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A NEW ERA OF LABOR REVOLT

On the Job vs. Official Unions

by

Stanley Weir

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Barry Hersh

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The text of this paper was obtained from a speech made before an open forum held under the auspices of the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Socialist Club.

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The announced title of this talk was "Recent Revolts in the Labor Movement." A better subtitle might be the one I presently plan to use for the book I am preparing: A New Era of Labor Revolt: On the Job Versus Official Unions.

Preparation for the work began almost unconsciously in the early 1950's when I began to read more and more accounts in various magazines by intellectuals, social critics, and labor journalists who were very critical of unions and of the workers who were members of those unions. More and more of these workers were being labeled as that "beer, barbecue, and television consuming class" who, having achieved a share of the affluence of this society, had shut up, laid down, and quit fighting for anything beyond their own immediate and selfish goals. Furthermore, the unions were said to be monoliths of conformity and the ranks were cited as a major cause of the unions' degeneration.

Part of the criticism was and is correct. Between 1948 and 1964, American labor unions did become more monolithic; became bureaucratic, and degenerated from what they were. I found myself, however, defending rank and file unionists from the part of the criticism that was not true: 'that workers had not and were not resisting the bureaucratization of their unions and were no longer capable of struggles that would benefit the entire society'. The workers described by labor's liberal critics and rejectors were certainly not the workers I had been working with since 1940-- and, in fact, had very little in common with them.

Rank and File Revolt

The rank and file revolts against long incumbent labor bureaucracies are now plainly visible. They broke into the open in 1964 in five major unions-- the Automobile Workers Union, the International Longshoreman's Association (representing the longshoremen of the East and Gulf coasts), the Steelworkers Union, the International Union of Electrical Workers, and the Oil and Atomic Workers Union. The revolts broke out, but they did not register on the public consciousness. The press reported them as isolated phenomena. It took much more than that to bring the revolts to the public's attention, and, as it turned out, by a much smaller number of workers-- that is, the Airline Mechanics strike in the summer of 1966. For five July-August weeks, these mechanics stopped 60% of the nation's air passenger traffic and, in doing so, touched the lives of the entire American middle class. They rejected the leadership of their top official, P.L. Siemiller, president of the International Association of Machinists (IAM). They rejected the intervention of the President of the United States. They rejected the Democratic Party as a place for the worker's political allegiance.

Their wages had fallen behind--far behind--those of the bus line and auto mechanics. The inequity was an affront to

their dignity. The wages were low and airline profits were at an all-time high. However, the primary cause of the airline mechanics' strike was working conditions. Robert T. Quick, who was president and general chairman of the IAM, District 141, made the following statement in one of his strike press releases: "We're working under chain-gang conditions for cotton-picking wages." Little else about the working conditions of the airline mechanics appeared in the press. The impression was left that the main and most comprehensible issue of the strike was wages.

I want to read right now, at the onset of this talk, two paragraphs from a paper prepared by Charles R. Walker, who is the Director of Research and Technology in Industrial Relations at Yale's Institute of Human Relations. The paper appears in a book titled Industrial Conflict, edited by Arthur Kornhauser (McGraw-Hill, 1954). Walker's paper is titled, "Work Methods, Working Conditions, and Morale".

In 1936 and 1937, a wave of sit-down strikes swept through the rubber and automobile plants of the United States. The workers on strike wanted higher wages, union recognition, and an organized machinery for the handling of day-to-day grievance but, above all, they were striking against what they called the 'speed-up' of work as governed by the assembly line. The causes of every major strike are complex and frequently so interwoven as to be inseparable. But somewhere along the causes (and frequently basic to the others, as in the sit-downs) are work-methods and working-conditions.

Two years before the first sit-down strike, the country experienced a nation-wide walkout of textile workers. Here, discrimination against union members, wages, and many other issues were involved, but the dynamic origin of the disturbance (not only in 1934, but throughout the remaining thirties and after) was the introduction of new work methods and machinery, all of which were generally lumped by the workers and denounced as the 'stretch-out'. If particular work-methods or undesirable working-conditions may sometimes cause a national walkout, they are also the common origin of innumerable lesser conflicts in the world of industry. The net result of a minor conflict over a work-method may be a day's slow-down or a grievance brought through the local plant's grievance machinery or, perhaps, hostilities expressed in low-quality work or by a high rate of absenteeism...When neglected or misunderstood these merely local disturbances can, with surprising rapidity grow into a national emergency.

Labor's revolt of the 1960's, and the part of it that was the airline strike, is a documentation of Walker's thesis.

They Said "No" to LBJ

Not only did the airline mechanics reject the Democratic Party, the four presidents of the four largest IAM airline mechanic's locals of the Pacific Coast--Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle--sent telegrams to George Meany, Walter Reuther, James Hoffa, and Harry Bridges asking that "immediate action be taken to form a third political party that will serve in the best interests of labor." They issued a press release carrying the text of the telegram simultaneously with their unequivocal rejection of the President of the United States and damaged his prestige in a decisive area--the handling of labor disputes. After the intervention of Lyndon Johnson, IAM President Siemiller announced that he was signing a contract that his ranks could live with and that it had only to be put to a referendum. Johnson called a press conference and claimed a major share of the credit. The mechanics voted against the settlement. The strike continued without pause, as if the announcement had never been made.

As the strike continued during those five weeks, the public was able to see a militancy and a stance of revolt that hadn't been seen since the 1930's. Life magazine, toward the end of the strike, came out with an issue devoted to "The New Era of Labor Militance." Murray J. Gart, Fortune magazine editor, stated "there has been a dramatic shift from the familiar faces to the facelessness of the rank-and-file" in the motive force of the labor movement.

In the months that have followed the airline mechanics' strike, other strikes occurred which further emphasized that the United States was entering a period in which those of its citizens who are organized or organizable into labor unions will again directly affect the economic, social, and political future of the entire population. A series of small, but "tough", strikes broke out in many major cities. In the Bay Area, there was the nurses' strike. In Detroit, the strike of the garbage collectors. Then there were the strikes and threatened strikes of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. (In San Francisco, an AFTRA walkout was conducted in which the major issue was a demand for contractual language which would allow the honoring of picket lines of other workers.) And then, of course, there was the organization of the California Central Valley farm laborers and the establishment of a union against what had seemed to be insurmountable odds.

Steadily in the headlines for weeks after the airline strike was the strike against the giant General Electric Corporation. Going into the strike, the following situation existed: General Electric had had a record volume

in 1965 of \$6.2 billion, up one billion dollars over 1964; \$655 million net after taxes, up \$130 million, or 5.7%, after spending \$330 million for capital expansion (also up \$100 million); their profits, between 1960 and 1965, were up 52%--after taxes. The major union involved in the strike was the IUE--the International Union of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO. The IUE got together with ten other unions for a united drive against GE. The four most powerful unions involved were the IUE, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the UAW, and the United Electrical Workers (independent). With a united front of 11 unions, they broke General Electric's Boulwarist approach to bargaining, i.e., GE's practice of making their first settlement offer their last settlement offer. These 11 unions made General Electric deal with them as equals. They got a 5% wage increase and they broke Johnson's 3.2% wage guideline. Yet, after signing that contract, local unions at six of GE's largest plants stayed out and refused to go back to work because of local grievances that had not been settled--local issues involving working conditions. Two of these locals were making products for the war in Vietnam. They did not go back to work until a Taft-Hartley injunction was issued against them and Congress threatened more anti-strike legislation.

1964: Widespread Open Revolt Begins in Auto

To really get the full feeling for the new era, we have to go back and examine the revolts that inaugurated the period in 1964. The first was that of the assembly line workers in the United Automobile Workers. First, a bit of background. General Motors hires as many workers as all other automobile manufacturers combined. Walter Reuther signed a contract in 1955 which contained no language to check the speed-up or help speed the settlement of local grievances. Over 70% of General Motors workers "wildcatted" immediately after Reuther announced the terms of the agreement. At the signing of the next contract, three years later, 90% of GM workers did the same thing because Reuther had again refused to do anything about the speed-up. In 1961, an even bigger wildcat--a general wildcat strike of all GM workers aided by several Ford locals.

A word about how they accomplished this. The UAW has a GM council composed of two members from each GM local. They meet in Detroit during negotiations. They discuss with the top negotiators what they want. The top negotiators led by Reuther are supposed to go in and get it. Reuther came out of what was supposed to be the final session with GM negotiators and announced the terms of the settlement just made. Again, the speed-up had been ignored. The council delegates phoned their home locals and reported the settlement. The locals immediately went out on strike. Reuther checked the mass wildcat by picking up the phone and notifying the press that the strike was official and that he was leading it. The ranks were forced to seek a reform of the speed-up and the grievance procedure on a plant-for-

plant basis. In 1964, Reuther again tried to out-maneuver the General Motors workers. Again, he cynically knew that he wasn't going to do anything to eliminate the speed-up. He negotiated the Chrysler contract first--the smallest of the contracts. He next negotiated the Ford contract with the Chrysler contract as a pattern. Reuther made it clear that the first two contracts were the "cake". The GM contract would be the "frosting" and in the same pattern. The GM workers struck without further dialogue with Reuther. He announced that the strike was official, that he was leading it, and that all would strike until all locals had obtained settlements of their local grievances at the local level. Here was a strike directed primarily against the union leadership and directed against the employer only secondarily.

Just prior to the negotiation of the 1964 UAW contract, a development took place that is unique in American labor history. Several large locals in Detroit initiated a bumper sticker campaign. In all auto cities including Fremont, Milpitas, and Southgate, California; Arlington, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia, auto workers car bumpers pushed the slogan, "Humanize Working Conditions." They were far more interested in the question of the conditions of their daily lives than they were in a wage increase.

The situation isn't settled yet in the auto union. The GM workers and auto workers as a whole have yet to get anything in their national contract that will help them defend themselves against the speed-up. At the present time, under the official grievance procedure, it takes up to 8 months to get settlements of speed-up grievances that are filed by workers who, in the middle of a particular day's labor, find the condition of their lives impossible.

Longshoreman Follow Suit

The East and Gulf coast longshoreman of the ILA, shortly after the auto workers' strike, had an almost identical strike. The stevedoring companies offered these workers what appeared to be an excellent contract, a good wage increase, a guarantee of 1600 hours work per year, and some minor economic fringe benefits. Nevertheless, the dockers were dissatisfied. When the terms of the contract were finally announced, the membership went out on strike. Their president, Ted Gleason, immediately toured all locals at the request of George Meany on a mission called "Operation Fact." Gleason claimed his membership wildcatted because they didn't understand the contract. It turned out that they understood too well. In return for the settlement offered by the employer, they were being asked to give up three men out of every work-gang. There were 20 men in each work-gang; the employer wanted to cut the number to 17 with no cut in production. In doing this, the employers were using a weapon created for them by the West Coast Longshoremen's contract. On the West Coast, the same amount of work was being done by 14 men.

Steelworkers Rid Themselves of David McDonald

The Steelworkers revolt deserves special attention because, if we go back through it with some care, it's easy to see how long it takes in some cases for a revolt to develop. In 1964, the steelworkers deposed David McDonald and elected I.W. Abel as their new president. The background: In 1946, the steelworkers had a 26-day strike; in 1949, 45 days of strike; in 1952, 59 days; in 1956, 36 days. All of these strikes were conducted with only reluctant or forced support from the International leadership.

In 1957, an obscure rank-and-file leader named Donald Rarick ran against David McDonald. Rarick, a conservative who has since become a reactionary, based his entire program on opposition to a dues increase and the raising of officials' salaries. As the campaign for the presidency developed, the rank-and-file could see that Rarick was not a militant unionist. Union militants couldn't vote for Rarick with enthusiasm or on a principled basis. His candidacy was used to record opposition to McDonald. He beat McDonald in the Pennsylvania region by a slight margin, but lost nationally. The vote ran like this: 223,000 for Rarick, 404,000 for McDonald. Abel, running for Secretary-Treasurer, got 420,000 votes to 181,000 for the opposition candidate. The incumbent vice-president, who ran unopposed, got 479,000 votes, while 150,000 blank ballots were cast. In effect, Rarick disappeared after the election, but the vote he received alarmed the leaders of the large unions.

Four years later, McDonald ran unopposed, and got only 221,000 votes. It was obvious that McDonald had been able to get a large vote against Rarick because he was able to utilize the treasury and resources of the International. To beat McDonald, a candidate had to be recruited from inside the International who had access to all its facilities. Abel was picked for the job and, after a dispute on the counting of votes, he was installed as president. He had not worked in a mill for at least 25 years. But McDonald was not the only victim of rank-and-file revolts.

The Fall of James B. Carey and O.A. Knight

James B. Carey was deposed from the presidency of the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) in 1964. The reason: his failure to lead a militant fight against the General Electric and Westinghouse corporations for an improvement of working conditions. O.A. Jack Knight in the Oilworker's Union retired three years early rather than meet a fate similar to Carey's. The failure to protect or improve working conditions, settle local grievances, and maintain contact with the rank-and-file, were the reasons for Knight's disintegration.

The revolts gathered momentum in 1965. Twenty thousand pulp and paperworkers of California, Oregon and Washington working in 49 mills and whose labor accounts for 90% of all pulp and paper production on the West Coast, disaffiliated themselves from their aged AFL International and set up their own, called the Association of Western Pulp and Paperworkers. They put out a paper called "The Rebel" and immediately prepared an organizational drive to win more members from their former affiliate. Too few labor journalists reported this revolt, but it commanded the attention of labor leaders nationally.

Miners Attempt to Undo the Work of John L Lewis

Also, in 1965, there was a revolt in the independent United Mineworkers Union. Keep in mind that between 1947 and 1964 the United Mineworkers had lost over 300,000 members. More than half of those members didn't necessarily lose jobs, but were cut out of the union by John L. Lewis. Lewis cut out of the union all miners who worked in mines that were not large or rich enough to automate. If they were not automated, they could not afford to pay into the union automation fund. The miners who were forced out of the union went to work, more than 100,000 of them, in mines whose veins were, and are, near exhaustion. In West Virginia, for example, a large number of mines today have a headroom of 36 inches and less. The miners literally spend the bulk of their lives on their hands and knees. Between 1947 and 1965, however, the production of coal in the non-union mines increased at a tremendous rate. They account for 30% of all soft coal mined in the U.S. Their yield is marketed at prices that are competitive with coal dug by UMW members who are paid \$22.50 a day.

Fortunes are again being made by small mine owners. They employ embittered and impoverished former UMW members with top experience and skills at \$14.00 per day. For every employee there are ten unemployed who are just as experienced and available. The employed work at top speed or are replaced. The low cost and high productivity of their labor has made it possible for the small mine owners to mechanize. (An example is the ever-increasing use of the battery-powered shuttle car. It is wide but low enough to travel in shafts where donkeys and burros are too tall to be used. Unlike gas and diesel-powered equipment, it creates no costly ventilation problem). The strong competitive position of the non-union mines has in turn caused the large mine owners to speed up the production of their unionized labor force. Pressure is applied to eliminate protective working and safety conditions.

In a small mine in Moundsville, West Virginia, in the summer of 1965, five men (four of whom were local trade union leaders) refused to work under unsafe conditions and were fired. Immediately there was a strike of that mine and within one week the strike was spread to include all of West Virginia, Ohio and southern Pennsylvania. Roving bands of

pickets driving over the countryside, shut down mine after mine. They even shut down the large and captive Robena mine owned by United States Steel Corporation. The United Mine-worker's top leadership lost control. The miners recognized only the authority of their rank-and-file leaders. Mine operators, seeing the lack of discipline and control in their industry, were terrified.

The main reason for this wildcat strike was the jam of unsettled grievances in union-mine after union-mine. The United Mineworker's International appoints district leaders, and the district leaders in turn, appoint business agents in every local. They have failed to give the rank-and-file good service. The main demand of the inevitable rebellion and wildcat strike became: the right of local autonomy. Not only did the union miners want the right to elect their own local business agents, they felt and feel that if left to themselves they could find ways of helping their friends, relatives and former union brothers in the small mines.

Out of the strike, too, came organized and formal opposition to the International. At the last convention of the United Mineworkers, a man called Steve "Cadillac" Cochise ran against Tony Boyle. This was the first time since the 1920's that an international president of the United Mineworkers had been challenged.

Revolt Against James Hoffa

In the latter months of 1965, James Hoffa became unable to restrain the rebellion of the Philadelphia Teamsters. In Philadelphia, Local 107, City Freight drivers, have a long tradition of opposition to the International. The leader of their local in 1963 and 1964 was Ray Cohen. He was a Hoffa man; he was not servicing the membership and the ranks were opposed to him. Two caucuses existed in the local: "The Real Rank-and-File Caucus" (pro-Hoffa) and the "Voice" caucus, so-called because of its publication. So much opposition grew against Cohen that Hoffa was finally forced to dump him. Hoffa made his first big appearance in Philadelphia (after becoming international president of the Teamsters) to announce that he was demoting Cohen for corrupt union policies. The elimination of Cohen created no basic changes in the local. In June, 1965, at Roadway Express Incorporated freight-loading dock, an 18-year-old worker, the son of a night over-the-road steward, was helping to load a big box onto a trailer. He refused to work under conditions he considered unsafe. The foreman said: "If you don't do it, I'll fire you." The young freight-handler answered: "Screw you. Fire away." He was fired. The next day, four men were ordered to do the same thing; they refused and were also fired. They left the job together and went to the union hall and told their story to the ranks standing around the hall. A meeting was held. The Voice caucus called for a general strike of all Philadelphia Teamsters. It carried and the strike was on. It grew from

five men to every driver and handler in the city and outlying region in less than 24 hours. To insure that the strike was totally general, the Teamsters patrolled the streets, stopped trucks and made out-of-town drivers get off their trucks. As a main location for the latter activity, they chose the area in front of Sears and Roebuck. There is an immense lawn and the highway widens out allowing room to parallel-park trucks and trailers in large numbers. After several days of this activity, the police attacked the local drivers. The out-of-town drivers joined the strikers against the police. A pitched battle ensued. Within five minutes, the boulevard in front of Sears and Roebuck was impassable due to overturned trailers. This guerilla-type warfare continued in many areas of the city for several days. Finally, by injunction and because both factions of the leadership backed down, the men were forced back to work. They won respect. They're working under better conditions. None of their gains have been contractualized, but they gained strength for fights to come.

At this point, both caucuses -- Real Rank-and-File and the Voice -- are in disrepute among the ranks because both backed down in the face of local authorities. Hoffa has threatened to take the local under trusteeship. The rank-and-file, to demonstrate that it was not defeated, had a meeting and passed a resolution which stated that if Hoffa or any of his lieutenants came into town or were seen in Philadelphia, another general strike would begin immediately. Hoffa has stayed out of Philadelphia.

Dow Wilson and the Painters

The 1965 Building Trades strike in Northern California, in the giant home-building industry there, was important because it involved skilled workers with relatively high hourly wage-rates. Laborers, plumbers, sheet-metal workers and painters struck against the wishes of their top leaders. All but the painters settled within a few days. Painters' Local #4, San Francisco, is the largest local in the International Brotherhood of Painters and was led by Dow Wilson. They came out with some of the most radical demands ever made by painters, among them, a break for coffee, mid-morning and afternoon. Painters work a seven-hour day. Their work is exhausting and pressured. Big advances in paint technology since the end of World War II created a speed-up of the work. During the strikes the leaders of the Painters' International Union publicly sided with the employer's automation demands which would have eliminated a lot of jobs. Local #4, San Francisco, stood pat against the International and the employers. In other northern California locals, the leadership backed down. After ten days of this strike which was to last 32 days, Dow Wilson became the leader of all painters in northern California.

The painters in all locals achieved victories. They got coffee-time and temporarily checked the advance of technological unemployment. The International wanted to place the

locals under trusteeship. The assassinations of Dow Wilson and Lloyd Green have not stopped the rebellion; they have not defeated these painters. This was seen in demonstrations that the painters conducted to get the U.S. Attorney and the Mayor of San Francisco to speed the apprehension of the murderers. And only just today, the Federal Courts ruled in favor of the Eastbay locals, against the International's efforts to put them in trusteeship. Any other decision would have caused more open insurrectionary struggles in the Bay Area labor movement.

The New York Subway Strike

The New York subway strike began on January 1, 1966, at midnight. Working conditions were the main issue. It was the first system-wide strike of New York subway workers. For 31 years Mike Quill, their president, had been threatening a strike, a city-wide strike of all transit workers -- for 31 years he had backed down. He called it in 1966 because (1) his ranks had voted overwhelmingly for the strike and (2) a majority of his executive board had threatened his position if he refused to lead. Now let's not take too much away from Mike Quill. He's the only old-line top-echelon labor leader in recent times who demonstrated an ability to change habits and to lead. Before television cameras he tore up the anti-strike injunction: he embarrassed the new mayor and demonstrated the power of his ranks over the whole city government. He was jailed, and the heart attack which came on him in jail caused his death shortly after the strike's end. This old bureaucrat who could still respond to pressure from below deserves our respect.

The Maritime Unions

Opposition appeared in the National Maritime Union last spring. Joe Curran has answered the rebels with physical violence, but they have pushed him into the position of trying to appear more militant. Curran is now on record for free rent for all NMU merchant seamen. He has announced that he will use the pension fund of the National Maritime Union to construct the homes.

Harry Bridges, Opposition and B Men

This year has seen the rapid growth of opposition elsewhere in Maritime. In July, Harry Bridges, International President of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, signed the second of the automation contracts that have won him plaudits and the title of labor statesman in employers' circles. The majority of longshoremen in the Portland, Seattle, and Los Angeles harbors voted against ratification of the contract. San Francisco's Local 10, the only local allowing retired longshoremen to vote on contracts, was the only major port to give the contract a majority.

The Local 10 vote plus the vote of the Ship's clerks and the longshoremen in the small ports gave Bridges an uneasy victory. Forty-two percent of all unionized longshoremen on the West Coast voted against the contract that cost them their most important working and safety conditions. The question arises: what if the thousands of young registered B longshoremen who work full time in the industry had been allowed to vote? They work in the hold on the heaviest cargoes and are the main victims of the speedup that the Bridges contract inaugurated. Every time they move a pound of cargo they contribute to the automation fund whose benefits they are denied. But then, they are not members of the union and thus cannot vote and this explains why Bridges and the satisfied employers fear giving them their democratic rights.

It was after these two developments in maritime that the airline and General Electric strikes took place. Immediately following those strikes the UAW held its convention in Long Beach. Reuther had feared this convention a great deal. When James B Carey was under fire because of ballot box stuffing and it appeared he might well lose to Paul Jennings on a recount, Reuther offered the IUE unity with the UAW. This was a shamefully shrewd maneuver. He was offering both Jennings and Carey a way out: if the IUE came into the UAW, both of the men would get UAW jobs and neither would lose all. Inside the UAW, Reuther could use the new unity as a smoke-screen to put off the opposition he knew was coming at the convention. Carey turned him down. The September 1966 convention came and Reuther outsmarted the ranks again. By maneuvering, Reuther got the convention to agree that the question of the 1967 contract would not be discussed until a special convention in the spring of 1967. By all accounts it was the most uneventful convention ever held by the UAW. Only one matter was argued and that was whether or not to put a woman on the Executive Board. This was done. There are 100,000 women members of the UAW. Reuther bought time for himself. By his own estimate, 60% of the faces of the delegates at the convention were new to him.

Simultaneous with the UAW convention in Long Beach, the United Packinghouse Workers, led by Ralph Helstein, had their convention in Los Angeles. Very little reporting appeared in the press on this meeting. Several days prior to the convention Helstein announced that the opening day's sessions would be devoted to the delegate's gripes and criticisms of the union. Neither the motivation for nor the results of this session have been reported by any of the leading labor journalists. I don't know if the discussion was held to avoid revolt or as a simple sounding measure, but it is to Helstein's credit that it was done at all.

The United Rubberworkers held their convention two weeks later. The incumbent president, who had been re-nominated, was forced to withdraw his nomination and concede that he had been corrupt because he had (1) used union money for family

expenses and, (2) had lost touch with the rank and file.

With the revolt in the Rubberworkers it was possible to observe something very important. The bulk of the large unions experiencing active revolts were formerly CIO unions with the exception of the United Packinghouse Workers union. The same industries whose workers had been in the forefront of labor's revolt in the thirties were doing it again in the sixties.

For a moment, let's look at some of the smaller drives and revolts that have been occurring on a local and regional level. For thirty years California radicals and liberals alike thought it impossible to organize California farm labor unless the Teamsters led and supported the drive. Instead, farm workers organized their union against the active opposition of the Teamsters.

White Collar Militancy

The AFL-CIO in 1965 grew by a quarter of a million members. The bulk of the growth was in service and white collar industries--workers that the CIO did not get around to organizing in the 1930's.

Teachers: most of the membership of the American Federation of Teachers comes from public schools; however, the AFT now has 25,000 college professors and instructors. In Chicago alone, at eight junior colleges they have a thousand members. The teaching assistants at the University of Minnesota are just now voting whether or not to affiliate with the Teamsters.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees is the fastest growing union in the AFL-CIO. It had a revolt, and its new president, Jerry Wurf, came to power as a result of that revolt.

Symphony musicians: Eight major symphony orchestras in America have been on strike or have threatened strikes this year. They are unionized and belong to the American Federation of Musicians. In Philadelphia they conducted a strike that was eight weeks long. They won the following: a maximum of four concerts per week, a maximum of 32 weeks of concerts per year, a maximum of six weeks on the road per year and a wage increase. Working conditions were again the major issue.

The Internal Revenue agents of Los Angeles have just voted to join the American Federation of Government Employees.

The Hiram Walker distillery, a large distillery in Windsor, Canada, just across from Detroit, has been in operation for 107 years. Last year it was struck for 34 days--the first strike in 107 years.

Detroit garbage collectors: A part-time employee, without union membership, was fired early this year. The garbage men went out on strike. The garbage began to pile up. In order to get the men back to work, the union hired this part-time non-union employee as a union official until such time as his grievance was settled and he got seniority. The aggrieved man was the one who talked the garbage collectors into going back to work.

There is other evidence that people are acting differently. Not just more militantly, but differently than in the era just past. The Philadelphia Symphony musicians, of whom I spoke a few moments ago, held a concert to build up a strike fund--the concert was conducted by Leopold Stokowski.

Getting Rid of Strike Breakers

Strikes are again becoming violent and the use of scabs is a practice that is growing. There was a small strike at the Iowa pork plant last year, California scabs were used. The strikers beat them up, burned their cars and sent them back to California.

In San Francisco, the International Typographers Union picketed the Phillips Van Orden printing plant for 10 months in 1964. Inside were professional scabs sent to the employer by an agency that recruits strike-breakers in the southern states. Printing pressmen were working alongside scabs and so were ILWU warehousemen. Teamsters daily crossed the ITU picket line.

The ITU won a victory in the tenth month of their strike because hundreds of rank-and-file longshoremen and teamsters gave them unauthorized support out of the conviction that it was an indignity to have to work alongside scabs. Trucks made no deliveries or pickups at Phillips Van Orden. The strike-breakers were physically beaten. Pickets teetered a box car off the railroad tracks at the rear of the plant and threatened to push it into the estuary. Mayor John Shelley and ILWU Secretary Louis Goldblatt presided over the negotiations that sent the strikebreakers out of town and received credit for ridding the city of scabs. In the months that followed several Bay Area cities passed ordinances banning the use of strikebreakers. The city governments offered no explanation of their motivation.

Causes of the Revolts

What has caused the revolts and outbreaks of militancy since 1964? It is not enough to point to the wide-spread drive to improve working conditions--it's not that simple. I have not meant to imply that wages played no part in these strikes and these revolts. Workers today can be divided into two categories: those in large, powerful unions and those in the smaller, weaker unions or in shops or in places of work that are unorganized. The latter, the unorganized and the

members of weaker unions, have over the years watched their wages fall behind those of the stronger unions. The War on Poverty, in particular, made these workers conscious of the fact that although they work full-time, their yearly income has shrunk almost to poverty levels recognized by the government. Inflation made them conscious of this, too, particularly during the last year.

But the revolts started long before the inflation began, and before the War on Poverty. The labor shortage is another cause. Last year, due to the war in Viet Nam, the labor shortage had become so acute that it gave workers a new margin of independence. But the main cause of the revolts was and is the onerous conditions of work in America. I don't mean in general, I don't mean the condition of the toilets, I don't mean the plant cafeterias and the food they serve. I mean actual work and the nature of the methods used to produce or service and what each man and each woman must do on the job each day. The question of what causes the revolts can be divided into three categories.

Automation. In the quote I read from C.R. Walker, he points out that the revolt of the thirties was due to the introduction of new machinery. Automation in the fifties introduced new machinery into the plants and work places in large quantities. Each time a new machine is introduced, traditional methods and practices of work are disrupted. In the periods of disruption and the creation of new work methods, new work-patterns and habits must be established by workers. The employers try to set precedents in these periods which will increase production. This occurs at the expense of working and safety conditions that help make life on the job bearable.

Secondly, the revolts are caused by the low standard of living of American workers. Like all Americans, workers in the US have a high standard of consumption, relative to their European counterparts and relative to their counterparts in the thirties. Today they can buy many of the things that American technology produces, but the bulk of their working hours, the bulk of their working year and their working lives are spent in activity which is dehumanizing. In the actual and most literal sense, they have a low standard of living.

Thirdly, there is deep in the consciousness of Americans today, the belief that something's basically wrong with American life. Its pace is too fast. Let me throw one item at you out of the November 22, 1966 issue of the Wall Street Journal:

Pep pill use by factory workers draws increasing concern as a hidden hazard. Plant medical directors and safety specialists fear scattered signs of drug use by production workers are symptomatic of an underground factory safety problem. A major

farm equipment maker, a big food processor, detect increased use of pep pills in their plants. One worker's tool box turns up a hundred bennies. One executive suspects 'there are several pushers in our plants.' 'The problem is most acute in California,' he adds, 'but we've found a little of this to be country-wide.'

Los Angeles narcotics authorities turn up a well-supplied pusher in an auto plant; they aid big aerospace companies seeking remedies to the problem. One California narcotics specialist figures pills are pushed in all plants with assembly-line operations. Some executives blame today's fast production pace and excessive moon-lighting for driving workers to stimulants. One detective says that employers don't want to attack the problem for fear of stirring unfavorable publicity.

Material Wealth and Dissatisfaction

The more people enjoy the affluence of America--those who are that lucky, the majority of Americans--the more they see that it doesn't bring real satisfaction. Walter Kerr, the drama critic, a man who has a profession which gives him some feeling of accomplishment, writes as follows in his book, The Decline of Pleasure:

I'm going to start off by assuming that you are approximately as unhappy as I. Neither of us may be submitting ourselves to psychiatrists, neither of us may take an excessive number of tranquilizers each day, neither of us may have married three times in an effort to find someone who will make us happier. We are not desperate, but we are vaguely dissatisfied. The work we are doing is more or less the work we meant to do in life. It does not yield us the feeling of accomplishment we had expected. The family pattern we have created around us with wife and children arranged neatly in a home would pass muster in a magazine series devoted to typical American domestic relationships. It leaves us tense. We own the car, the television set, and the encyclopedia that are generally suitable to our better than modest station, and we are neither terribly envious of those who have accumulated a greater number of these things, nor terribly determined to acquire very many more for ourselves. These things have given us some pleasure and some feeling of confidence, but not so much that we are convinced that all felicity lies in acquiring more of them.

This feeling of dissatisfaction is reflected in the mass media, too. The feeling that the pace is too fast;

that something's basically wrong. Two prime-time television programs, "Run For Your Life," and "The Fugitive" are designed to capitalize on the dissatisfaction. Both have heroes who have been forced to uproot their lives out of the routine. They spend their lives travelling and having adventures. Adventure, women, booze--no time clocks, appointments, meaningless errands. These heroes are out of the boring and deadening routine. Both programs have top poll ratings.

The outstanding boxoffice success of the movie "A Thousand Clowns," is significant. The total message is: affluence doesn't do you any good. In one of the opening scenes the uncle says to the nephew at 7:00 in the morning, field glasses in hand, in the midst of Manhattan: "In a minute I'm going to show you the saddest sight in the world: people going to work." Then the camera pans all those things that are associated with going to work--the fast eating of hamburgers, walking in heavy mid-town traffic, and so on.

You'll forgive me if I take time to add a fourth reason for the revolt. There's been a general decline in the ability of the leaders of the nation in all establishments to maintain control. They appear to be somewhat out of control. They are not able to bring a stability to the functioning of the society. There's an obvious amoral quality in leaders of all establishments. Whenever this condition exists, the people at the bottom feel free to assert themselves and play a new role.

Back again to the question of wages. I want to go through some reasons why the wage issue is always paramount in the eyes of the press reporting labor struggles. I've lifted this almost intact out of A.V. Gouldner's "Wildcat Strike." Gouldner lists eight reasons why the wage issue is usually the dominant issue in most labor struggles. (1) There are contractual restraints against opening labor contracts for issues other than wages; (2) Workers themselves have doubts about the legitimacy of non-wage issues; (3) Wage issues unify workers in different parts of the plant. From one section of the plant to another, working conditions may vary a great deal; (4) Workers have traditionally felt that the public is unable to understand and is unsympathetic to non-wage issues; (5) A strike for working conditions is a strike, in effect, only for themselves. If they strike for wages, too, or just for wages, it pacifies the wives and the bill collectors. During a strike workers need credit and all the members of striking families have to make sacrifices; (6) Union leaders shy away from working condition fights and when the men have not developed their own in-plant leadership, they want to keep their leadership with them. A fight for working conditions cannot be waged every three or four years at contract time. It's a day to day fight inside the plant which develops new leaders who can challenge the incumbent leaders. (7) International unions are usually geared to fighting wage-struggles. They've had studies made about the corporation's

profits. A strike is made easier if it has the support of the International. (8) The employers understand the wage issue. They can figure the cost of the wage increase easier and they consider working conditions and line-speed their sacrosanct property. Bargaining for working conditions meets with maximum employer resistance.

It is a testimony to the advanced nature of the revolts from 1964 to the present that in most instances, they have been waged primarily for an improvement in working conditions. Workers are no longer so worried about the legitimacy of struggles for working conditions. Their fears that the public will not understand have diminished. It shows, too, that they have developed a leadership of their own inside the plant that allows them to survive these open struggles; to take on not only the employer, but their own union leadership at the same time.

The Apathy of Intellectuals

The question arises out of all this: how is it that the intellectuals, social critics, and labor journalists have not picked this up as yet? The FSM on the Berkeley campus caused a national debate in a number of magazines almost immediately after its outbreak. Many liberal intellectuals once paid attention to every labor disturbance, no matter how small. However, while revolts of great proportions have occurred in the labor movement in the last three years, there hasn't yet appeared one article: no debate, no discussion in any of the liberal magazines or radical journals. The one national publication that attempted to analyze labor's new militancy -- The American Socialist, organ of the American Socialist Organizing Committee -- regrettably has ceased publication.

I offer the following reasons for this silence. Intellectuals, whether liberal or radical, are totally isolated from the workers. It is the liberal intellectuals who helped to originate and now perpetuate the myths about labor's inability to struggle while well-fed. They're now stuck with that set of myths. They reject the current struggles of labor's rank-and-file due to their feeling that the workers will allow the bureaucratization process to repeat itself within a few years.

One of the problems is the real demoralization of the intellectuals that came out of their experiences in the thirties and early forties. Many of them had participated in liberal and radical movements. They had high hopes in the working class, and, when it failed to live up to their expectations, they rejected it.

Let's very rapidly run through the historical background on this. In the revolts of the thirties, the intellectuals responded almost immediately. At last there were

troops who could challenge corporate power in the United States. The union struggle was a struggle for dignity: it was attractive. There wasn't a union leadership in the country at the local or international level that didn't have an intellectual brain trust around it -- just for the asking. Because most of these intellectuals came to the labor movement through the influence of one or another of still-European-oriented American radical organizations, there was a great deal of romanticization of the workers. There was a belief that workers were superhuman; that they were almost without faults. Workers were the good guys.

The union movement was still in pretty good shape and still based in the shops in 1940-41. Intellectuals were still around, but World War II completely diverted the attention of the intellectuals from the labor movement. When the war was over, the 1946 strike-wave seemed to say to everybody that labor intended to resume its former role. It didn't. The reconversion of industry to peacetime production atomized the cadres of workers that had produced the strikes. In the period that followed WWII the labor movement failed miserably on several questions. About civil rights they did nothing. "Operation Dixie," the CIO's drive to organize the South failed. The AFL-CIO championed some of the worst aspects of American foreign policy. During the McCarthy period and the attacks on civil liberties, liberals were losing their own base of support--the labor movement did nothing.

Life in Industry Neglected by Mass Media

The intellectuals had no way of knowing the reasons for that inaction on the part of the movement. Additionally, intellectuals who had been working for trade unions--as technicians, professionals, lawyers, economists and so on--were straight-jacketed, and those who were worth their salt and had any independence about them at all, were kicked out or resigned, making their way back to college campuses, private industry or government.

There are a number of books, written by sociologists, that are very good and that could inform people about what has been happening in the unions and in industry, but these books do not get a good circulation. They do not get publicized: they aren't aggressively marketed in paperback form. Our society isn't geared for the wide dissemination of this kind of information. The American office and what happens inside the American office is widely publicized by TV, radio, magazines, and so on. Not so with the industrial work places. Take the example of the motion picture industry. Try to think of one American movie, outside of Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times," whose locale is a factory or mill and whose action shows men at work or shows union activity in all its drama and comedy. There are none.

Another factor arises from the fact that there is no meaningful participatory political activity for most Americans. This is the only industrial capitalist nation that hasn't got a party where workers and intellectuals can gather together to seek solutions for some of their grievances. Because of this, America more resembles Russia than any other of the Western industrial capitalist countries.

Attentive Employees

Employers don't neglect the problems and attitudes of workers which arise out of the conditions of work. They have sponsored a whole series of experiments. Books on these series have been published. The Hawthorne experiment, conducted at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric corporation in Chicago, is the best known. From the early twenties until the depression--nine years--a series of experiments were carried out by Western Electric personnel, Harvard psychologists and sociologists. Loren Baritz has written a book called Servants of Power. It has a history and critique of these tests. Twelve separate, long-duration tests were made on workers in this plant. They took two test groups composed of women: one they isolated, one they left on the line. They found that no matter how they improved or worsened working conditions for these women, production constantly increased. They finally had to conclude that this was because they were paying attention to the workers in the test groups--asking their opinions on all questions. Western Electric dropped that phase of the testing because they saw where it was going. If employers start asking workers questions and including them in the decision-making process in any way, a risk is incurred.

Western Electric then bugged what they called the Bank Wiring Room. The workers in the room were men, more than 20 in number. They didn't know they were under surveillance. Western Electric found that the leaders and the most capable workers in the group were turning out, in some cases, the least production. Through social pressure, all were involved in restricting the group's output. The workers who wanted to turn out more production were disciplined. Volume after volume has been written on these tests. The experimenters could never come to face the problem that workers have in this society. No matter how pro-capitalist workers are when interviewed, they have a basic antagonism and conflict with capitalist production while at work. They are against managers and owners. No matter how they talk to survey takers, on the job they act as if production is their enemy.

The Degeneration of the Labor Movement

The criticisms of the intellectuals against the labor movement have to be dealt with. How did the labor movement get this way--how did it degenerate? In the early thirties,

the revolts were much like now. Workers came back to work after the Depression. The long period of conservatism, the habitual coming from and going to work every day was broken by the Depression. The workers had not retaliated against what had happened to them in the twenties with the mass introduction of the assembly line and new machines. In 1932, if they struck, if they fought back, they could be no worse off than they had been a few months before, when they were unemployed. As soon as they got to know each other again in the plants and had developed cadres and leaders in the informal work groups created by the productive process, they were able to conduct a fight against the foreman, the employer, and finally to organize a union.

The CIO really did no more than to centralize the power of these union organization drives that took place independently, plant by plant. The CIO drew together hundreds of already organized unions with existing local rank-and-file leaderships.

World War II however, atomized--almost over night--the cadres and the in-plant union organizations. Let's examine a work-group of 10 men at plant X. They have been through the formation of a union. Five of them go into the Armed Forces, two of them go to the West Coast to work in the shipyards. Replacing them are two housewives, two pensioners, and several young men awaiting the draft. How could the remaining men impart to these newcomers the tradition, the struggles, the fights, the lessons that were learned in the process of the many years of fighting. They couldn't. If a trade union leader or a local president started going astray or started weakening before the employer, it was possible for these ten men, before WW II, to embarrass him, to discipline him--to tell him: "Look. Remember when you worked with us and how it was, and how you cried louder than anybody else? And now you're talking out of two sides of your mouth and letting us live under these conditions!" Or say one of the workers in the group didn't want to go to the union meeting on a particular night. The others reminded him of the struggle they all went through together and of the consequent improvement. This could not be done after the war atomized the group personnel. (Parenthetically, the current revolts are establishing traditions and cadres similar to those that existed in the thirties).

Atomization of the ranks allowed the union leaderships to move the power of the union out of the shop and into the International headquarters. A war gift: the bureaucratization of the labor movement. During the war, new groups developed but reconversion in turn broke them up. When the war was over, with a return to consumer production, the people in the work groups were strangers to one another. In plant after plant there were three segments of men with separate identities--ole timers, returning vets, and kids, so-called. The veterans were interested in establishing

little cocoons of privacy in their homes. They weren't union-oriented. They'd had four years away from home; they wanted to settle in. They didn't want to spend long evening hours at union meetings.

It took several years for these workers to recuperate from the boom's acquisition disease. The young workers felt "out of it" and the old timers were cynical. Like all Americans, they stockpiled appliances and home furnishings. Who could blame them? For the first time in American history workers were able to purchase a large number of consumer products that industry yields. Slowly they got to know one another again. "How many kids do you have?" "What do you like to do--fish, bowl?" When they got to know each other on this basis, they began selecting leaders to express their grievances. The process of selection was not always by anything as formal as a vote. Who's the most courageous? Who articulates the gripe best to the foreman in the beef that day in the shop? --these are the standards of selection. A leader is selected with a nod, a wink of the eye, a raising of the brow.

In the late 1940's these cadres were again in a position to struggle and to fight back. They discovered, however, that the top union leadership wasn't willing to lead in the fight that they wanted to make.

Sabotage

From the early fifties until 1964, these struggles remained contained inside the plants, hidden from public view on the work side of the time clocks. The union leaders and the leaders of industry during that period were, and still are, keeping a vital secret from the American public: American production was being sabotaged daily. It was, and is, plagued by sabotage. If you're on the assembly line it's hard for you to control the pace of your work. You can't discipline those around you; the line keeps running and all must keep up. Bolts are dropped into the slots that pull the assembly lines; heat controls in ovens that bake auto bodies in auto assembly-line plants are jimmied so that paint jobs wrinkle and crack. In non-assembly line plants the restriction of output is normal practice. It is accomplished through social pressure of the kind that I spoke about in the Hawthorne plant whereby workers regulate the output of their group. If one of them wants to work too fast and turn out too much production that day, he begins to get the isolation treatment from his fellow workers.

The revolt broke into the open in 1964 primarily because this kind of guerilla warfare inside the plant is very costly. If you sabotage production on the line, you're then under surveillance for several days by plant guards, private investigators and supervisors. Some of the men get fired, disciplined, or are transferred to another department in the plant and have to break in with another group, get another foreman, learn another routine and another social group. Particularly in assem-

bly line plants, revolts were waged in order to bring the union back into the shops and make it operative at the point of production once again, in order to make life bearable and improve the standard of living.

Needs of the Revolt

That the main goal of the revolts is to bring a dignity to daily existence is one of its main strengths, for it strikes a sympathy in a broad section of the population. Workers are doing what others would like to do and lack the advantage of organization provided workers by industrial technology.

Another of the revolts' strengths is their obvious mass grass roots origin. They are not led by nationally known leaders. There is not yet a John L. Lewis villain-symbol for the press to exploit. Neither are the workers being led or agitated by revolutionaries or "subversives." For anyone to claim this would be ludicrous. To oppose the revolts, it is necessary to cast aside bourgeois democracy and take an open anti-working class stand. As yet, only the radical right is willing to do this.

This strength can easily become a weakness in the period ahead. The rank and file rebels face political as well as economic retaliations from the employers and their representatives. Radical political counter-measures will be necessary.

Let us look at the future of the revolts and a labor movement in the process of renovation. There's a need to again centralize revolt power, a service performed for the revolt of the 1930's by the CIO. There's a need to redesign collective bargaining methods and contracts. The United Steelworkers' revolt is the one that has come under the most criticism, particularly from the liberal intellectuals. "What did they get? They got Abel in the place of McDonald. Another phony bureaucrat." But under Abel, the Steelworkers at their September convention, democratized the procedure by which they negotiate contracts. No more will there be any "early bargaining." They're going to use last-minute bargaining again and the threat of strike right at the deadline to get what they want. No longer is the Wage Policy Committee of 165 appointed men going to ratify contracts. This will now be done by a conference of elected delegates from the locals. The Human Relations Committee which McDonald and the employers created to go from plant to plant to investigate working conditions and decide which of the conditions could be eliminated was abolished. The ranks are now in a better position to effect contract goals and negotiations.

An American Shop Stewards Movement

If a liberalization like the above can take place in most unions, collective bargaining will again be able to satisfy many of the needs of the rank and file of American workers.

If this does not develop, then the alternative is that the rank and file leaders at the local level today will try to formalize their power. We're on the eve of the development of something like that which exists in Great Britain: a formalized shop stewards movement. Of course, one of the best things that could occur would be the organization of a shop stewards movement or system organized and formally recognized in the contract. The British workers' shop steward system provides alternative leadership, and a duality of power. It restricts the freedom of Britain's labor bureaucracy.

We've already seen in the revolts that there is a dual power situation in the bulk of the American labor movement today--less developed than in England, but there nonetheless. The revolts are being conducted and led by leaders who do not have official union positions: they lead the on-the-job unions.

The whole internal structure of American unions has to be democratic. Situations wherein International leaders appoint business agents has to be eliminated. This is at the guts, right now, of the fight in the Painters' Union. The rebels have to reattract intellectuals and this is more likely now than at any other time and is not so far-fetched as one might think, because with the entrance into organized labor of teachers, professional technicians and white collar workers, intellectuals today have a base of their own inside the labor movement rather than the way it was in the thirties when most of the labor movement was composed of blue collar workers.

There's one other factor missing, today, which allows a healthier relationship between intellectuals and workers: the romantic attitudes of the intellectuals toward workers is pretty much gone. When intellectuals again come to the labor movement, they will be looking at workers as human beings who simply happen to be in an advantageous position for affecting the future of the nation.

A word about the need for labor to get into politics. The rebels have to get into politics, if for no other reason than to check the currently contemplated anti-labor legislation. Already, from the Wall Street Journal, the reactionary press, the Luce press and liberal newspapers like the New York Post, it is agreed that there has to be legislation to handle strikes--the new type of strikes; the new militancy. There is a division only on how to handle it. The more sophisticated and managerial segment of the establishment wants to put a freeze on both wages and prices. The other group wants to allow the employers the freedom to deal with their employees as they see fit--with strikers, by legalizing the use of scabs to break strikes. When the decision is made, we're going to see quite a bit of legislation. This will push the rebels into the political arena.

Building Alliances

An alliance between labor, intellectuals, scientists, and minority groups is most easily accomplished through joint political activity. The disparate groups have many common goals and interests that can best be pursued politically. Already we see some evidence of this. Out of the development which followed upon the election of State Senator Dymally of Los Angeles, the first Negro state senator in California, Dymally announced that he was through with the Democratic Party; that Negroes had no role to play there; that there was nothing in the Democratic Party for Negroes and that he was going to do everything in his power to set up an independent force to enable Negroes to meaningfully participate in California politics.

At the national level, the Students for a Democratic Society, at their convention in Iowa last summer, held a series of discussions on the perspective of activity with labor unions and workers. The SDS, the largest student organization in the United States, at the time of its formation rejected the possibility of such activity. SDS participation in the organization of the Delano grape workers and their revolts accomplished this change!

Another pressure that forces political action upon the rebels is that the only solution to the crises, particularly in coal, railroad, and maritime, is nationalization. There is absolutely no way of solving the crisis of non-union miners earning \$14. a day and automated miners earning \$22.50 a day, without the government owning all the mines and leveling out the wages. There is no solution to the problem that is faced by the railroad firemen without nationalization of the rail lines. There has been increased talk of nationalization in a number of industries for a number of reasons. At the moment, such concern with the automobile industry is stimulated by the auto makers' refusal to design safe vehicles.

In order to check automation -- that is, to insure that workers get a fuller share of what occurs when automation takes place -- a political solution is necessary. But above all, before the rebels who have been conducting these revolts can hope to expand their fight successfully in any way, they have to get vigorously into the fight for racial equality. There are a lot of things pointing to the immediate danger in this field--you see them all around you. In San Francisco, with the Culinary Workers coming out against what the civil rights movement won from the Hotel Owners' Association. In Chicago, Cleveland, and other cities in the middle west right now, companies whose factories or work-places are in Negro neighborhoods are having to pay their workers premium pay in order to get them to come into those places to go to work. In one factory, women who work later than 4:30 in the afternoon are given parking facilities behind locked gates. Montgomery Ward allows Negroes to use one of their parking

lots, in contrast, for recreational facilities in order to create a better climate. Still, it's getting so that if factories remain in the negro neighborhoods, the employers are going to have to convey their white workers to and from work, in and out of those neighborhoods. A police-state situation, which means that more and more of these companies are going to be moving their facilities out of the central city and into the suburbs, leaving more unemployed minority workers in the central city cores.

The Spectre of the South African Parallel

Workers, like all other white Americans, aren't going to automatically wise up to what is needed. In South Africa there is a good example right now of the sort of crisis that can build. There is a crisis, for example, in the South African Miner's Union. There are 45,000 white goldminers in South Africa, a country which supplies over 70% of the world's gold. There are 387,000 Bantu miners in South Africa, but only the whites are allowed in the union. The whites earn \$400 a month; the Bantus \$30. Because of the crisis demand for gold, the pressure is on. There is a shortage of labor; more production is wanted. The mine owners want to upgrade the Bantus to skilled jobs. The most militant section of the miners' union has just come to power, however, and they are the most militant racists. Not only are they anti-Bantus, they are anti-Semitic and anti-English. These leaders are now faced with the responsibility for union leadership and with bringing stability to labor-management relations. The course they will take is unknown but now is the time when we can expect to see the Bantus doing some organizing.

Fortunately, the American Negro is not in the position of the Bantu and has a far stronger position. Workers in the thirties were capable of labor movement. They were capable of rallying to numerous sophisticated demands although the general cultural level of our population at that time was lower than now. Necessity is the force that demands American workers become the champions of social progress for all Americans. An example: the rebels who are conducting the revolts need allies and need them fast. They are not going to get any aid from students or intellectuals or any of their professional and technical talents and energies, know-how and sophistication, unless they are able to do something about labor's discrimination problem. The way intellectuals and students are thinking today, they will reject the new labor movement unless it is cleaned up on this particular question. Observe what Dr. Carleton Goodlet did the other day as a result of the Culinary Workers' action against San Francisco Negroes. He threatened labor with the spectre of a right-to-work movement based in the Negro communities. Now that's a pretty big base, and a pretty big vote. There is little public sentiment against Goodlet for making this threat of establishing a right-to-work law. Reformed or not,

labor unions cannot afford such a move nor such a base of opposition. The rebels have too many against them already-- the employers, the government and the union leadership. They need allies in the Negro community which represents one of labor's few powerful potential allies.

The whole problem is made clear by the facts surrounding Dow Wilson's rise to leadership in the Painters Union. Dow Wilson was a man who was willing to lead and fight for what the rank desired. He led their fight for better working conditions; he led their fight for higher wages; he led their fight against technological unemployment. As a result, he was able to propose and get them to pass some very sophisticated demands that went far beyond the painters' immediate needs. Negroes, for example, haven't been getting into the Painters Union in many places around the country. Dow Wilson, before he was murdered, was able to get Negroes into the San Francisco local, the largest local in the International.

When a trade union leader is doing his job for the ranks, it's not hard for him to put over progressive social measures and get his ranks to champion them. Walter Reuther, at one time, was evidence of this. Today, when Reuther goes to Delano and gives the grapestrikers \$5000 a month, its full value is lost to the UAW rank and file. Their attitude is: "He's giving them \$5,000 a month. That's okay, but he's tryin' to be a big shot. He's not doing anything about the speed-up that we have to live under daily." If Reuther was leading the fight against the speed-up in the auto industry, he could have done much more for the grapestrikers.

Necessity and Morality

The morality of the labor movement which we observed and which was such a wonderful thing in the thirties did not come from a metaphysical force. It was strictly necessity that taught it. It was part of a quid pro quo arrangement. Labor needed allies and had to do something in order to get them to become allies. That necessity, that quid pro quo, creates a morality: people do learn. For example, the longshoremen refused to handle Delano grapes. They did that not just because they wanted to help grapestrikers. They did it because simultaneously, they had a big beef of their own going and were mad and wanted to strike back at their own leadership's refusal to make the fight on the waterfront. In the same period there were a number of unauthorized work stoppages on the San Francisco waterfront.

Then there is the whole question of the longshoreman's attitude toward picket lines. I will give you an example via an incident I observed one morning a few years ago. A tiny old man was walking in front of a pier in San Francisco with a picket sign just prior to starting time. He carried an 8 x 11 picket sign. Longshoremen refused to go on the pier. It was being picketed and that was the end of it. The old

man was picketing the pier because his daughter's luggage had been damaged by the steamship company, but those men weren't going to walk past him. They had learned a morality through a necessity in the thirties which made them know--and makes them know to this moment--that a picket line is a thing to be respected.

Every American has a responsibility in the struggle that can again make American workers a major force for social change. Students, in particular, must become familiar with the details of the worker's struggles against their employers and union leaders. Criticism is called for, but with context and with responsibility. Students and intellectuals should make their talents and energies available to the workers who are reforming the unions.

Recommended Reading:

- Wildcat Strike, Alvin Gouldner; Harper Torchbook, New York, 1965
- On the Line, Harvey Swados; Little Brown, Boston, 1957*
- Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy, Alvin Gouldner; Free Press of Glencoe, 1954
- The Man and the Assembly Line, C.R. Walker and Robert H. Guest; Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1952
- The Auto Worker and the American Dream, Eli Chinney; Beacon Paperbacks, 1965
- Industrial Society, Georges Friedman; Free Press of Glencoe, 1955
- The Anatomy of Work, Georges Friedman; Free Press of Glencoe, 1961
- American Labor, Herbert Harris; Yale University Press, 1938
- Servants of Power, Loren Baritz; Science Editions, Wiley and Sons, New York, 1965
- Management and the Worker, (The Hawthorne Tests) F. J. Roethlisberger and William J. Dickson; Science Editions, 1964
- Alienation and Freedom, Robert Blauner; University of Chicago Press, 1960 (Ford Workers, Milpitas, Calif.)
- Class in Suburbia, William H. Dobriner; Prentice-Hall, 1963 (Ford Workers; in Milpitas and Dagenhan, England)

*This work is fiction and autobiographical. It was possible because Swados, almost unique among writer-intellectuals worked two years on an auto assembly line. On the Line is both top fiction and sociology; more valuable than much of the recent academic sociological studies on factory life.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS PROGRAM IN BRIEF

We stand for socialism: collective ownership and democratic control of the economy through workers' organizations established by a revolution from below and aimed toward building a classless society. We stand for an internationalist policy, completely opposed to all forms of class exploitation and in solidarity with the struggles of all oppressed peoples.

We believe in socialism from below, not dispensation from above. Our orientation has nothing in common with the various attempts to permeate or reform the ruling classes of the world, or with the idea that socialism will be brought to the masses by an elite. Socialism can only be won and built by the working class and all other oppressed people, in revolutionary struggle.

We oppose capitalism as a system of class exploitation and as the source of racial and imperialist oppression. In the interests of private profit and corporate power, it presents itself in the United States as a liberal/conservative "welfare state" based on a permanent war economy. It promotes unemployment, poverty, and racism; it violently suppresses militant opposition. As an international system of imperialism, U.S. capitalism struggles to contain and absorb the colonial revolution, and continually deepens the underdevelopment of satellite economies.

I.S. is an activist organization which seeks to build a mass revolutionary movement in the United States, to train revolutionary socialists, and to develop socialist theory to advance that movement. We see ourselves, not as the revolutionary leadership, but as part of the process of developing it: we are committed to working toward the building of an American revolutionary socialist party -- a party, based on the working class, which can provide the leadership necessary for the revolutionary seizure of state power by the working class.

We regard the working class, female and male, black and white, blue collar and white collar, as potentially the leading revolutionary force in society. We see great promise in the new militancy of the labor movement, including the emergence of black workers' organizations. We will help build uncompromising struggles by rank and file forces against racism and bureaucratism in the labor movement and against the subordination of the workers' interests to the demands of the state. In places of work we fight to build workers' political consciousness and to link their movement with the struggles of oppressed peoples in this society and internationally. We regard the development of a new radical party based on rank and file workers' organizations as a giant step in the political independence of the working class and in the coordination of all insurgent social forces. Workers, organized as a class, can stop bourgeois society dead in its tracks. More importantly, they can organize society on a new basis, that of revolutionary socialism. In the course of doing so, they will create new instruments of democratic power, just as the workers of Paris created the Commune in 1871, the workers of Russia the Soviets in 1905 and 1917, and the workers of Hungary the Workers'

Councils in 1956. Our conception of socialism is bound up with such organizations, which embody workers' control of industry and the state.

At home we stand together with the struggles of black people and other oppressed minorities for liberation. We support armed self-defense, independent self-organization of the ghetto, and the right of self-determination for the black community. We look to a future coalition of black and white workers; however, blacks cannot allow their struggle today to be subordinated to the present level of consciousness of white workers.

We work to build the movement for women's liberation, both in society at large and within the radical movement. We support the formation of independent women's organizations in which women will work out the organizational and programmatic forms of their struggles. Within these organizations we push for an orientation towards organizing working class women. Women's oppression is bound up with the exploitation of labor in all class societies; thus the struggle for women's liberation can only be won as part of a broader struggle for a socialist society. We do not counterpose women's participation in their own liberation movement to their participation in revolutionary socialist organizations. But women's liberation will not result automatically from socialist revolution; women must build their struggle now, and continue it after a revolution, if they are to be free under socialism. This struggle, like that of other oppressed peoples, will itself be one of the forces which will begin to shake the capitalist order.

The struggles of students and young people against imperialist wars, and against education and training designed to make them the agents or passive victims of oppression, likewise are shaking society. We participate in these struggles not only for their own sake, but also because they will help bring other sections of the population, including young workers, into motion.

We are part of the international movement against imperialist exploitation and aggression. We support popular revolution against American domination, and fight for the withdrawal of American troops from all foreign lands. In Vietnam we favor the victory of the NLF over the imperialists, but we believe that the new regime will establish bureaucratic class rule, not a socialist society.

We believe that no existing regime can be called socialist. On a world scale, the "socialist" countries constitute a system of regimes and movements in different stages of development, but with a common ideology and social origin. In place of capitalism this system has achieved, and now aims at, not the abolition of class society, but a new type of class system. In some areas (e.g. France and Indonesia), the official Communist parties -- both "Soviet" and "Chinese" -- have held back mass energies in a search for power through maneuvers at the top. Elsewhere, these movements have been able to organize immense popular energies in revolutionary opposition to the capitalist state; but the leadership

These movements do not organize the working class to seize power for itself, nor does it intend to establish a regime in which the masses themselves rule. The revolutionary struggle expels capitalist imperialism and expropriates the native capitalist class, but the leadership aims at a social system in which that leadership constitutes a ruling class through its control of the state which owns the means of production, and through the repression of independent workers' organizations. Thus, where successful, these movements have placed in power not the working masses, but a self-perpetuating bureaucratic class. Taking power in backward countries, these regimes have based their attempts to industrialize (successful or unsuccessful) on the crushing exploitation of workers and peasants. In all cases, popular discontent reappears and the struggle of the masses cannot be carried forward through the ruling party, but only in revolutionary opposition to it. This system is no less class ridden, and in its fully developed form (as in the USSR) no less imperialist than capitalism. In these countries we support and identify with the struggles -- sometimes organized, more often not -- of rank and file forces for their socialist birthright. We believe that socialism cannot be achieved in these countries without the overthrow of the ruling groups. In all countries we advocate revolutionary struggles as sparks for the world revolution; this alone offers the solution to the problems of poverty and underdevelopment, which cannot be overcome in the framework of a single country. But this internationalist perspective itself depends on the mass struggles for liberation in individual countries, whether against capitalist or bureaucratic regimes. In the bureaucratic states as under capitalism, SOCIALISM MEANS ONLY A REVOLUTION IN WHICH THE WORKING CLASS ITSELF OVERTHROWS ITS EXPLOITERS AND DIRECTLY RULES THE STATE.

Basing its work on the ongoing worldwide struggles against oppression and the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, I.S. seeks to build a socialist movement which is both revolutionary and democratic, working class and internationalist: an international struggle in which the world's masses can fight for power and win a new world of peace, abundance, and freedom that will be the foundation stone of classless communist society.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

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INTERESTED?

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