the Branch threw out its president, Gus Johnson, and elected a rank and file slate headed by current president Vince Sombrotto.

The election was also a slap at NALC National President Joe Rademacher, who directed the sellout of the strike. But Rademacher ignored



the vote and appointed ex-President Johnson to be Director of the New York District.

By June 1971, contract negotiations had dragged on for six months. In anger at the delay, the Branch took a strike vote. Rademacher moved to stop the Branch, and placed it in trusteeship, over Sombrotto's weak and hesitant opposition. During the trusteeship, the Branch voted for no cooperation with the National.

The trusteeship was lifted in January. The next membership meeting saw a new beginning for the Rank and File Committee (RAFC). The RAFC originally put Sombrotto in office, and has established itself as the anchor of national opposition to Rademacher. Now RAFC has begun to organize to push Sombrotto into militant action, and to build itself as a force in Branch 36 and the NALC.

At the February meeting, RAFC introduced a motion for President Sombrotto to appoint a National Education Committee to coordinate all national opposition to Rademacher, and to prepare for a showdown with him at the NALC convention in New Orleans in July. The motion was passed unanimously, and the leaders of RAFC were appointed to be the National Education Committee.

At the February meeting, conservative supporters of Gus Johnson were also organizing. They introduced a motion to take Branch votes, including strike votes, by mail ballot, instead of at general membership meetings, Station meetings, or by voting machines. In the long run, this would help conservatize the Branch and slow down its ability to act. The membership will have a chance to vote on this question at station meetings.

[Adapted from a report by Jerry Hill, a member of Branch 36 and of the New York I.S..]

UFWOC wins contract with Coca-Cola in Fla.

The United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) has broken into the Southeast for the first time by signing a contract in Florida with

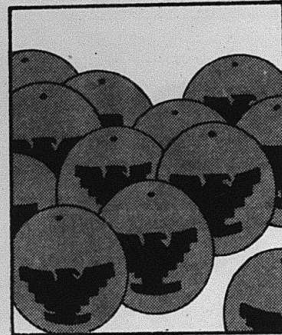
Coca-Cola. The contract will cover 1,200 full-time and migrant workers who grow and pick the oranges in Minute Maid orange juice, owned by Coca-Cola.

The contract gives a better deal to the 300 full-time workers than the migrant workers. Full-time workers won a 25-cent-an-hour raise, and the new wages now range from \$2.25 to \$3.70. They also won for the first time paid holidays, vacations, and paid sick leave.

Migrant workers won 5 cents a box increase in the harvesting piece rate, bringing the rate to 40 cents. Their benefits are about half those of the full-time workers.

The contract was won fairly easily after a six-month organizing drive, which is much less time than it took to win the first contract in California's grape industry. Coca-Cola probably thought it was less expensive to take the union in quietly, rather than take a long, bitter strike.

However, Florida's small growers, who employ most of the state's 120,000 farm laborers, can less easily afford a union than a conglomerate like Coca-Cola. They have started talking about importing migrant West Indian labor rather than recognize the union.



Prisoners strike in Conn., Mich.

The growing prison rebellion in the US is beginning to borrow some of the labor movement's tactics, especially the work stoppage. In Connecticut, a strike by prisoners at the Danbury Correctional Institution has entered its second week. The issue is wages.

Prisoners across the country are used by state and federal governments as a source of cheap labor. Many states produce car license plates with prison labor.

In Danbury, the prisoners produce gloves and electric cable in the prison factory for the government's General Services Administration, which sells it to other government agencies. The profit goes to the government, while the prisoners get from 19 to 46 cents an hour.

The prisoners want a pay increase. They have stopped all prison work, including maintenance and kitchen work. An elected prisoners' committee, made up of two men from each of the 12 barracks, is representing the prisoners in negotiations.

In retaliation, prison officials have cut meals to two a day, stopped evening movies, and isolated five prisoners who organized the strike.



A similar thing happened in Michigan recently when 35 prisoners petitioned state authorities for an increase in pay. In Michigan, large drug companies use prison labor as a source for easy profits. The petition argued that the drug companies were using prisoners as human guinea pigs for drug research without caring what happened to them. The petition was denied.

CPHA employees strike for union contract in A²

[Adapted from a report by Miriam Siefert and Eugene Lee].

Nearly 200 workers fighting for their first union contract went on strike February 25 against the Commission on Professional and Hospital Activities (CPHA) in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The strike is the result of an organizing drive which began a year and a half ago among the women key punch and clerical workers and spread to computer operators and mailers.

CPHA provides 1,500 hospitals around the world with computerized medical records. The rates charged to these hospitals have not risen in ten years, in spite of runaway inflation. CPHA rates have stayed low because of the rock-bottom wages and working conditions of CPHA employees.

Most of the strikers are women, and sex discrimination is a big issue at CPHA. The company hires large numbers of women as teenagers, sets high production quotas, and then fires or demotes them later when they can't keep up the pace. Many employees never last there past the age of 30.

Within the same department, women are paid less than men for the same work, and secret job classifications allow the company to shuffle employees at will. Pregnancy is cause for being fired.

CPHA workers elected UAW Local 157 as their bargaining agent last September, when they got tired of sexist practices and subsidizing low rates through low wages. Since then, 96 percent of the workers have signed check-off cards. The strikers' main demand is for a union shop.

CPHA has taken a hard line, refused to negotiate a union shop, and offered the union less than what the workers have now. Before the strike began, the company "promoted" many employees out of the bargaining unit to weaken the union, and trained scabs to do the work.

The UAW has not fought the company as hard as the company is fighting the UAW. The international rep went South on vacation when the strike started, and Local 157 president, Joe Danz, is trying to run the strike from his office 20 miles away. But the

strikers, in spite of everything, were able to successfully shut down the plant during the first few days of the strike with mass picketing.

Stewardesses fight sexism in friendly skies of United

Stewardesses have been fighting the sex discrimination of US airline companies for the last five years. Now a new battle has started at United Air Lines, at a time when the stewardesses' union is deadlocked with the company over a new contract.

The fight started late last summer after United began enforcing a rule that all stewardesses must weigh-in once a month to prove that they have not gained weight and gone over United's weight limits. If they have gone over, they may be suspended from work until they lose weight. Stewardesses have been fired when they failed to lose weight fast enough.

United stewardesses object to the policy because it is humiliating and degrading and because it is part of the authoritarian attitudes of management toward women.

United's sexist attitude was stated frankly by one executive who said: "You run a \$1.5 billion business, and it boils down to whether some chicks look good in their uniform. If you have fat stewardesses, people aren't going to fly with you." Stewardesses have also been suspended for being underweight.

Most of the major airlines have weight limits, and most have fired stewardesses for being overweight.

**Too fat! Too thin! Too flat!
Too busty!**



Cleveland's Mayor Perk attacks city workers

Cleveland, Ohio, the city with the highest unemployment rate in the US, has received a fresh blow -- this time from Cleveland Mayor Ralph Perk. Perk has started a drive to reduce the wages and numbers of Cleveland's 9,500 city workers.

On February 7, Perk announced he was reducing the work week by 10 percent (meaning 10 percent less pay), and laying off 2,000 people. He threatened 1,500 more layoffs.

Perk is trying to solve Cleveland's financial crisis with layoffs. Before him, Carl Stokes, Cleveland's first black Mayor, tried to meet the crisis with several unsuccessful income tax measures. Perk was elected after he promised no more taxes from city.

hall -- he hopes to raise \$8-9 million toward his budget through the pay cuts and layoffs.

Many people now being fired by Perk are black workers hired for the first time under Stokes' administration. And most of them will be forced back on welfare and unemployment checks.

Reaction to Perk's order by rank and file city workers came quickly. Two days after the announcement, 200 water department workers stopped work. They struck after a slowdown failed to reinstate 45 workers who had refused assignments in protest against the 10 percent pay cut.

On February 16, 700 garbage truck drivers and collectors stopped work. The next day, the street department laborers and 144 drivers in the same department went on strike. The strikes ended when a court decision ordered collectors, drivers, and laborers back to work. By law, Ohio public employees are not allowed to strike.

The unions representing Cleveland city workers are split on a solution to the city's financial crisis. James Trusso, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 244, called for a strike and shutting down the city. However, some union officers, like Robert Brindya, director of Council 78, AFSCME, support a move to raise city income tax from 1 to 1.5 percent.

This measure, like Perk's and Stokes' before it, puts the burden of taxation on the working and poor people of Cleveland -- rather than on the 50 Cleveland-based industries that each made profits of \$60 billion over the last ten years.

[Adapted from a report by Stuart Schaffer, a Cleveland city worker and a member of the I.S.]

Vega workers begin strike against speedup

The continued attempts of General Motors to speed up production -- and the continued resistance of a young UAW local -- led to a strike on March 4 at the Lordstown Vega plant. The dispute started when GM changed management teams at the plant and started laying off hundreds of workers without slowing down production.

Negotiations began several months ago without producing results, and the union took a strike vote to show how solid the local was in the fight against speed-up. The local voted 96 percent in favor of a strike. Negotiations have not been scheduled to begin again until March 13. ■



Taxi drivers in New York City have been given another illustration of the thoroughly rotten nature of their union's leadership. After initiating a series of "wildcat" strikes, officials of Taxi Drivers Union Local 3036 deliberately broke their own strikes.

The strikes were begun under the direction of union officials around the demand that all drivers be paid at least 49 percent commissions [see *Workers Power* no. 52]. At many garages, resentment grew because drivers who were already earning 49 percent did not understand why the strike was important for them. The leadership did little to explain it to them, nor did it explain anything to all the membership about its strategy for winning the strike.

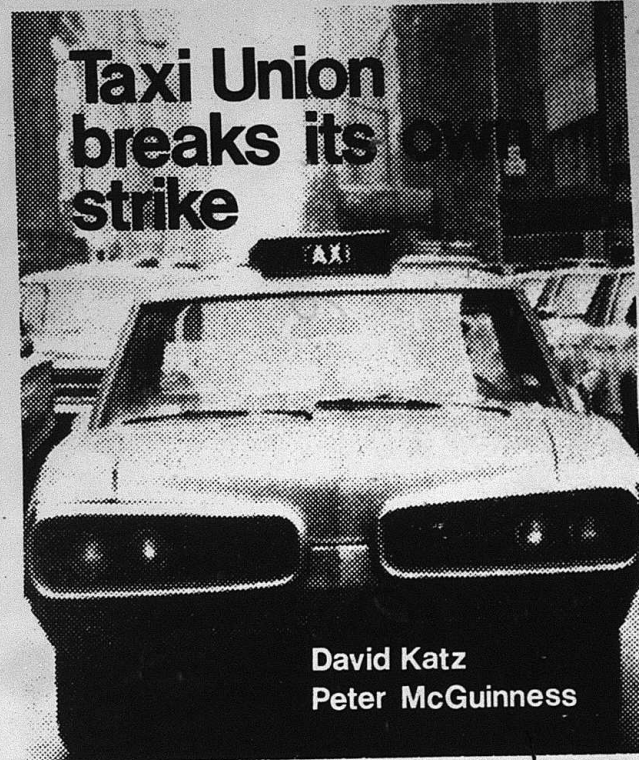
The standard response to any question was, and is: "Don't worry -- we have everything under control." This may have been true, but given the past history of 3036, it was not particular-

ly setting plans, carrying them out, or even understanding what is going on, all it leads to is demoralization.

And demoralization, most likely, is the name of the game that union President Harry van Arsdale is playing. He may have decided that now is the time to get us to ratify the contract we have been working under for a year. But to do so, he needs to teach us the lesson that this is the best we can get.

The kind of strike the union has been running teaches this to some drivers. To others it says, "This union is worthless; we can't change it, and therefore any struggle is hopeless."

Although much of the popular initiative has been taken out of the strike, there is still a lot that militants can do in this situation. At individual garages, we should support the strike, but take the initiative away from the bureaucrats. We can broaden the issues to include demands that appeal



ly reassuring. With demoralization and confusion rapidly resulting, it was easy for the union to pass back-to-work votes after several days on strike.

Militants at a few garages were able to lead real wildcats, but the union leadership quickly showed where it stood on that matter. At one Brooklyn garage, a union Vice President put up a sign saying that the wildcat there was not authorized by the union. He stayed around encouraging drivers to cross the picket line. At a Manhattan garage, a committeeman was threatened with the loss of his position if he didn't end a wildcat at his garage.

After breaking the initial enthusiasm and spontaneity, union officials have continued calling out a few garages for short periods of time, and then sending them back to work. In certain situations this strategy could have some limited value. As it is, without the membership participating

to all drivers, and also add local garage issues. If any local issues can be won, some real gains can be made and drivers will not feel so isolated and demoralized if the union leadership continues its current strategy.

Further, we need a city-wide union meeting at which we can determine what demands we are fighting for and outline a strategy for a strike which can win. This must ultimately mean a city-wide strike. And it must be a strike which is run by the rank and file in a democratic fashion.

This will not come down from Van Arsdale simply for the asking, but will have to be fought for by the ranks. Drivers will only overcome their own doubts and cynicism if they organize their own strike.

If the organization is left in the hands of the present leadership, the strike will at best be a mild failure. The Taxi Drivers Union cannot take another failure. ■

Labor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

a strategy with which to fight back.

Instead the AFL-CIO officials put forward a pathetic proposal, which mainly involves attempting to increase "labor's delegate strength" at the Democratic Party convention from 200 in 1968 to 500 in 1972 (out of a total of 3,000 delegates!). This, American workers are supposed to believe, is sufficient to defend the labor movement from the "most serious challenge" in its history.

In order to implement this "bold" strategy, the AFL-CIO decided not to endorse any specific candidate before the Democratic convention, and to push the election of "uncommitted delegates." Where it is more difficult

Sad to say, much of what the AFL-CIO bureaucrats want in return for this gift will be supported at least on paper by the Democratic Party. This indicates how bankrupt the AFL-CIO program is, not how good the Democrats are. To put it another way, the sellouts the bureaucrats begin at the bargaining table are continued politically inside the Democratic Party.

To solve the problem of unemployment, for example, the only programs the labor bureaucrats can propose are designed to stabilize American capitalism, such as stronger protective tariffs or projects like the SST. Tariffs would set American workers against European and Japanese workers, and could touch off a trade war which would hurt them all; while SST-type projects provide a few jobs, but only by wasting more money on mammoth boondoggles.

The AFL-CIO leadership has never raised demands for a real solution to unemployment, such as a thirty-hour week for forty hours' pay, in order to provide work to laid-off workers. And as supporters of US imperialism and

Kennedy, who was one of the initiators of Landrum-Griffin. And it was a Democrat, John Lindsay, who pushed through legislation in New York City to enforce compulsory arbitration for all city employees.

The recent bill to force compulsory arbitration on the west coast longshoremen (signed into law by Nixon in China) passed the Senate by a vote of 79-3, with almost the unanimous support of the Democrats (McGovern voted for it, Humphrey and Muskie -- the favorites of the labor officials -- conveniently abstained). The Democrats have also continuously supported legislation to outlaw strikes in the railroad industry.

The March 4 issue of *Business Week* outlines the prospects for even broader legislation in the period ahead: "Chances are stronger than they have been in years for the passage of some sort of legislation to prevent strikes, at least in the transportation industry." The response of "Meany and other top labor leaders" (such as Joseph Curran, the dictator of the National Maritime Union), according to *Business Week* is

The fact that, in spite of these policies, the labor leaders can still support Democrats is not surprising, given their own policies. The Democrats' support of anti-labor legislation is matched only by the labor bureaucrats' refusal to struggle against it. Indeed, the labor bureaucracy today has gone far toward integrating itself into the state apparatus of repression against the union membership.

The repressive function of the trade union bureaucracy is shown most clearly in an interview with George Meany in the February 21 issue of *US News and World Report*. [A feature article on the politics and outlook of George Meany, as revealed by this interview, will appear in the next issue of *Workers' Power*.] When asked why membership in American unions is falling behind the growth in the labor force, his answer is blunt and to the point: "I don't know, I don't care."

NO-STRIKE PLEDGE

While talking a tough line on behalf of labor as a "pressure group" within the system, Meany promises in advance a no-strike pledge in case of war (which obviously means that strikes which affect the war effort in Vietnam could legitimately be banned). His long-term goal is the abolition of strikes, on a "voluntary" basis -- which means, in plain English, that he is preparing to take the lead in hamstringing the right to strike and to bring workers' organizations under strict, "benevolent" government regulation.

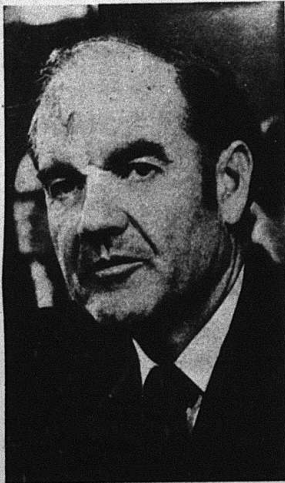
Such policies are being opposed and fought by a growing rank and file movement. But that struggle cannot be successful if confined to any one arena. While struggles on the shop floor and inside the unions are critical, they do not by themselves offer a winning strategy.

To defend itself, labor must also fight against the political parties which advocate anti-labor policies and implement them at the national, state, and local levels. This means a struggle not only against Nixon and the Republican Party, but also against the Democratic Party: it means a struggle to build a workers' party, a party to unite working people and their allies in the Black Liberation, Third World, Women's Liberation, and other movements for social change.

Such a party would actually represent the working class because it would be a democratically controlled political instrument of that class: Its emergence would have a tremendous impact, not only in defending the rank and file of labor in their day-to-day struggles but also in fighting for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam and other foreign countries, for an end to racism and discrimination, and for real solutions to society's problems.

It is too late to build such a party in time for the 1972 elections. However, it is important to begin the process now in order to prepare for the fight ahead. Rank and file forces in the trade unions can begin to build a movement for such a party by fighting against any endorsements of Republican, Democratic, or Wallaceite candidates by local unions.

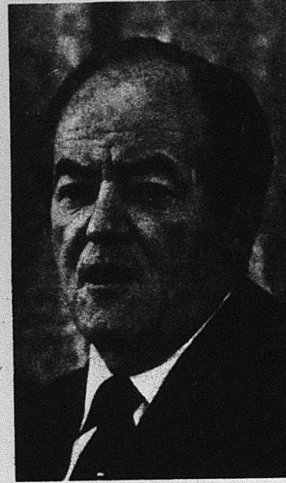
The AFL-CIO officials are correct on one point: *the labor movement is facing a serious challenge*. But instead of providing the ranks with a strategy to fight back and defend their interests, they offer only capitulation and retreat. ■



McGovern



Kennedy



Humphrey

to run uncommitted delegates, especially in states with primaries, labor representatives will run as delegates for various candidates, thus assuring labor representation no matter who wins the primary. The AFL-CIO wants a "mobilization" of the ranks only to vote for whomever the Democrats nominate to run against Nixon.

By remaining uncommitted to any particular candidate, the AFL-CIO officials avoided the danger of bringing into the open differences among them over which one to support -- differences which reflect massive dissatisfaction and cynicism among their members over the electoral system as a whole.

While most labor leaders who have spoken out so far seem to favor the mediocre front-runner Muskie, more conservative elements support Humphrey or Jackson, while those who face pressure from black workers might be tempted to lean toward liberals like Chisholm or Lindsay. In any case, most of them prefer not to discuss in public the various Democratic hopefuls but rather to pledge their members to a blanket endorsement.

the war in Vietnam, Meany and his friends will never demand that the arms economy be scrapped and reconverted for a major effort to rebuild the cities, end pollution, etc., and thus provide millions of useful new jobs.

CAPITALISM FIRST

There is a reason, of course, why neither the Democratic Party nor the AFL-CIO officials will support or implement such a program. The reason is that both of them put the interests of American capitalism, from which they derive their power and privileges, above the needs of American workers, poor people, blacks, and other oppressed minorities. That is why they prefer the continuation of war, racism, and unemployment to raising demands which would challenge the basic relations of wealth and power in American society.

One of the most decisive issues for the labor movement has been anti-labor legislation. Yet the Democratic "friends of labor" have made no significant fight to overturn Taft-Hartley or Landrum-Griffin. In fact it was a Democrat, none other than John

to accept "voluntary" binding arbitration, as a way of eliminating strikes altogether.

It goes without saying that the government will take this one step further by demanding compulsory binding arbitration, and that the "labor statesmen" will put up no resistance except loud bluster, mostly for show.

It was also the Democrats who first proposed and passed legislation giving the President authority to impose wage controls. Among the first moves toward controls was made early in 1970 by liberal Congressman Henry Reuss (D-Wisc.), who introduced a bill (HR14460) to establish wage-price "guideposts."

At that same time (the last week in May, while public attention was focused on the upheaval over the invasion of Cambodia), "populist" Democratic Senator Fred Harris (D-Okla.) introduced a similar bill (S3876). Ever since that time, it has been the Democrats who have been behind every initiative toward wage control laws, and the Democrats who have been first and loudest to applaud Nixon's use of them.

UAW UNITED NATIONAL CAUCUS STRENGTHENS LINKS TO BLACKS AND PRODUCTION WORKERS

On February 20, the United National Caucus of the UAW (United Auto Workers) held a special convention in Detroit, to establish the main issues to focus upon at the coming 1972 UAW Constitutional convention. The caucus made a number of decisions at this meeting which mark important advances.

For the first time the UNC officially established that it favors the formation of an American Labor Party independent of the Democratic and Republican Parties.

For the first time, production workers and blacks have been formally brought into the leadership of the caucus.

For the first time, the caucus established formal mechanisms for decision making between infrequent general caucus meetings, for providing

leadership to the caucus, and for overseeing implementation of its policy.

The above advances do not represent a sudden change in direction of the caucus, but rather mark official caucus recognition for a process that has been going on for the past several months. And in fact, that process is not yet complete.

The Labor Party resolution -- which called upon the UAW to run, where feasible, labor candidates independent of the Democratic and Republican Parties -- passed overwhelmingly. It was argued for in terms of the deadend results of labor's present policy of supporting so-called "friends of labor" in the two capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and few illusions about these parties were expressed.

However, an amendment to the

resolution was turned down which called upon the UAW to "in no case support any candidate of the Democratic or Republican Party." The argument against this amendment was not opposition to the sentiment it expressed, but rather the assertion that "the caucus is not yet ready to take such a strong position."

The UNC singled out for discussion a number of issue areas to focus on. It adopted a major slogan or demand in each area, and also adopted a fuller list of subordinate demands. The following are the issue areas and the major demands in each:

Unemployment and Job Security -- 30 for 40; Working Conditions -- rank and file control of production standards and the right of locals to strike over local problems; Union Democracy -- referendum vote for top UAW officials; Racism -- bring the percentage of blacks in the skilled trades up to that in the corporations as a whole; Wage Controls -- off the board; Political Action -- build a labor party.

LEADERSHIP EXPANDED

The caucus also expanded its leadership through the election of two co-chairmen and a thirteen member executive board. Pete Kelley, founding chairman of the caucus, was retained. He is the vice-president of UAW Local 160 at the GM Tech Center in Warren, Michigan and chairman of the styling unit.

The new co-chairman is Jordan Sims, a Black production worker. Sims is former chairman of the Eldon Ave. Gear and Axel shop committee, UAW Local 961. He was fired from the plant two years ago for his mili-

tant leadership, though he still remains active in the local and is contesting for its presidency [see Workers' Power no. 47].

The board has a seven to six majority of members who come out of production units -- an important step for a caucus which until quite recently was led almost exclusively by whites from the skilled trades. It will probably be a while still, before the newer members of the caucus leadership fully assert themselves, although that process had already begun to occur even before the executive board was elected.

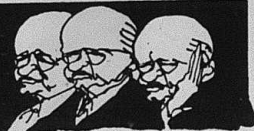
The election of the executive board also marks an important step toward the UNC beginning to organize its affairs on a more systematic basis.

When the caucus was smaller and less ambitious in the tasks it saw for itself, informal organizational methods were possible.

As the caucus has grown and has begun to mature, those loose organizational methods became a hindrance. The election of an executive board provides a framework in which this problem can be overcome.

The UNC convention voted to press for reversal of the present UAW opposition to protective legislation for women, and its replacement with the demand that protective legislation be maintained and extended to men. It also voted to ask the UNC executive board to organize a campaign for the reinstatement of Jordan Sims with full seniority, and to use this campaign as a means to focus on the questions of unsafe working conditions and other important issues that can be raised in the context of the campaign. ■

Repression Roundup



Free Feliciano And Guzman!

In a series of court appearances and legal maneuvers, the New York District Attorney's office has proceeded full steam ahead in its attempts to railroad Carlos Feliciano. Despite the fact that both of Carlos' lawyers, William Kunstler and Conrad Lynn, are tied up in other cases, the Bronx D. A. is pushing for an immediate trial date.

During the 17 months the Puerto Rican Nationalist was jailed on \$175,000 bail, the D.A. cared nothing about setting a trial date. Since October, when Carlos won release on \$55,000 bail, the trial date has become the D.A.'s chief concern.

The D.A.'s new-found sense of urgency about the trial date reflects the growing support the case has been gathering. Carlos has spoken before hundreds of audiences, including Puerto Rican students, unemployed Black construction workers, and supporters of the Irish freedom struggle.

Coverage in both the underground and official press has grown. A number of sub-committees, fund raising activities, and speaking engagements are building broad support in New Jersey.

The case of Carlos Feliciano is an important symbol of both the fight for Puerto Rican independence and the fight for democratic rights for political prisoners. For this reason, the government is anxious to obtain a conviction.

Only the broadest possible support and mass action, which combines the strength of the Puerto Rican movement with other forces fighting for social justice, can win Carlos' release.

On March 14, Carlos again goes to court in Manhattan. The same morning, Pablo "Yoruba" Guzman, a Young Lords Party member [see Workers' Power No. 51], will be sentenced on a draft resistance charge. A mass joint demonstration is planned to defeat this attack by the US government on both the movement for Puerto Rican independence and the fight against US militarism.

Free Carlos Feliciano and Yoruba Guzman, and all political prisoners!

Conference On Puerto Rican Prisoners

A conference on Puerto Rican Political Prisoners will be held in New York City on March 19 at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church on 113th Street. Prior to the conference a number of sub-conferences will take place throughout the city, aimed especially at the Puerto Rican community.

The conference was called in response to the growing attacks by the US government against the Puerto Rican liberation movement. In the last few years, as the movement for independence and social justice has demon-

strated its mass character, both in Puerto Rico and in the Puerto Rican community in the US, the US government has systematically framed militants in a blatant attempt to terrorize the movement off the streets.

The government has attempted to pin criminal charges against independence fighters, usually bombing charges. Yet it is the US government which is the real terrorist, with a history of colonialism, plunder, murder, and complete contempt for the democratic right of the Puerto Rican people to determine their own destiny.

The conference will take up the cases of all imprisoned Puerto Rican independence fighters, including those from the 1950 Nationalist uprising and more recent cases. A conference fact sheet lists 33 major cases, including Carlos Feliciano, Humberto Pagan, William Fapia, Eduardo Cruz, Wilfredo Melendez, Lolita Lebron, and Juan Antonio Corretjer.

The aims of the conference include "to denounce the colonial status of Puerto Rico and the political repression that is systematically being carried out by the American government . . ." and the creation of an on-going organization that can build a campaign to win freedom for all Puerto Rican political prisoners.

The political prisoners conference, which has primarily been organized by El Comite, Puerto Rican student groups, and many independents, deserves the broadest possible support, and offers an example of the kind of effective united defense activities that can win freedom for all political prisoners. ■



Carlos Feliciano

Southern Ireland Cracks Down On The IRA

Joan McKiernan

The leaders of the Irish government have once again revealed themselves to be collaborators in British imperialism's domination of Ireland, north and south. Leaders of the IRA, both Provisional and Official, were arrested in Dublin last week.

Those arrested included Cathal Goulding, Chief of Staff of the Official IRA, Tony Hefferman, Secretary of Official Sinn Fein, and Sean Kenny, who is responsible for fund raising in the US. Kenny was arrested as he was on his way to the airport to testify at a US congressional hearing on Ireland.

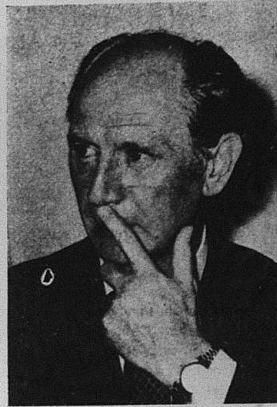
Perhaps most atrocious was the government's arrest of one of the Provisional IRA men who had recently escaped from internment on the Maidstone prison ship in Northern Ireland.

The IRA men were arrested under the Offenses Against the State Act which enables the government to hold anyone for 48 hours before charging

them. Several of the IRA leaders were finally released on \$1,200 bail, an outrageous sum in Ireland, after being charged with belonging to an illegal organization and maintaining an illegal army against the State.

The hypocrisy of these charges is evident to all. Tony Hefferman and Tomas MacGiolla, President of Sinn Fein, whom the police were unable to capture, are leaders of a legal political party which represents the politics of the Republican movement. This technicality has, however, not stopped the government in the past, when it interned Sinn Fein members in the 1950's.

The IRA has been able to operate openly in the South until very recently. Members were able to hold marches and rallies, sell the *United Irishman*, appear on TV programs, and give news interviews. But in the wake of increasing British pressure on the



Irish Prime Minister Lynch

Irish government, the crackdown has come.

The national TV station is now forbidden to have IRA members on their programs. The arrests last week are the closest the government has come to the internment policy it has been threatening.

The government has taken these steps to show Britain it is doing its best to maintain "security" in the South, while Britain "keeps the peace" in the North. In return it hopes to obtain "concessions" such as minor political reforms in the North -- a few more seats in the Stormont parliament for the Catholic minority.

Prime Minister Lynch also hopes to maintain "good" trade relations with Britain, whom Ireland is following into the Common Market against the wishes and best interest of its people.

The slight prospect for such political reform was demonstrated by Bri-

tish actions this week. The highest court in Northern Ireland had ruled that the Stormont Government's direction of British troops since August, 1969, was unconstitutional according to the Government of Ireland Act.

This decision meant that all actions taken by the army since that time -- the beatings, shootings, internment -- were illegal.

But the British government would not stand for such a decision. In one night Parliament rushed a bill through overruling the court decision. There was only one negative vote -- that of Bernadette Devlin. Not even the famous Labor left would support the cause of justice at that moment. This is the kind of political action the Irish government is willing to put up with in Northern Ireland.

FUTILE TERROR

While the Fianna Fail (dominant party in the South) government is showing its hypocrisy and weakness, the IRA is showing its own frustration and weakness, opening itself up to attacks by the British working class and further hatred by the Protestant working class in Northern Ireland.

Recently the Official IRA began a bombing campaign in England, killing 7 civilians, and attempted to assassinate John Taylor, member of the Northern Ireland cabinet. Taylor was responsible for handling law and order in Ulster and advocated the policy of internment.

The IRA has tried military campaigns such as these often in the past and has always met with failure. The English bombing campaigns, though intended to hit military targets, have too often hurt only civilians. This has only served to alienate the working class in Britain and Northern Ireland from support of the Irish struggle. ■

Premier Salvador Allende of Chile has begun a national purge of homosexuals, the first in Chile's history, with the removal of homosexual artists and intellectuals from high government places.

The information comes from reports in Brazilian newspapers. Observers note that the actions followed soon after the visit to Chile of Cuban Premier Castro, whose regime has mounted a similar purge. ■



"Socialist" Chile Begins Purge Of Homosexuals

In the 17th century the island of Tortuga, off the northern coast of Haiti, was a haven for French pirates. With the rebellion of the black population against the whites and sugar planters in 1791, Tortuga became part of the sovereign state of Haiti. This is no longer the case.

Recently the Haitian dictatorship sold the island and its population to Dupont Caribbean Incorporated. The inhabitants, in the sale contract, were considered "indigenous personnel," and will be paid low salaries by the corporation. (After all, they are black and the grandchildren of slaves!)

Moreover, the contract stipulated forced expropriation of the small plots of land owned by the impoverished peasantry. Dupont Caribbean Corporation will pay "indemnization" according to what it considers "assuring the subsistence of the interested parties."

So there you have it: a capitalist

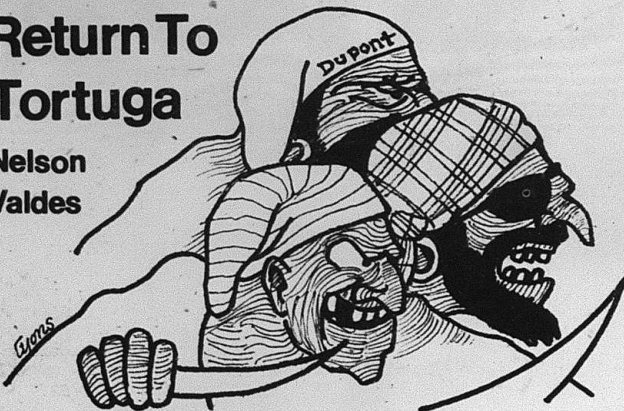
institution undermining the so-called sacred principle of private property. And the State Department is not even asking for "prompt, adequate, and in cash" payment. Perhaps the peasants of Tortuga cannot afford to have their lobby in Washington.

The situation is no better in Port-au-Prince. The government of Baby Doc (son of Papa Doc) in Haiti will not tax the new owners of Tortuga. In the signed contract the state renounces "all rights of direct or indirect expropriation or nationalization in the region during the duration of the contract." That is, 99 years.

The transaction was undertaken by Weber T. Alexandre, Economic Minister of Haiti and Don Pierson, President of Dupont Caribbean Incorporated. The pirates have ended their transaction but in the final analysis the people will have the last word. ■

The Pirates Return To Tortuga

Nelson Valdes



Asia

CONTINUED FROM
PAGE 3

1962, when Khrushchev and President Kennedy implicitly agreed to respect each other's "spheres of influence," Kennedy and then Johnson were preoccupied with meeting the threats to American interests in the "underdeveloped" countries. They concentrated on the combined use of moderate reforms and military repression to combat revolutionary threats in these countries. While this proved unsuccessful in Vietnam, Russia's "hands off" attitude was useful to the US elsewhere.

But in the meantime, Russia, both under Khrushchev and under his successors, followed a quiet diplomatic policy aimed at increasing their influence with formally "non-aligned" governments. This approach paid real dividends, particularly in the Arab oil-producing countries and in the expansion of Russian power in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

Russia's increased power has played a major role in Nixon's calculations. US-Russian rivalry has continued as before in the Middle East, while in Europe and on such international issues as arms control, negotiations have continued as before. The Nixon administration's concern with Russia can more easily be seen in regard to the India-Pakistan war. There, Nixon's apparently illogical pro-Pakistani policy can be seen in part as a futile attempt to counter Russia's growing influence (through its alliance with India) by backing India's traditional rival.

Several accounts make it clear that, as early as 1969, Nixon recognized the possibility of reversing the United States's (and his own) traditional hostility to China and instead using China as a counter to Russian influence in the Pacific. Russian trade with Japan had been growing (and continues to do so); Russian military aid to North Vietnam made the USSR the

most influential power in that country. Russia's emergence as both a military and an economic power in Asia could be anticipated.

In March 1969, Russian troops clashed with Chinese troops along their border; three months later, Russian bombers were redeployed from the west to the Chinese border region. Later that same year, Nixon sent the first secret diplomatic "signals" to China indicating a desire for a thaw. From that point, the secret contacts continued until the Nixon visit was negotiated in June of last year.

The most fundamental result of Nixon's visit was thus an agreement that, for the present, China and the US would accept each other's existing power in Asia and oppose any increase in Russian power. As stated in the communique:

"Neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to the efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony."

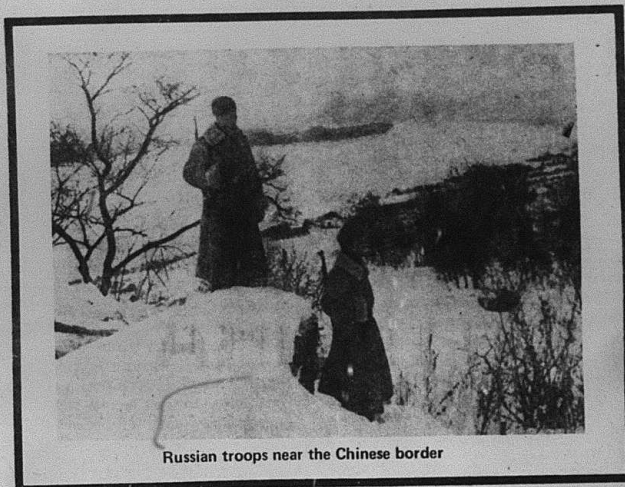
The second major motive behind Nixon's trip -- and the precondition which made any agreement with China possible -- was his recognition that the successful challenge to US military power in Vietnam made it necessary to conserve America's position in Asia by diplomatic as well as military means. Put brutally, it would be easier to keep guerrilla movements in line with China's help. This raises the question of China's motives in staging the Nixon visit.

PEACE ON ONE FRONT

For China too the most important power interest was the danger of Russia. As argued by China expert Allen S. Whiting in *The New York Times* on February 27, China's main motive was a desire for "peace on one front."

Second was China's fear of Japan -- but on this Chou got little satisfaction, as mentioned. Finally, China saw the visit in terms of its underlying foreign policy strategy for Southeast Asia.

This is not yet a full-fledged imperialist strategy. China does not yet have the strength or power position to play a major imperialist role. Its foreign policy has been one of securing its borders and seeking alliances to break out of economic, diplomatic, and ultimately, military isolation.



Russian troops near the Chinese border

This policy, which sounds "moderate" and peaceful to many ears, is thoroughly reactionary. China has not merely maintained correct relations with any country friendly to it, it has supported these countries in their bloody suppression of revolutionary or nationalist movements -- notably in the Sudan, in Ceylon, and in Pakistan last year. Earlier, in the early sixties, the Indonesian Communists under Chinese influence collaborated with the Sukarno government and made no preparations for revolution as long as Indonesia followed a pro-Chinese policy.

Thus, China's foreign policy aim in Asia has been revolution only where existing governments have been unfriendly; its real policy is one of aiming for diplomatic and economic status as a major regional power, through friendship to existing governments wherever possible. Once this is achieved, China will play a major imperialist role in the region, despite its statements to the contrary. The US is willing to accept this as a counter to a more substantial imperialist rival, Russia, on the understanding that China is not really playing a revolutionary role.

These factors -- the common threat of Russia; the US need for a bulwark against revolution to replace its weak-

ened military power; China's aim of emerging as a major regional power -- drew the US and China together on a basis of common interest.

The consequences, for Asia and the world, are reactionary and dangerous. The new agreement between China and the US "not to seek hegemony" must mean that China will discourage revolutionary movements -- though it will not openly disavow them -- in any country tied to the US. For Taiwan, the agreement means the certainty of the establishment of a Communist bureaucratic state in place of the Chiang Kai-shek dictatorship.

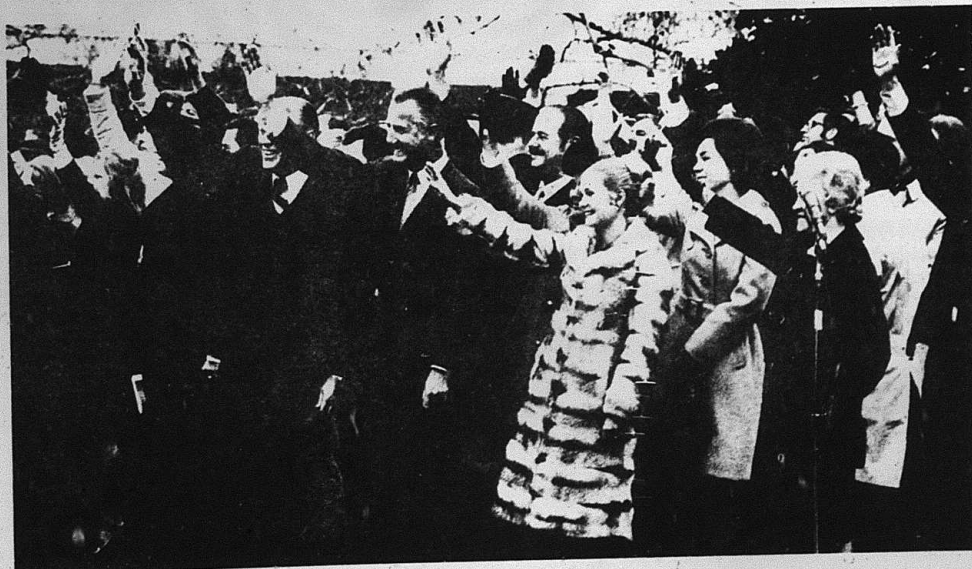
For the Chinese native to Taiwan (distinct from the ruling group which has made the island its home since 1949), the US-China agreement was a blow. As quoted in *The New York Times* March 3, an economist friendly to the independence movement stated that if a deal is made between the mainland government and the Kuomintang government on Taiwan, "the Kuomintang could defend its own interests, but who would speak for the people of this island? We would be sacrificed."

In the larger world, the US-China agreement is only a lull. Nixon's concentration on American rivalry with Russia -- reflecting the new reality that has grown up since the days of Kennedy's *detente* in 1963 -- is a worldwide game in which the nations and peoples of the world are to be sacrificed, as in Bangladesh. Behind this looms the possibility of war -- most likely over the territory of third countries.

Between the US and China, too, the agreement is only a limited peace between rivals. China's aim is to increase its power and influence in Asia and the Pacific; the US's aim is to maintain its own power and influence.

For the moment they find it convenient to cooperate against the growing Russian influence -- and for obvious reasons, they find it convenient to phrase this in terms of the world peace for which the people hope so desperately. Ultimately, however, their jockeying for advantage must mean new rivalry. ■

[For a somewhat different analysis of Nixon's China trip, in particular giving greater emphasis to the emergence of Japan as a factor in the moves towards a US-China *detente*, see the editorial in *Workers' Power* No. 52.]



Bye, bye, Mr. American Pie

Editorial

CONTINUED FROM
PAGE 1

This panel includes only one black woman -- and no Chicanos. The rest are white. Angela's attorneys have pointed out that the process of jury selection is thoroughly exclusionary and requested that special income supplements be granted to jurors, saying that otherwise "we will have only wealthy and retired people serving as jurors."

Angela Davis represents many things to many people. To the state of California, she has come to symbolize everything that the state is attempting to crush and destroy -- the revolutionary movement, the struggle for Black Liberation, and defiance of "established authority."

The state of California, and the forces of repression throughout the country, rightfully fear that if they fail to convict Angela Davis their legitimacy will be in danger of virtual collapse. The state will spare no effort and expense to imprison her forever, and if possible even try to find a way to restore the death penalty to silence her completely.

To many liberals, Davis represents yet another "test of the system" -- can a black revolutionary receive a "fair trial" under the American system of justice? Such people, who want to believe that such things as a "fair trial" really exist in this system, and even more want to convince others of the same, will bend over

backwards to be "fair" -- to the system itself.

Some will overlook everything from the fact of sixteen months in jail without bail, to the selection of the virtually all-white, middle-class jury, to the arrest of demonstrators supporting Davis outside the courthouse, provided only that it is possible to get to the "facts" of the case. If the state can construct some sort of "proof" that Angela Davis purchased the guns, then many of the liberals who half-heartedly defend her today will have a sign of relief and abandon her to the penitentiary or the gas chamber.

What liberals don't understand is that Angela Davis cannot receive a fair trial, not only because the state violates its own rules of "justice," but more fundamentally because of the very nature of that "justice." Under the rules of justice of the capitalist state, it becomes an act of murder for prisoners to attempt to escape, or to aid in such an attempt.

The state is obligated to "prove" only that such an attempt took place -- it is taken for granted that men sentenced to life imprisonment for minor crimes against property, or subjected to the brutality of racist, sadistic, prison guards, have no right to escape and may be shot on sight if they try. While it is important to thoroughly expose the fact that the state has no real evidence linking Angela Davis to the Marin County jailbreak, it is still necessary to defend that jailbreak as a justified and heroic, though suicidal bid for freedom.

To millions of black people in the United States, this case involves much more than an abstract test of "fairness." Black people, who know that the system is stacked against them from the start, realize that the attempt to victimize Angela Davis is directed

against them as well. No one -- not even the capitalist press -- has failed to notice the depth of feeling throughout the black community in support of Davis' defense.

The issue will become an explosive one in black communities as the trial comes to a conclusion this summer. The greatest depth of feeling for Angela Davis, and the greatest potential strength that could be mobilized in her support, is unquestionably concentrated here.

The black community knows that the attack on Davis is directed against the black community and its militant fighters. The state attempts to crush the militants while it coopts the "respectable" leaders with jobs in "poverty" programs, and black-capitalist franchises aimed at developing a black leadership for pacification.

The black community needs no help from the capitalist state in choosing its leaders. It will reject the pacifiers and defend the militants in its struggle for liberation.

To the Communist Party, of which Angela Davis is an outspoken member, this case represents an opportunity to restore some of the Party's badly-tarnished image as a fighter for freedom, equality, and revolutionary change. As the Davis case develops, and as the radical movement of the 1960's continues to decline, hundreds of militants and radicals, both black and white, are being attracted to the CP because of what Angela Davis represents to them and of the Party's defense of her. But if the CP's image has changed, its politics have not.

The American Communist Party, one of the most servile Stalinist parties to be found anywhere, pursues policies not of revolution but of reaction, both in the US and internationally. For example, the CP fully supported the crushing of Czechoslovakia

in 1968 by the Soviet Union, as a "defense of socialism" against a mythical "fascist counterrevolution."

Today the CP supports the "peaceful road to socialism" of the Allende government in Chile -- although that policy is preparing the ground for a right-wing takeover -- because Allende, unlike Dubcek in Czechoslovakia, is friendly to the Soviet Union.

In the US, the CP remains committed to a course of derailing rather than building movements for social change. In the labor movement and the black liberation movement alike, the CP argues for support of "progressive" trade union officials -- including some of the worst bureaucrats -- and liberal politicians of the Democratic Party, of whom some are black but none will lift a finger in defense of Angela Davis or other political prisoners.

As in the 1930's the CP in the 1970's is hoping to capture those forces in the working class which start to move left in order to keep them chained to the Democratic Party. Angela Davis herself fully supports these reactionary politics, and helps to build the illusion that they represent a revolutionary ideology.

FIGHT REPRESSION

To revolutionary socialists, however, Angela Davis is also a symbol, independent of the politics she represents. The state's attempt to frame and destroy her is a blow against the entire movement, which the state has tried to crush by both legal and extralegal means.

The state was able to force Eldridge Cleaver to flee the US because Cleaver knew he would be murdered if he returned to jail, as ordered by the parole authorities. It was able to assassinate Fred Hampton in his bed and George Jackson in the yard of San Quentin Prison.

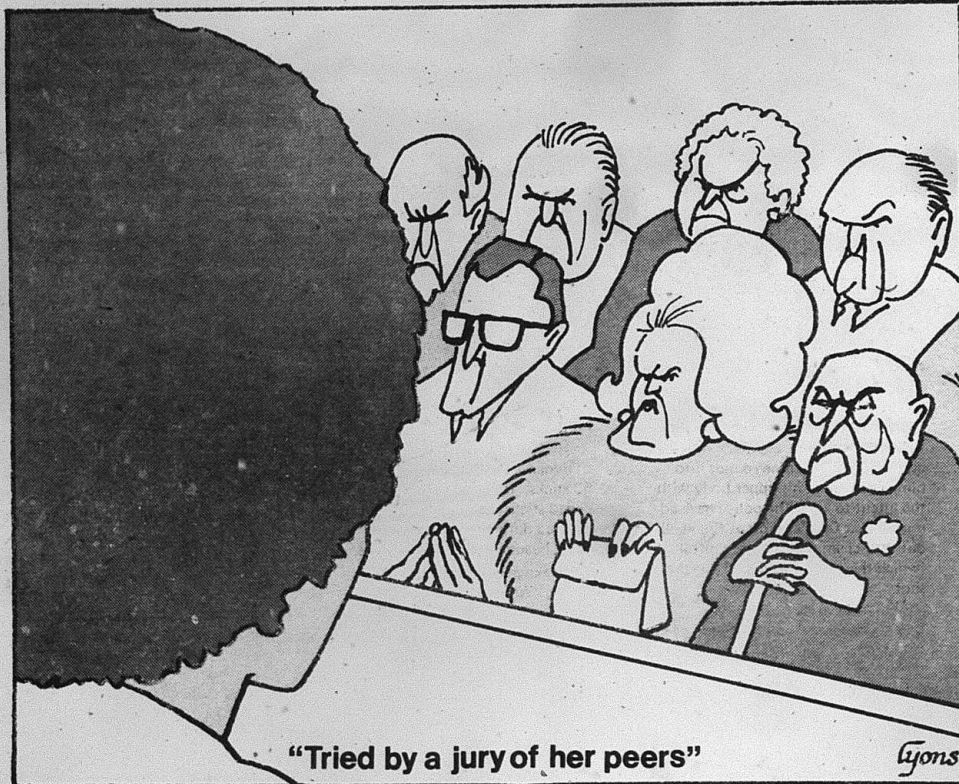
On the other hand, where the state has had to take its case to juries, it has been defeated time and again -- despite all the biases in its favor. Huey Newton was freed last December after juries, increasingly skeptical of police accounts, failed to convict him in two manslaughter trials after his earlier conviction was reversed.

Black Panthers Bobby Seale and Erica Huggins were freed last May when the jury trying them on murder charges failed to agree. And last April, the "New York Panther 13" were acquitted on all counts of conspiracy by a jury whose members openly stated they believed the police were conspiring against the Panthers.

With the Davis case, the stakes are raised. This will be the biggest of the political trials. If she is convicted, the blows struck against repression by earlier verdicts will be neutralized. But if she is acquitted the state's legal campaign against black militants will fall in ruins.

If she is to be acquitted, it will not be through a "fair trial" but through the support of millions of black people, working class militants, and radicals raising the demands Free Angela Davis -- Fight Repression -- Free All Political Prisoners. The task of the movement now is to build demonstrations of support and solidarity for Angela Davis in every city throughout the country during the trial.

By throwing the brightest glare of publicity on the trial, we can expose the truth about the frame-up trial and throw back the forces of oppression. ■



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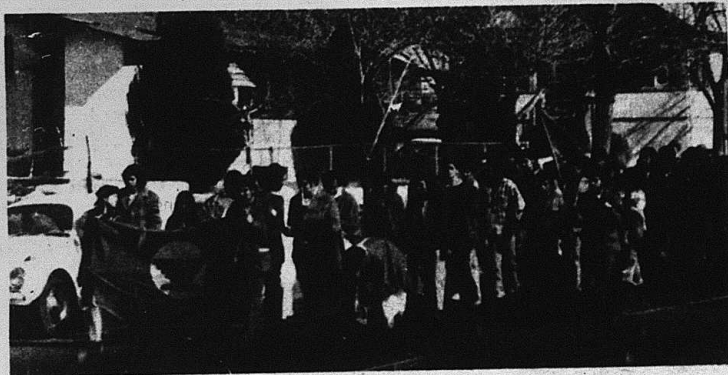
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Chicano Militants Murdered By Police

Thais Grak



On January 31, Albuquerque television cancelled a special on police brutality and prison conditions because the two key speakers were killed by the police two nights earlier. Rito Canales and Antonio Cordova were shot at 12:50 a.m. on January 29, at a construction site 10 miles south of town — allegedly while attempting to steal dynamite.

Canales was on parole for life from the Santa Fe Prison. He had served 8 years for a conviction for second degree homicide (despite blatantly contradictory evidence, he had been sentenced to 3 years to life).

While in prison, Canales participated in a work stoppage that culminated in riots on October 7. His cellblock was teargassed, and he was one of the prisoners beaten afterwards. He was paroled when he agreed to drop a \$22.5 million suit against prison officials.

Antonio Cordova was beaten by police while photographing scenes of police brutality for the Chicano newspaper, *El Grito del Norte*. He had prepared information on statewide police brutality for the television appearance.

Other information to be released included an investigation into the death of inmate Ramon Silva, who supposedly hung himself in the Senate Penitentiary. Canales had uncovered

evidence that Silva had been beaten and that he had a broken wrist.

Both Canales and Cordova were active in the militant Chicano organization, the Black Berets.

The police account of the killings is patently absurd. The police claim that they received an anonymous phone call tipping them off about the robbery. So they staked out the construction site with 6 heavily armed men, 4 more nearby, and a roadblock.

According to the police version, Canales and Cordova approached the dynamite bunkers and tried to pick the lock; and when the police called out, "Police. Freeze," Cordova opened fire with a carbine. From six feet away, police fired nine rounds into him, all aimed at his upper body with the intent to kill. The police have admitted that Canales did not fire at all, but they claim that he had a pistol (which they never produced) so they shot him.

With six rounds in his body, Rito Canales is supposed to have jumped or fallen off a 25 foot cliff and run another 120 yards before dying. *The press was not informed of the killing for another 11 hours.*

Meanwhile, police had a chance to raid Black Beret headquarters at noon on Saturday. They found 61 sticks of dynamite in the basement (a section

of the building the Berets had no access to) and an ounce of marijuana (although Berets are dismissed from the organization for using drugs).

Six Berets were arrested. Federal charges for possession of dynamite have since been dropped, though the six still face state charges for the dynamite and the ounce of marijuana.

Police claim to have received another tip off to a robbery of the bunker a week earlier. They informed Mr. Hogland of the Wylie Bros. Construction Co. of this tip on January 18. On the 20th they called to ask if the robbery had taken place. Yes, it had.

Hogland estimates that 2 - 5 cases of dynamite were stolen, each with 50 sticks. It was twenty-six of the coded sticks that were supposedly recovered during the police raid on the Beret headquarters.

Weaknesses in the police story are glaring. Why wasn't the first robbery staked out? Cordova had a shoulder separation so painful that he could not shift gears on a car, let alone fire a rifle.

Police produced a photograph of Cordova still holding the carbine after being hit with nine rounds of ammunition; it is inconceivable that he could have held onto the gun in these circumstances. The mortician examining

Cordova found his jaw and nose broken.

A get away car was never found. Police claim that Canales signaled it away with a flashlight, but with 10 men on the scene and a roadblock, it was not even spotted.

They also claim that they found tire tracks indicating that a car had left at a great speed. However, this road has since been dynamited by the construction work, conveniently destroying the evidence.

The Chicano community will not let the police forget the murder of these brothers. The Berets regard this not only as murder but also as an attempt to discredit them in their own community, but the attempt has backfired on the cops. The Berets have been able to mobilize large sections of the community around their demand for an independent investigation of the killings.

A call for a federal investigation has already been denied. Instead, a grand jury was convened by Albuquerque's District Attorney, Alexander Sceresse, the same man who publicly announced that the killings were "justifiable homicide" only 48 hours after the incident. The Chicano community has denounced this farce as an investigation "of the police, by the police, for the police."

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