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MILITARY GROWS
IN CHILE**
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REPUBLICANS OR
DEMOCRATS**
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THE EMPLOYERS' OFFENSIVE

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for more coverage

POSTAL

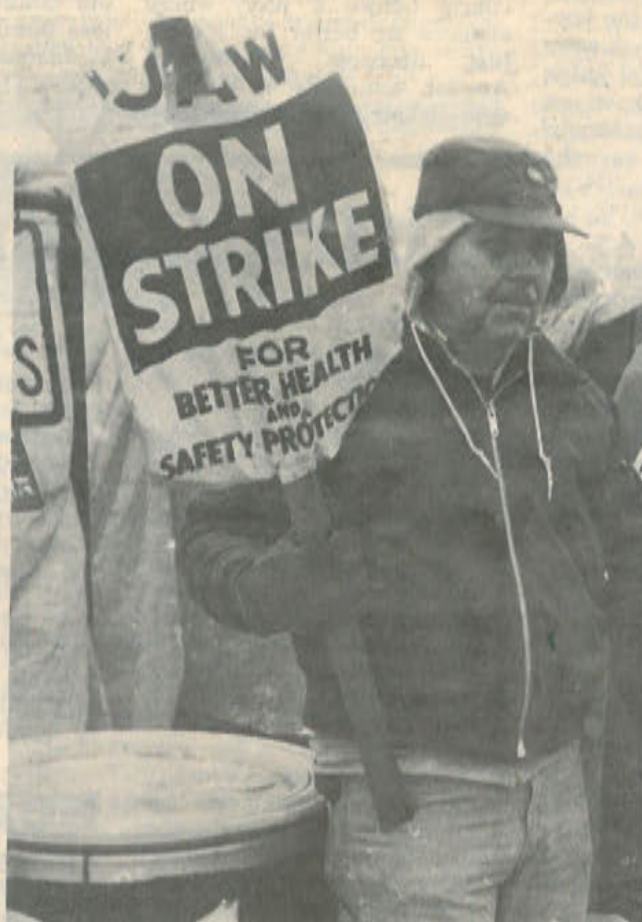
AUTO

MINING



POSTMASTER GENERAL Bolger threatened to do to the postal workers what Ronald Reagan did to striking air traffic controllers in 1981—fire them and destroy their unions if they walked out.

Bolger's scare tactics paid off. Officials in three unions representing 600,000 postal workers refused to call an illegal strike against the government's concession demands for a two-tier pay scale that would freeze current wages and cut those for new hires by over 20%. Once again trade union officials have stood by as the bosses attack the rank and file.



TWO YEARS after auto workers accepted concessions, the auto industry is enjoying enormous profits.

General Motors and Ford will total at least \$8 billion in profits this year, but still plan to slash 130,000 jobs between them to increase their profit rate even more.

Rank and file auto workers will have to take a stand to reverse the trend. The UAW's \$560 million strike fund could support a strike lasting months. A successful walkout could reverse the series of defeats endured by auto workers that began with the Chrysler concessionary contract of 1979.



NOT SINCE 1964 have coal miners reached a contract settlement without a strike. This year, with the contract expiring September 30, the stakes are much higher.

The United Mine Workers faces its biggest challenge since the 1920s. Nearly half the nation's coal mines have shut down since 1978, and nearly 25% of coal miners are unemployed.

The UMW has announced a strategy of selective strikes to fight demands for concessions. Together with the auto workers, they could stop the employers' offensive. Had the postal workers walked out, or if auto does—workers could begin to turn the tide of Reaganism. □

REAGAN'S GIFT TO THE RICH

Some time between the champagne and caviar at the parties hosted by Texas millionaires, the Republican rich got down to the business at hand in Dallas: renominating Ronald Reagan for four more years.

It all makes sense. A torrent of recent information confirms what most of us already know—the Reagan years have boomed for the rich and increased misery for the poor.

Reaganomics shifted some \$25 billion to the richest fifth of the U.S. population, a figure which translates into a gift of \$2,000 to each family in that category, according to the Urban Institute's study, *The Reagan Record*.

The total family income share for the richest 20% shifted from 37% to 38.9% of the national income during Reagan's first term, the study said. At the same time, the bottom 40% of families share dropped from 20% to 18.6%.

LOST

In fact, as a Congressional study showed, families with incomes below \$75,000 lost income while families who made more than \$200,000 gained an average of \$17,403—all resulting from the effects of Reagan-initiated changes in income and Social Security taxes.

Taxes on the rich felt the scalpel at the same time that programs for the poor got the ax.

Since 1981, Reagan and a willing Congress reduced Aid to Families with Dependent Children by 13%; child nutrition programs by 28%; food stamps by 13%; and general employment programs by 24%.

Over fiscal years 1982-1985, programs for low-income people were cut by \$57 billion, twice as deeply as social programs not targeted to the poor.

According to the Congressional Research Service, the 1981 budget cuts pushed 560,000 people into poverty. Almost 500,000 single parent families were dropped from AFDC. In cities surveyed, between 30% and 60% of families dropped from the rolls had no health care coverage. Half ran out of food each month and one-fourth suffered utility cutoffs.

All of these cuts fell disproportionately on Blacks and Hispanics. Census Bureau figures showed Black poverty levels—more than one-third of the U.S.'s Black population lives under the poverty line—is nearly three times that for whites. More than twice as many Hispanics as whites fall below the line. □

AGENT ORANGE VICTIMS:

"We are fighting for ourselves and countless others"

by BEN BLAKE

CHICAGO, IL—Operation "Ranch Hands' Revenge" is the code name for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War's (VVAW) campaign against the recent federal court decision offering very limited compensation for exposure to the deadly herbicide Agent Orange.

The name is derived from the Air Force study showing that veterans who came into contact with this chemical, used to defoliate large areas of the Vietnamese countryside, experienced an increased rate of skin cancer, birth defects among their children and a number of other medical problems. The Air Force, however, recommended that no action be taken to aid the vets other than an annual repetition of the same medical study for the next twenty years!

The federal courts have taken a similar attitude towards vets suffering the consequences of contact with Agent Orange, which contains dioxin, a carcinogen considered to be 170,000 times more toxic than cyanide.

This spring, after over five years of delays, lawyers for the vets and representatives of the corporations that manufactured and distributed Agent Orange reached a tentative out-of-court settlement, just as the case was to go to trial. Because the lawyers representing the vets were appointed by the federal judge hearing the case, they have not been accountable to veterans' organizations such as the VVAW.

ABSOLVES

The initial proposal has been very favorable to the corporations involved—Dow, Monsanto, Hercules, Diamond Shamrock and Uniroyal. It actually denies a link between dioxin and vets' health problems and absolves the corporations from any responsibility for failing to develop safeguards to protect the vets from the chemical.

Both these positions reinforce the Veterans Administration's claim that Agent Orange only causes a type of skin rash, and would make it easier for the agency to continue to refuse to test, treat and compensate vets for more serious medical problems related to contact with this deadly chemical. This saves the VA a lot of money, but it doesn't save the health and lives of the over 40,000 Vietnam veterans exposed to the deadly herbicide.

In addition, the court proposal would order the chemical companies to set aside \$180 million in a trust fund to cover all medical expenses and compensation for the affected vets.

This sounds like a great deal of money, but it's only \$4,500 per victim and their families. Considering that this amount is supposed to cover all costs relating to treating such serious



Vets picket Agent Orange hearing in Chicago.

problems as cancer, genetic and immune system damage and birth defects, Vietnam veterans consider this proposal totally inadequate.

MOBILIZE

As a result, Operation Ranch Hands' Revenge was organized by the VVAW to mobilize vets and their supporters to oppose this tentative agreement and force the case back into the courts before a jury, where chances are better for a more just decision. Throughout August, hundreds of Vietnam vets picketed, rallied and gave

testimony against the proposed agreement at official hearings in New York, Chicago, Houston, Atlanta and San Francisco.

One of the national coordinators of the VVAW stated the objectives of this campaign in these words, "We fight on because of brothers like Paul Reutersham, Ed Juteau and others who have already died from Agent Orange exposure. We fight for ourselves and for our families and for the countless hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who were also exposed to our herbicides."

"The chemical companies,

the Pentagon and the VA fight us tooth and nail because they can't admit what they have done to us or to the people of Southeast Asia."

In October, the judge hearing the case will decide whether the settlement will go into effect or a trial will begin. Even if the ruling is unfavorable, the battle to get adequate testing, treatment and compensation for Agent Orange victims and their families will continue.

If you want to join the fight, contact: Vietnam Veterans Against the War, P.O. Box 25592, Chicago, IL 60625. □

Chicago cops attack gays

by ANDY THAYER

CHICAGO, IL—"All of a sudden you see all these cops walking down the street with their billy clubs in their hands," said Gail Butensky. "Everybody started turning around saying, 'What the hell's going on' because there were so many of them."

An August 12 street fair in what is commonly known as Chicago's "gay ghetto" had abruptly ended when one of the numerous squirt guns sold by one of the vendors had been turned on an undercover cop.

It was harmless. "What harm can waterguns do?" said Dewey Harrington, a member of a committee appointed by Mayor Washington to investigate the incident.

The undercover cop had been slowly driving down the crowded street when a man fired a squirt gun at the cop's open car window. "The officer (started) coming out of the car and attacking, pulling the guy down to the ground and wrestling with him when his—the cop's—coat opened," said Harrington.

"There was a gun and they—the crowd—were scared.

They were booing the officers."

Soon after, the cops started arresting people at random, swearing and shouting anti-gay slurs. In response to the arbitrary arrests, people in the crowd said, "You can't do that." "How can you arrest them for doing nothing?" said Harrington.

In all, 39 people were arrested—most on "disorderly conduct," and some on

"mob action" after about 300-400 people marched to the nearby police station to protest the arrests.

The incident showed in bold relief how, despite the election of openly lesbian and gay politicians and a proliferation of gay and lesbian democratic and republican clubs in major cities, gays and lesbians—like other oppressed groups—are not immune to "special treatment by bigotted cops or 'gay bashers' without badges. □

BUILD PRO-GAY RALLY

CHICAGO, IL—The Reverend Hiram Crawford, Sr., a Chicago pastor who said he "supports the principles" of anti-gay bigot Jerry Falwell has pledged to organize "10,000 Christians" to march around City Hall in order to defeat a proposed bill prohibiting discrimination against lesbians and gays.

Supporters are urged to join a pro-gay and lesbian rally aimed at pressuring for passage of the bill and countering the scheduled anti-gay

picket to be led by Crawford. While passage of the bill would give little material aid against the oppression that lesbians and gays face daily, the fight for the bill, as well as its passage, is a good opportunity to bring out of the closet the issue of lesbian and gay oppression and thus publicize the need for gay and lesbian liberation.

The pro-gay rally is scheduled for 9 a.m., September 6 at Chicago's Daley plaza. Be there! □

Why we need a socialist alternative

The Republican Party comes away from its audacious display of wealth in Dallas wondering not whether Ronald Reagan can be re-elected, but if it can actually capture the majority in both houses of Congress.

"FUROR"

The "furor over Ferraro's finances" and grumbings from Jesse Jackson and Andrew Young once again have raised questions about Walter Mondale's campaign. Reagan's lead in the opinion polls seems insurmountable.

The prospect of another four years of Reagan has led many on the left to support the Democratic ticket. They argue that in a second Reagan term the so-called "far right" would emerge—that religious fundamentalists like Jerry Falwell and social-spending slashers like Rep. Jack Kemp will make Reagan's first four years of union-busting and militarism look mild.

RHETORIC

The Republican rhetoric in Dallas did sound extreme. Echoing Reagan's "They're so left, they've left America" comment, Nevada Sen. Paul Laxalt declared that the Democratic Party had moved "outside the American political tradition."

But are the Democrats really so different? Geraldine Fer-



Can you spot the difference? Left: the Democratic Party Convention. Right: the Republicans. Both engaged in an orgy of patriotism and flag-waving, calls for "law and order" and increases in military spending. Neither is an alternative for workers.

raro has gotten bad publicity precisely because of her enormous wealth and questionable business practices—things the Democrats usually attack Republicans for.

Suddenly, Ferraro—the Mondale campaign's great symbol of all those who suffered most under Reaganomics—was exposed for what she is: a miserable token. What can a millionaire member of Congress know about the working class woman's double burden of working for a wage while raising children?

Former prosecutor Ferraro promises to be "tough on crime" if elected. Can this opponent of school desegregation even understand, much

less do anything about, the racism and poverty confronting the nation's Blacks and Hispanics?

Fear of Ronald Reagan can't alter the fact that the Mondale-Ferraro ticket is running the most right-wing presidential campaign the Democratic Party has seen in at least 20 years. Union buttons and banners were barred on the floor of the Democratic convention in July, but American flags were everywhere as speakers droned on about "family" and "tradition."

But what is behind this shift? Is it really true that all Americans are more conservative than they were five, ten or twenty years ago?

Hardly. The conservatism of the Republican and Democratic conventions reflected the fact that in the past five years the American working class has suffered a series of stinging defeats. Starting with the concessions at Chrysler in 1979, workers have been on the defensive. Reagan's firing of striking air traffic controllers in 1981 boosted the bosses' confidence to impose their will on contract negotiations, as was the case in the defeated Greyhound bus drivers' strike.

Countless strikes have failed from a complete lack of solidarity. Union officials have shown no interest in doing the things necessary to win a strike—such as building mass pickets, organizing support and taking on the employers. And all too often the rank and file has shown little initiative in filling that gap.

But only through such confrontations—workers against their bosses—can the conservative stranglehold be broken. A militant miners or auto workers strike would be an infinitely greater challenge to the right-wing than a vote for Mondale-Ferraro.

Only through their own activity can ordinary workers turn the tide against the bosses' union busting, wage cuts and social spending cuts.

Workers in the midst of long, grueling strikes like the struggle at Chicago's Danly Machine Co. do have a fighting alternative to the union officials' inactivity. The rank and file can take the lead in building mass solidarity pickets with workers in other unions and plants and among the thousands of unemployed trade unionists as they did at AP Parts in Toledo this summer.

MINORITY

But such organization depends on the minority which is willing to fight—before the election and after. And such organization can be built, if not out of the big battles this fall, then out of the small

struggles that involve a militant minority day in and day out. But the building must take place in the here and now. The arguments have to be put forward at every opportunity—no matter how unpopular.

A successful miners or auto workers strike would be an infinitely greater challenge to the right-wing than a Democratic vote.

The course of American society has relatively little to do with which set of rich people inhabits the White House. The bosses will continue to go unchallenged until workers use their power—the power they have in offices and factories around the country.

CRISIS

The system today is, despite the recovery, crisis ridden. No genuine reforms will be implemented from above. Workers create the world's wealth, and have the potential to build a society based on their own needs—a socialist society.

The hope for such a society lies not in choosing the "lesser evil" among the bosses, but in revolutionary organization of workers who look beyond elections and other sideshows to a future of workers' power. □

The issues at stake in the auto contract

DETROIT, MI—Job security has shaped up as the number one issue in the auto industry's labor contract negotiations this month.

The United Auto Workers' demands for job guarantees could upset Ford's and GM's plans to eliminate 130,000 jobs between them by 1989. But UAW leaders know that a strike could endanger the presidential hopes of their main man, Democrat Walter Mondale. They are reluctant to call a walkout that would make the UAW and Mondale appear as wreckers of the economic recovery.

ROOM

Still, the auto boom gives the UAW ample bargaining room. Record profits and huge bonuses preclude the auto companies' usual pretense of poverty, sparking the slogan, "Restore and more in '84"—a reference to the concessionary auto contracts of 1979 and 1982.

The Big Three auto companies made a massive \$6.5 billion in 1983, and GM and Ford profits should total be-

by JOE ALLEN

tween \$8 and \$9 billion this year. GM Chairman Roger Smith rewarded himself with a \$1.49 million salary and an \$800,000 bonus in 1983. His counterpart at Ford, Philip Caldwell, got a \$900,000 bonus last year.

Yet this upturn in auto production and profits did not slow the loss of jobs in the industry. UAW membership has dropped from 1.5 to 1.2 million since 1979. Rather than recall the thousands of workers on layoff, the auto companies have increased productivity through mandatory overtime and the introduction of new technology—robots.

As *Business Week* said at the end of July, "There is a sure-fire way for U.S. auto makers to compete with the Japanese—slash the labor content in each car they build." GM has already spent \$5 million in a joint venture with Fanuc Ltd. of Japan, the world's largest robot manufacturer. GM plans to spend \$3 billion per year on research and development of artificial

intelligence and \$7 billion to introduce the technology in its auto plants.

Rank and file auto workers will have to take a strong stand against layoffs and press the UAW leadership to fight for more.

There is some talk of a token selective strike—most likely against GM—but it is only talk. If auto workers are going to defend their working conditions and job security, it will require more than token action. Auto workers are still tremendously powerful—if they use their power.

Reagan will try to use any auto strike to his advantage in his presidential contest with Walter Mondale this fall, charging that Mondale is "selfishly" threatening the economic recovery. And last month he urged auto workers to reach a "moderate" settlement.

But workers must reject the idea that they should sacrifice their standards of living—or their jobs—to help one millionaire or another find the way to the White House. □

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"Corporate campaign" won't win Danly strike

CICERO, IL—After nearly four months on strike, workers at Danly Machine Corp. may face the possibility of defeat unless they can stop the drift of scabs across the picket lines.

"They're getting close," said striker Cliff Mounts, a grinder at Danly for the last 10 years. "If they get a few more people in the right departments, they could run this operation for two years."

United Steelworkers of America Local 15271 struck the auto press maker May 1 over the company's demand for a two-tiered wage system and the elimination of most work rules and seniority rights. "They want us to train our own replacements," striking electrical assembler Bill Budenz said.

UNION-BUSTER

Danly personnel director Gary Lorenz admits to having presided over six union decertification elections in his career. And Danly's owners, the Ogden Corp., defeated a strike at its Tulsa, Oklahoma

by **LEE SUSTAR**

subsidiary, the Yuba Heat Transfer Co. Company reports said the strike ended with "the permanent replacement of the bargaining unit workforce and was abandoned by the union in July, 1983."

Ogden is hoping for the same results at Danly. On July 18 it declared all scabs "permanent replacements" and demanded superseniority for them in the event of a settlement. Negotiations have broken off, and Danly took out full-page want ads in Chicago newspapers.

But rather than challenge the scabs on the picket line, the union leadership has turned to a "corporate campaign" of generating negative publicity against Ogden/Danly. Mass pickets were abandoned when a court order limited pickets to eight per gate, and the union turned to such activity as distributing leaflets outside scabs' homes and the offices of the public relations firm hired by Danly, Hill and Knowlton.

But this strategy takes workers far from the decisive point in the strike: the picket line. The ability to shut down a plant or office is what, in the end, forces the bosses to meet workers' demands. Workers at Toledo's AP Auto Parts demonstrated their power in April when the 400 strikers organized the support of 2,000 solidarity picketers.

Ignoring an injunction, they forced scabs to spend the night inside the plant and defended their picket line against police. But the AP workers and their supporters promptly were stabbed in the back by their union officials. UAW Local 14 President Oscar Bunch took out a newspaper ad denouncing the mass picket.

DIFFERENT

USW Local 15271 President Joe Romano said he "applauds" the AP pickets, but claims that Danly is a "different situation"—even though the two plants are about the same size and both Cicero and Toledo are full of



Scabs herded through Danly line.

unemployed trade unionists who could be called on to support a mass picket.

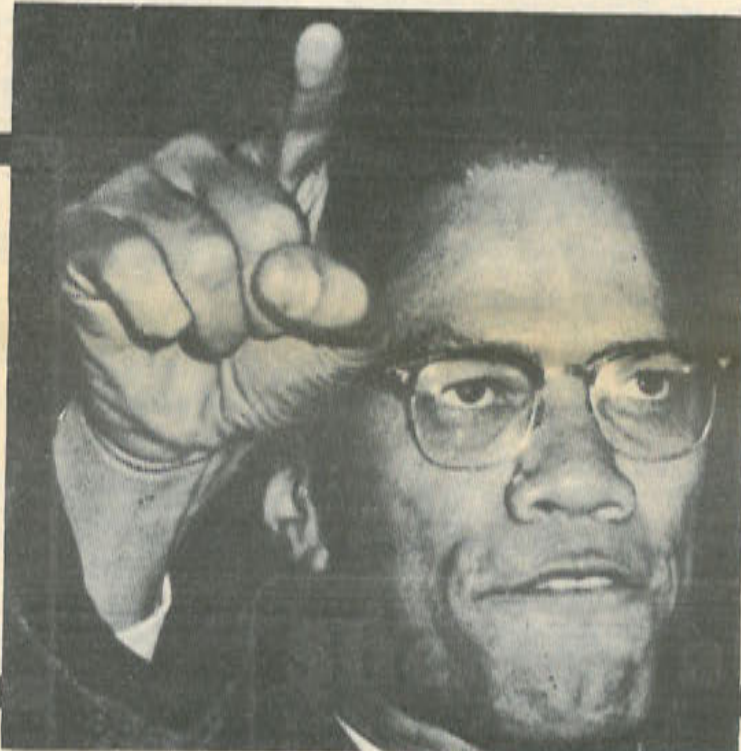
Danly claims that 300 scabs are working in the plant. The union puts the figure at less than 100. Whatever the actual figure, the numbers of strike-breakers are likely to increase as long as the union officials rely on the corporate campaign as their main tactic.

Bad publicity doesn't matter to Danly or its customers in the auto industry—profits do. And since it's easier to make profits in a non-union shop, Danly may be prepared

to drag the strike on for several more months.

"Danly's hired people just to break this union," Cliff Mounts said. "It's a hard fight; they're tough, they're smart. But working people today read more, know more than they ever have. We're going to have to get a few hundred people on that picket line to stop those scabs, and if Danly's security or the police try to stop us—well, their heads bleed, too."

"The injunction? If strikers always obeyed the law, there wouldn't be any unions." □



BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY: BLACK POLITICS IN AMERICA

No "liberty and justice" for Black Americans

WAYNESBORO, GA—About 200 Black residents of this small Georgia town took to the streets August 18 to protest the death of Larry Gardner, a 32-year-old Black worker who died in police custody.

The Burke County coroner claimed Gardner died from heat exhaustion. But Gardner's relatives said sheriff's deputies beat and tortured him.

OUTRAGE

Community outrage was swift after news of Gardner's death swept through the town of 6,000, about 35 miles south of Augusta. Throughout the day, 50 to 200 Blacks gathered around the Burke County Courthouse before Sheriff Glenn Coursey slapped a curfew on the town.

As night fell, eight fires broke out around the town. Authorities arrested 20 to 25 people for curfew violations.

About 100 demonstrators met with Coursey and other city officials to press them for an investigation. After the meeting, some of the protesters said they didn't believe authorities' assurances that

by **LANCE SELFA**

there would be no cover-up in Gardner's case.

Coursey called in over 100 police from surrounding counties. Thirty Georgia State Patrol troopers, armed with shotguns, patrolled the town.

Deputies arrested Gardner following a foot-chase related to shoplifting and drug charges, authorities said. Within a few hours, he was dead.

Gardner's story is not an isolated incident. Police beatings of suspects, shootings in Black neighborhoods, prison cell "suicides" continue all the time. Only a few such incidents, like those that sparked the 1980 and 1982 Black rebellions in Miami, receive any national attention at all.

ACQUITTED

In 1980, a Tampa jury acquitted police who beat Arthur McDuffie, a Black insurance salesperson, to death. In 1982, Miami's Overtown neighborhood exploded after policeman Luis Alvarez shot

and killed 20-year-old Nevell Johnson, Jr. A jury acquitted Alvarez, determining his actions to be proper in the line of duty. Johnson was shot in the back of the head.

While the Republicans talked about "law and order" at their week-long coronation of Reagan in Dallas, the Dallas police showed what that slogan means.

Since January 1983, the Dallas police have killed 25 people. Since 1984, the cops shot 17 people—16 of them Black or Hispanic. Ten of those shot by police this year have died.

The events in Waynesboro, like the more-publicized events in Miami, show that "liberty and justice" are hollow words for most Ameri-

cans, especially for Blacks. Racism pervades the whole society and its "justice" system: the police, the courts, the jails.

These racist murders make headlines when Blacks mobilize to fight back. But they will continue until a sustained fightback is built—one which challenges the system at its roots. □



Flashback Miami, 1980: Police violence against Blacks is endemic in this racist system.

"You must protest U.S. aid to El Salvador"

Many of us have read of the popular resistance forces in El Salvador and of the lives of peasants both in the liberated zones and throughout El Salvador. Where does the working class fit into this struggle for liberation?

APRIL STOLTZ of *Socialist Worker* interviews two exiled El Salvadoran trade unionists. They were in Cleveland, Ohio last month on a solidarity campaign.

Oscar

“There exist in El Salvador two kinds of unions. There are large unions with government support. They don't suffer persecution—because they take up the problems of only a select group, not all the workers they represent.

The other unions struggle for better work conditions, against discriminatory laws, for real living wages and for better health care and education. They are totally persecuted by government forces. And so then it is said they are communist, when in reality they are working for a better life for the workers.

Workers internationally, and especially in North America, can do a lot if they are in solidarity with the workers of El Salvador and put pressure on the Salvadoran government to decrease the repression workers and unions receive. It is international solidarity which will stop the repression of the working class in El Salvador.

DESTROYED

In 1932, the government destroyed the labor movement, and then it arose again in 1944. Again it was destroyed by the government, but in 1980 it rose again. And Duarte persecuted and eliminated the leadership. Yet in 1984, only four short years later, we can see again the labor movement on the rise. The workers have no choice. Whatever road they take, there is the possibility of losing their lives. Martial law has been declared to keep the national labor movement from going forward, and yet it grows daily.

In June, the postal workers went out on strike and were out for more than a month for a raise in wages. For a state institution to go out on strike and to have won some of their demands is a

good sign.

The truck drivers struck recently when they were given jobs by the government—only to find that the job was taking soldiers to the war front in their trucks. The government filled their trucks with the soldiers, but the truck drivers refused to go to the front. The government had to put the National Guard on them.

In 1980, we supposedly had a democratic regime, but Duarte, who was in power, went on a selective campaign to destroy the union leadership of El Salvador. And he practically succeeded in destroying the union movement by physically killing many unionists. 1980 was a year of many strikes, and he did this to shut the workers up. Of course, after they'd killed most of the union leadership, they were able to say to the U.S., "We have established peace."

FREEZE

Afterwards, the first thing the government did was to freeze wages. This is a law that still exists, yet the cost of living has gone up tremendously. Beans, the staple food of the Salvadoran diet, have seen a more than 400% increase in price. Milk has gone up 500% and transportation and housing have gone up as well.

What can you do for your children under these conditions? How can you buy them clothes, feed them, or take care of them medically? These things all happened while Carter was in office.

Any U.S. company can come to El Salvador's free zones and set up their own wages, throw away the rules and basically do anything they want. This is a privilege strictly for North American companies.

There are factories which send boxes of pre-cut clothes to El Salvador, only for the workers to sew and send back to the U.S., and then what they say to North American workers is that they are losing their jobs because of these imports. For workers in the U.S., the enemy is not the workers of El Salvador, but rather the owners of the factories.

The U.S. says there is no intervention, but there is direct economic intervention. There is an alliance of U.S. capital with that of any country of South and Central America. This proves that workers all over the world have a common interest to fight together. ”



The poster reads: "Stop the repression against farm workers!"

Fernando

“I started working when I was 17-years-old and was one of the founders of the union in my factory. When I started the job, I didn't understand the problems of workers and the necessity to have a union. Then I started seeing violations: low salaries and discrimination against women workers.

ORGANIZING

So we saw the necessity for organizing a union. We fought for more benefits and equal pay for women workers. Later I worked for the National Union of Food Products and Canned Goods, and saw that other factories had worse conditions than ours.

I remember especially Quality Foods, a North American corpora-

tion. Here the conditions were very bad. They had policemen at the entrance to check everyone who entered the factory. A lot of the workers were getting fired, there were no benefits, and there was no possibility of a raise. We decided to call a strike.

After being on strike for eight days, the National Guard came to take six of us away. They told the workers that they were taking us to the National Ministry, and they treated us well in front of them. But as soon as we were out of the sight of the workers, they took us to the National Guard and tortured us. Then they started asking questions about who we were, who our parents were and who was in the union. They tried to tell me I participated in an occupation of government property. This is always the charge for unionists, so they can lock them up in prison



Ending occupation of Ministry of Labor, San Salvador.



Cotton workers, Usulután.

for 6-8 years. We were released because of pressure from the workers.

Freedom didn't last long because once we were released, the government began the death squads. They were calling us up and telling us to get out of the unions, or they would kill us. Many of us had to sleep in different houses night after night. And there was the constant pressure and fear that at any moment we could be captured, tortured and assassinated. Finally, I had to leave my job, my union, my family, my country.

"DEMOCRATIC"

After the first week of Duarte winning the recent elections, 400 people were killed and three-quarters of the country was bombed. This is our so-called "democratic" regime.

Last January there were a number of strikes. The electrical workers went out. Hospital workers, bank workers, agricultural workers, tourism workers, teachers and a number of different factories struck around the issue of higher wages. One month before and one month after the elections, there were more than 65,000 workers on strike.

The first problem Duarte had to face after winning the election was a strike of postal workers. The postal workers strike ended under strong repression. Also, on May 1, in the Plaza Libertad in San Salvador there was a demonstration of 3,000 workers. Besides raising the fundamental needs of workers, they raised the issue of U.S. intervention and the problem that U.S. intervention is causing in El Salvador and why they are against it.

There are 12 union leaders of the electrical workers union who have been in jail for over four years. The government has still given no cause for their being there. They have let no organizations interview them. Unions from all over the world have sent letters, telegrams and made phone calls to the minister of defense, to the press and even radio stations. This is one way to help.

You must protest especially U.S. military and economic aid to the El Salvadoran government. ”

Court strikes blow against gay rights

Ruling that "private consensual homosexual conduct is not constitutionally protected," a federal appeals panel in Washington D.C. on August 17 struck a grave blow to the gay rights movement. The case they decided involved James Dronenburg, a 27-year-old petty officer who was dishonorably discharged from the Navy after he acknowledged he had had sex with another seaman.

UNBLEMISHED

Dronenburg had—even according to the court who ruled against him—"an unblemished service record and earned many citations praising his job performance" as a linguist.

The court's decision was significant for two reasons.

by TERRY STONE

First, because its language was not limited to the military case at hand but said that gay relations in general are not constitutionally protected.

Second, because the decision was a blow to women's reproductive rights since the court said that "we are unwilling to draw" the conclusion that "any and all private sexual behavior" is constitutionally protected. The decision is a negative precedent for abortion rights and other right to privacy issues.

The Dronenburg decision represents a growing opinion in the nation's courts that people—heterosexual or homosexual—have no right to privacy when it comes to their sexual and reproductive lives.

Lesbian and gay rights activists across the country were shocked and dismayed at the strident language the D.C. court invoked to uphold the military's policies against lesbians and gay men.

And the author of the court decision—Judge Robert Bork—is now favored by Reagan to be appointed to the Supreme Court. Bork is known for his anti-abortion, anti-gay views—and for his support of the "pro-family" agenda of the religious right. Best known as the only one in Nixon's White House willing to fire Archibald Cox (the special prosecutor assigned to investigate the Watergate scandal), now Bork has a new leader—Reagan—and the two hold closely similar views.

In a statement released by

the White House this month, Reagan said he would "continue to oppose the efforts of some to have government sanction homosexuality." So the real message from the White House is that it continues to be open season on lesbians and gay men.

JOB

"A lot of poor and working class gays and lesbians go into the military because they need a job," said Amy Miller, a gay rights activist in New York. "Many third world gays go into the military."

"And the military is statistically the largest employer of lesbians. What do they get once they're in uniform? Harassment, dishonorable discharges, imprisonment, and worse." □

An "International March for Lesbian and Gay Freedom" will be held in New York City on September 30 at the United Nations. According to the march organizers—the Lesbian and Gay Organizing Committee for 1984—the march is part of a strategy devised by the International Gay Association (IGA) to promote international visibility of lesbians and gay men.

A conference will be held from September 28-29 to discuss the international gay movement. For those interested in more information or who wish to help, contact: Lesbian and Gay Organizing Committee for 1984, P.O. Box 1498, New York, NY or call (212) 219-1026. This is an important march.

Do ideas shape our society?

Ideas are important and help shape our understanding of the world. But they come from real conditions, not from outer space or divine inspiration. Marxists are concerned with the relationship between ideas and their material source.

In everyday parlance, an "idealist" is someone committed to certain ideals or principles and unwilling to compromise them for personal gain. A "materialist," on the other hand, is someone whose main goal in life is the accumulation of material goods. In these terms, marxists should certainly be idealists rather than materialists.

Why then do marxists insist they are materialists? Because in theoretical terms, an idealist is one who believes that the fundamental driving force in shaping society is the ideas in people's heads. Materialists believe that the fundamental driving force is the production of life's necessities, and that people's ideas are ultimately a reflection of the real material and social conditions under which this production takes place.

DIFFERENCE

This is an extremely important difference in outlook that has enormous implications for how we go about trying to change society. To see this, let us contrast idealist and materialist explanations of some major historical events.

To the idealist, slavery was abolished in the U.S. in 1864 because Lincoln was morally persuaded that slavery was wrong.

To the marxist materialist, slavery was abolished because economic development made wage labor more profitable than slavery. In addition, slave revolts, like that led by Nat Turner, and militant abolitionist agitators like John Brown, provided further incentive to the ruling class that slavery was no longer tenable.

These material realities led to changes in the productive relations.

To the idealist, the rise of Hitler and the Nazis occurred because the German people were suddenly seized by frenzied racism, nationalism and authoritarianism.

To the marxist materialist,

the Nazis came to power because they were needed by the German ruling class to destroy the labor movement and save German capitalism from ruin.

The idealist view of the Cold War is that it is essentially a clash of ideologies. The right-wing idealist sees it as a struggle between freedom and communist totalitarianism, while the left-wing idealist thinks it is caused by bigoted anti-communism.

The materialist view is that the Cold War is the product of the clash of economic and political interests of two rival ruling classes locked in worldwide competition.

What should be clear from even these few examples is that the idealist view is the one which dominates the teaching of history in school and the interpretation of current events in the media.

This is because idealism is the point of view of the ruling class. Idealism emphasizes the role of great "thinkers" and leaders in the making of history. It flatters the ruling class that they hold their exalted position by the power of their ideas, and conceals the real basis of that power in their control of the means of production.

Intellectually, the great weakness of idealism is its inability to explain where ideas come from without falling back on notions of divine inspiration.

HUMANITY

By contrast, marxist materialism takes as its starting point the simple fact that human beings must first of all have food, clothing, shelter and so on before they can philosophize or engage in religion or politics, and that therefore human labor, the labor of the mass of working people, is the foundation of society—the basis on which everything else depends.

Thus it directs the attention of the working class, first and foremost, not to parliaments, leaders or saviors from above, but to the organization and control of production.

It shows that the workers, the immediate producers, hold the whole future of society and humanity in their hands, and they can win their freedom only by their own struggle. □



Nazism served to destroy the German labor movement.

STUDENT AID TIED TO MILITARY REGISTRATION

The Supreme Court upheld the federal government's power to require the nation's colleges and universities to enforce the Solomon I Amendment on July 5. The amendment requires institutions of higher learning to see to it that any male students, aged 18 to 26, who apply for financial aid present proof that they have registered for the draft.

Gerald Solomon, Republican Representative from upstate New York, tacked his amendment onto the 1983 Defense Authorization Bill. Congress, representing the ruling class, approved the entire package.

Enforcement of Solomon I was delayed for one year due to a lower court decision finding it unconstitutional. Now, however, the high court, by a 6-2 vote, has made Solomon I the law of the land.

HOLDOUTS

According to Solicitor General Rex Lee, Solomon I has already been effective in forcing most non-registrant holdouts to sign up for the draft. Irv Bomberger, president of Draft Action, a group organized to protest peacetime draft registration, disputes Solomon I's effectiveness, stating: "The effect of the Court's decision on draft compliance will be negligible because the Solomon Amendment is easy to evade and impossible to enforce."

Let's hope so, because as Warren Burger, the court's chief justice, pointed out: "A person who has not registered clearly is under no compulsion to seek financial aid... he is simply ineligible for aid." Therefore, it's only poor students who will be trapped into killing and being killed, when the draft call comes. Now, as in the Vietnam war, the sons of the capitalist elite won't have to go—they don't need financial aid from the government to get through college.

Yet what can unemployed youth do today but apply themselves to higher educa-

by MARY HESSEL

tion? With capitalism in crisis, there are a few jobs out there for college graduates, but hardly any for those with only high school diplomas.

Similar circumstances prevail for poor, unemployed males 18-26 who avail themselves of job training offered under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), passed by Congress last fall. Its budget is lower than the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) that it replaces. Representative Solomon adroitly attached his second Solomon Amendment to the JTPA.

EVIDENCE

Solomon II mandates that any draft-age male participating in JTPA programs must provide evidence that he has not violated the law requiring registration with Selective Service. According to Henry Chrisman who administers the JTPA in Cincinnati, any male must show his classification card upon filling out the JTPA application form.

When asked why this was necessary, Chrisman said: "The state auditors will be looking for this documentation." (The federal government has pushed off on the states policing the JTPA the same way it has financial aid offices policing student loan applications in the colleges.)

Draft card issuance had been discontinued with the end of the draft in 1975, but resumption began in 1983. Draft cards, which can be clipped out and carried in a wallet, are now printed at the bottom of registration letters sent to young men who have signed up. This is the form of documentation Chrisman is talking about.

Unlike CETA, the JTPA doesn't provide any jobs, only job training for about 2% of the unemployed. Its budget is 28% less than CETA's was at its peak in 1977 when unemployment was less. Only \$7.5 million of the \$3.6 billion al-



located is earmarked for disadvantaged youth aged 16-21.

Nevertheless, Solomon II aims to make sure that any such youth applying are ready and willing to be drafted in case they are needed to "keep the peace" in countries where U.S. capital has interests.

The latest Solomon proposal—Solomon III—aims at enforcement of draft compliance respecting draft-age males applying for welfare benefits, food stamps, housing and other minimal entitlements for the unemployed or underemployed. Draft Action's Bomberger said that Solomon "has promised to attach similar amendments to every other federal aid program that 'comes down the pike.'" □

SACRIFICE

Representatives of the ruling class, like Solomon, are doing their utmost to enforce draft compliance so that the capitalist economic system from which they benefit might continue. We workers need to overthrow such a corrupt system which sacrifices lives so that an elite can remain millionaires, and institute socialism which will benefit all in its stead. □

Graffiti



Walt 'Til Next Year . . .

Last November, Reagan budget director David Stockman told a Congressional committee: "I am absolutely confident that the poverty rate is going to decline dramatically in 1983."

Well, the Census Bureau proved Stockman to be wrong. An August Bureau report showed that 868,000 more people dropped below the official government poverty line in 1983.

The Reagan administration reacted swiftly to the news. Marlin Fitzwater, an official spokesperson, pledged: "The prospects for a drop in the poverty rate appear very good in 1984." □



David Stockman.

Birds of a Feather . . .

It seems that being an Eagle isn't such a distinction in the Grand Old Party any more. Those \$10,000-a-year donors, whose generosity is rewarded with invitations to state dinners and briefings with administration officials, don't feel as distinguished as they once were.

Too many wealthy folks can join the club, said a Republican source. So, to create a more chic flock, the Republican National Committee is considering upping the membership dues to \$25,000. □

Chile's dictators face protests

September 11 marks the eleventh anniversary of the bloody military coup which overthrew the elected government of Salvador Allende. For the people of Chile, these have been 11 years of severe repression and hardship—with the destruction of democratic rights and steady impoverishment for most.

But these eleven years have not been borne in silence. Since 1973, there has been a strong and continuous resistance against the military regime. They have been years of gradually overcoming fear, rebuilding unions, forming popular organizations and creating a clandestine structure of political parties. Today this struggle has reached a new and crucial point in its development.

The economic disaster brought onto Chile by the "Chicago boys"—a group of right-wing economic advisors—has eroded the original support to the military junta. The right-wing National Party and the Christian Democrats have moved into the "opposition" to the regime.

Owners of small and middle level industries and farms have suffered harsh consequences under the Pinochet regime. Meanwhile, the economic crisis has hit the working class and peasants. The official unemployment is 30% in urban areas and 50% in rural areas. The wage reductions are only comparable with those of 1960.

A new beginning

In 1983, especially during the last six months, the face of Chilean society has changed. The mass movement entered the Chilean political scene with its own strength. The struggle is no longer restricted to debate or "scrapping dialogue" among different factions of the ruling class for privileged position in regard to exploitation and control of the state.

The workers are resurging as an independent force in the struggle against the dictatorship and for political democracy. The new movement of

by ANA TORRES

1983 was a beginning, still slow—but it shows the capacity for struggle and the potential of the workers' resistance and Chilean revolution. The same year, and mainly the last three months, marked a turning point and signalled a qualitative change in the activity of the mass movement and the resistance struggle.

It was after this date, in a more or less generalized way, that the trade unions and the mass movement began to clash with the imposed structure of legal and semi-legal limitations and with the leadership which until then had dominated the labor struggle.

In January, 1983, 1,500 construction workers at the large Colbun-Machicura hydraulic plant near Concepcion stopped work, staging the largest illegal strike ever attempted under the dictatorial regime. The striking workers received enormous solidarity from the Chilean people. Workers at the Sota and Coronel mines held partial work stoppages in support of the strikes.

On May 1, International Workers' Day, the National Workers' Command (set up in March, 1983) called for a mass demonstration demanding not only economic, social and political reform, but an end to



After 11 years in power, General Pinochet's regime faces increasing opposition.

the dictatorship itself. The protest received the enthusiastic support of more than 70% of Chile's people.

On June 22, a national strike was called. In spite of strict government censorship prohibiting any mention of the strike, 80% of truck and taxi drivers, 55% of industrial workers and almost 100% of the university students went on strike. The copper mines at Andina, El Salvador and El Terriente, which together produce one-fourth of Chile's annual copper production, were completely shut down, and the southern ports of San Vicente and Talcahuano were paralyzed, in spite of the extremely high unemployment in both of these sectors.

The new rise of working class and popular struggles in Chile has created excellent conditions for raising and developing an alternative of struggle for the overthrow of the dictatorship.

The bourgeois opposition

In 1983, the bourgeois opposition organized themselves in the Democratic Alliance (DA) led by the Christian Democrats (CD). But the workers have learned what the role of this type of organization is. It is a dispute among the monopoly groups themselves, who are fighting to submit the economy and the state to their own interest.

It must be understood that in this fight, some factions of the ruling class look for their support directly and exclusively from the military, while other groups, like DA, also seek support in a multi-class movement, recruiting help from the middle classes and the working class. In this context, the Christian Democrats present themselves—acting as a political apparatus, a political party of big capital, and trying to regain the confidence of the U.S. State Department and at the same time to gain popular support.

To seek an alliance with Christian Democracy to overthrow the dictatorship today is to understand nothing about what is happening in Chile. To

seek such an alliance is definitely to line up with one wing of the counter-revolution to carry out the struggle against the other. An example of this is the aim of the CD since September, 1983 to have a dialogue with the government to obtain a peaceful solution to the "crisis" in Chile. The CD has become aware about a radicalization of the mass movement.

In September 1983, the Popular Democratic Movement (MDP) was formed, uniting the three major left parties: the Communist Party (PC), a large section of the fragmented Socialist Party (PS) and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR). This step was a major advance for the Chilean revolutionary movement, particularly since it marked a shift to the left by the PC, which had previously leaned towards a strategy of uniting with the CD. Other left forces have joined or are seeking membership in the MDP.

However, within this alliance of the left, the different positions about the role of the CD still remain—and limit its capacity to lead that the workers need in this period. We understand a favorable period is opening for a more rapid accumulation of forces by the working class and the popular resistance.

The workers movement today is the only real alternative for the masses—in the face of the monopoly groups' disputes over privileged position in regard to exploitation, the economy and the state. The implementation of a correct tactic for independent, democratic struggle, based on the experience gained in these eleven years of resistance, is an urgent task for revolutionaries.

September: on with the strike!

The words—"On with the strike!"—have become a recurrent nightmare for General Pinochet. The mounting of a general strike will be the conclusion of months of preparation, of struggle and protest, local and regional strikes, labor demands and numerous other mobilizations throughout the country, all organized with a common and united objective—the defeat of the military dictatorship and the establishment of socialist government.

The call to strike had been included in the resolution of the National Convention of Workers which took place April 28, 1984. It also presented a list of 22 demands, which included the creation of a new government, the repeal of the labor plan, repudiation of the anti-terrorist law and military tribunals, end to exile, and the dismantling of secret political police.

No one claiming leadership in Chile today can disregard the workers' call demanding a general strike without placing him or herself outside history. Today, it is the responsibility of the leadership to take this up as a fundamental priority. We in the solidarity movement must likewise make this call our own and unite forces to aid the strike from here. Along with the Chilean people, we too say: On with the national strike!

"Our problem is not that of more laws or one law less, nor the modification of existing laws, but rather a more profound and vital problem: It is an entire system . . . that envelops and exploits us . . . The moment has come for us to stand up and say enough!"

—1983 Congress of the Confederation of Chilean Copper Workers



SPECIAL OFFER FROM HERA PRESS

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A DECADE OF SETBACKS FOR LABOR

In 1981, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) was destroyed and since has symbolized labor's position under Reagan. But the current crisis did not begin with the PATCO defeat or with Ronald Reagan. Neither is voting for Democrats a way out of the present situation. But there is a way to turn the tide—it begins with organizing the rank and file. CELIA PETERSON explains.

In 1981, air traffic controllers, led by PATCO, went out on strike, and the labor movement held its breath—anticipating the first labor showdown under Reagan's new regime.

PATCO had a right to feel confident it would win the strike. For six years the union had led a series of slowdowns and sick-ins, sometimes openly defying court injunctions.

ILLEGAL

They had amassed a strike fund of \$3 million—even though strikes of air traffic controllers are illegal. The union had endorsed Reagan's election, and their strike demands included privatization of the air traffic industry—right in line with Reagan's anti-government spending rhetoric.

But while labor leaders held their breath—and did little else—Reagan smashed the strike. Air traffic controllers in New Zealand, Norway, France and Portugal refused to handle flights from the U.S. while machinists' union members in this country crossed PATCO's picket lines.

And so, the story goes, began

labor's downfall under Reagan.

There is, of course, no question that Reagan's policies have been unfavorable to workers. His appointments to the National Labor Relations Board led one Harvard economist to call the board "the most ideologically biased board in the history of the NLRA [National Labor Relations Act]."

In 1982, wage gains for the first years of contracts were the lowest ever recorded. And concessions during the 1980s, said one labor journalist, "have redistributed wealth [to the wealthy] on a scale not seen since the Robber Barons of the late nineteenth century."

But the ease with which liberals and the liberal left blame Reagan for labor's troubles feeds the notion that the hope for unions is benevolence from above, and that the only role workers have to play is to rally behind the Democrats and vote Reagan out in 1984.

FORGOTTEN

Everyone has conveniently forgotten the 1970s period. In 1969, unions represented 25% of the U.S. civilian workforce. Today, only 20% of workers are organized. In the recession-prone seventies, union officials leapt at the chance to cooperate with management.

"Quality of Worklife" programs sprang up to deal with worker dissatisfaction and increase productivity. And union officials, like Douglas Fraser of the UAW, took seats on company boards of directors.

But workers did all the cooperating. By 1979, only 25% of all "Quality Circles" had lasted more than a few years. More important, by 1978 unions had begun to lose more certification elections than they won. The 1970s win rate was 57%—already way down from the 1950s win rate of 73%.

The low win rate for union elections is influenced by two main factors. One is the general anti-union climate, perpetrated by a right-wing movement throughout the 1970s, which managed to convince a large proportion of American workers that high union wages were responsible for the country's economic problems. The number of workers who pollsters say approved of unions actually declined during the 1970s.

The response of union leaders has been to run strict, expensive TV ad and public relations campaigns, instead of fighting to win real gains for workers. An aggressive strate-

gy to organize the unorganized and to resist concessions would do far more to convince workers that collective activity can accomplish something than

Anyone who tells you the Democrats will reverse the anti-labor trend has a memory only four short years long.

doubling the number of TV commercials showing happy, singing unionized workers.

The second reason unions lose elections so often is increased management resistance, fuelled by the growth of anti-union consulting firms which did \$500 million worth of business in the 1970s. By 1980, the AFL-CIO estimated that high-priced consultants are hired by management in nearly two-thirds of all union organizing campaigns, and the consultants have clearly proved that their presence makes a difference.

Though the NLRB has had the power to curb consultant activity since reporting laws went into effect in 1959, only 16 cases were filed by the government against employers' consultants to bust unions. In the same period, unfair labor practice charges by unions against employers increased from 8,266 in 1959 to 29,026 in 1980.

There is no evidence that electing a Democrat would mean enforcement of pro-labor laws, a decrease in anti-union sentiment or concrete gains in union contracts.

In short, there is no substi-



Solidarity Day, 1981 showed the anger and potential of workers.

UAW n return 1930s

With the expiration of UAW contracts this fall, workers will most likely see a rerun of an old familiar show—rank and file needs quashed, negotiations between the bureaucracy and the bosses with no input from the rank and file, and finally a contract that will once again sell workers short.

The strikes and negotiations of the 1970s are a good indication of what we can expect this year. More important, however, are the lessons that can be drawn from a look at the recent past.

SLUMP

The year 1970 saw the worst business slump since 1958. But despite the weakened economy, profits were up for GM—the largest of the Big Three auto manufacturers.

The employers showed little anxiety about the possibility of a strike. One executive explained that UAW president Walter Reuther "needs a walk-out to prove to his members that the demands are excessive and can't be met." Reuther never got around to proving much of anything to the workers—he was killed on May 9, 1970 when his Lear jet crashed on landing.

Under new president Leonard Woodcock, the UAW called a national walkout against GM on September 15, 1970, the first since 1946. The chief issue of the strike was the

tute for day-to-day struggle by workers and their unions. There is no better way to convince non-union workers to join unions than for them to see unions winning at the bargaining table. And winning at the bargaining table means being prepared and willing to strike.

ORGANIZE

There is no way to defeat consultant-backed anti-union drives except to organize active rank and file pro-union committees. There is no way for unions to increase their membership without committing resources to organize workers to win votes in union elections and contracts. And there is no way to force employers to increase wages and improve working conditions except to make demands, strike to win them and fight for solidarity with other struggling workers.

Anyone who tells you the Democrats can do it for you has a memory only four short years long. □



PATCO was left to stand alone.



Miners march in 1978.

A POSTAL STRIKE COULD BE WON

The two major postal unions voted at their respective conventions to take their contract impasse with the Postal Service to binding arbitration.

The letter carriers union (NALC) voted directly for arbitration, while the clerks union (APWU) voted to leave it up to their executive council. Since rural letter carriers, mail handlers and city letter carriers voted against striking and for arbitration, there is little the APWU can do except go to arbitration.

It is no mystery why postal workers voted against striking—there is little confidence of winning a strike. Workers see nothing but defeats and concessionary bargains.

The firing of the PATCO workers weighs especially heavy on federal employees, because federal workers are forbidden by law to strike. So the idea of going to a third party rather than facing the threat of losing everything in a strike makes sense.

The point, however, is that a postal strike could have been won. A force of 600,000 rank and file postal workers could have defeated the Postal Service.

Union leaders would say that postal workers didn't want to strike, but nothing was done to challenge this attitude. Nothing was done to convince union members that a strike could be won. Instead they encouraged passivity and pessimism.

Vincent Sombrotto and Moe Biller, current presidents of the two main unions, led a 1970 postal wildcat that gave postal

KATHY WHALEN and JOHN TRIPLET report from the recent postal workers conventions in Las Vegas and argue that a strike could have been won.

employees collective bargaining rights. They do know how to conduct a strike.

Much has been said about the PATCO strike and how postal workers don't want to have the same thing happen to them. But the true lessons of PATCO are never told. The idea that postal workers could have gone out in solidarity with PATCO or that the mechanics could have honored their picket lines is never mentioned.

THRUST

The main thrust of the letter carriers and APWU conventions came from Democratic politicians telling delegates how their lot could be improved by getting rid of Reagan.

Everything is blamed on Reagan—he was the one who fired the PATCO workers. He was the one who appointed the postal board of governors (who said postal workers are overpaid). The emphasis was not on how to organize a struggle, but on how to get a more reasonable set of bosses.

But the bosses, whether reasonable or not, have the same goal in mind: to get as much work as possible out of their workers. Politicians, whether Democrats or Republicans, agree wholeheartedly with this. There may be a dif-

ference of opinion on how best to go about it, but the basic premise is never argued about.

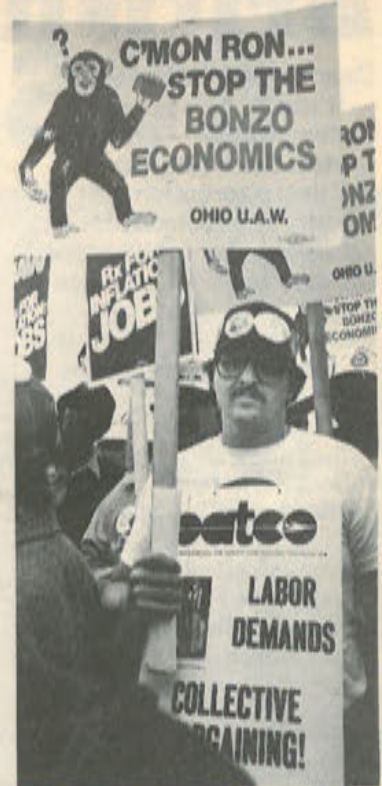
If Mondale had been president, he would have fired the PATCO strikers. In fact, Reagan used a Carter-Mondale plan in dealing with the PATCO strike. Democratic politicians would have been just as opposed to a postal strike as Republican politicians.

The whole strategy of supporting "friends" in Congress is a dead-end strategy. Postal workers wildcatted in 1970 because that strategy had gotten nowhere. Workers wanted the right to bargain for their wages and working conditions—but workers can't really bargain if they can't strike. Arbitration is no answer, because arbitrators have to appease both sides—and that favors management.

In 1978, arbitrators capped an uncapped COLA (cost-of-living allowance) to appease the unions, but gave away a no lay-off clause to appease management. Canadian postal workers make \$2,000 more per year and have better working conditions than their American counterparts because they have the right to strike and have used it.

CONFIDENCE

Whether or not anything will be done in the future to change the current situation is hard to say. A lot will depend on the arbitrator's decision and what happens in the rest of the working class. Confidence comes from participating in victorious struggles, and victories come from correct tactics. Union leaders cannot be depended



Protesting Reagan's policies.

upon because their jobs depend on their ability to negotiate and compromise.

What is needed is an organization of militants—independent of the trade union bureaucracy—who want to take the bosses head on and can argue against the current strategy.

No such organization exists now, and, in fact, Vincent Sombrotto of the letter carriers union is very popular among union activists. There is opposition to Moe Biller in the clerks union, but it is led by Dave Daniel whose main criticism of Biller is that he didn't use professional negotiators like the Postal Service.

The key task remains to organize the minority willing to fight—both now and for the future.

Needs a to tactics

ELEANOR TRAWICK reports on the UAW's sellouts of the 1970s.

"30 and Out" demand of the union. This would allow workers to retire with a \$500 per month pension after 30 years on the job.

The bosses were shaken by the size and militancy of the strike—fearing that the strike would put a dent in their profits. The agreement two months later—after the most expensive strike in U.S. history—was seen as a major union victory. GM gave in to the demand for "30 and Out" with the pension.

And other auto manufacturers fell quickly into line. But few workers could actually take advantage of the early retirement provision, as it meant a shattering loss of Social Security benefits later. And workplace conditions remained as bad as ever after the strike.

Workers realized that they had been sold out, forced into a long strike for little or no substantial gains. They would never have ratified the final settlement except after their grueling weeks on the picket line. As one member of the union negotiating committee put it, "If we had brought that settlement to the rank and file on September 15, they would have told us to go to hell."

The new GM management



Above: Twinsburg, Ohio wildcat in 1982.

Right: UAW President Bieber shakes hands with GM's Warren with Douglas Fraser looking on.



team—GM Assembly Division (GMAD)—quickly moved to consolidate its position and whip the labor force into shape. GMAD took actions it claimed were necessary to "increase efficiency." More simply, they forced a speed-up on workers.

In St. Louis, GMAD laid off 16,000 workers but produced even more cars than before with the 8,000 workers who remained. More than 1,000 disciplinary cases and 12,000 grievances piled up quickly as GMAD tightened plant practices—without consulting the union.

These practices led to some of the most bitter local strikes of the early 1970s. Workers at the assembly plant in Norwood, Ohio staged the longest local walkout ever—a 174-day strike causing a production loss of some 39,000 cars. The volatile, young labor force at Lordsburg, Ohio walked out demanding an end to layoffs after 400 of them were laid off. They also opposed robotization and the dehumanizing working condi-

tions in the plant.

But despite the militancy of the locals, in 1973 the contract negotiations were settled by the bureaucracy after only a short nine-day strike of Chrysler, the smallest of the Big Three.

SETTLEMENT

Most labor experts predicted a settlement in 1976 as easy as that of 1973. The press smugly predicted, "There will be no major auto strike in 1976."

"The workers, hard hit by the recession, are eager to settle without a strike. The auto makers are determined to avoid any interruption in their robust sales—and rising profits. Any prolonged walkout could well derail the steady economic upturn now underway."

But the companies' first offer was bitterly rejected by auto workers. On September 14, Leonard Woodcock called 165,000 Ford workers out on strike. *Newsweek* noted, with surprise, this "breakdown in communications in an industry long-noted for sophistication at the bargaining table."

ment, which was forced, led to gains in other companies.

Nonetheless, as the U.S.—and the world economy—slid deeper into recession in the late 1970s, and as gasoline shortages further cut back new car sales, the auto industry looked sicker and sicker. And, as usual, the auto makers wanted to make workers pay the price. In 1979, hourly earnings of workers went up at a rate of 7.2%, but consumer prices were increasing at twice that rate.

When the UAW contract again came up in 1979, union president Douglas Fraser was prepared to talk concessions with the companies. Jimmy Carter, frantically trying to cut inflation, had urged so-called voluntary wage-price guidelines of an increase limit of only 7%.

BLUSTER

Despite Fraser's bluster, the union proceeded to negotiate a quick settlement of concessions to the bosses. 1979 was the year of the massive concessions to Chrysler. For the first time since 1964, the UAW peacefully negotiated a three-year agreement without a strike. One boss said, "The old knockdown tactics have gone by the wayside. Predictably, in 1982 GM and Ford came to the UAW asking for the same concessions as Chrysler. The UAW obliged."

If there is one lesson to be culled from the experience of the seventies, it is that the UAW leaders and management are more or less business partners. If the rank and file is to get back what is theirs, there will have to be a return to the "old knockdown tactics." □

British terrorism in Ireland

Dear Socialist Worker,

It was to be a peaceful demonstration—a rally to protest the military and political oppression that the country has suffered for centuries. But even before the meeting began, police began shooting at rock-throwing youths. When the featured speaker approached the microphone, cops charged the crowd of 3,000 killing one and injuring dozens. The resulting street battles lasted for hours.

This must have happened in some Central American dictatorship, right? Or perhaps in the Philippines or South Korea, or in some other military-dominated

government.

But this shooting took place in Northern Ireland, and the cops who did the killing were in the service of Great Britain—the supposed champion of free speech, democracy and equality.

But no Irish need apply for those "rights." Marvin Galvin, an American Irish Republican Army supporter, was to address the meeting, but he didn't even say a word before the British police and their Protestant backers began shooting into the crowd, killing 22-year-old Sean Downes.

Police called the murder an "accident," explaining

that the plastic bullet lodged in Downes' chest wasn't designed to pierce flesh. Cops are not supposed to aim the plastic bullets above the waist or fire closer than 65 feet except in cases of "grave danger."



Victim of British forces.

But the, British "security forces" have never been known to let a few rules get in the way of their military occupation of Northern Ireland.

Lee Sustar
Chicago, IL

I MISSED SW

Dear Socialist Worker, Sorry it's been so long since you heard from me, but I've been moving about so much. Now with a more stable address, I'll be able to receive my various publications which I miss very much—*Socialist Worker* being a very important one.

Comradely, Edith Fox
Burbank, CA

Workers create wealth

Dear Socialist Worker,

Floyd Hoke-Miller is a long-time member of UAW Local 659 in Flint. He was a sitdowner in the 1937 strike at Chevrolet. He was a long-time member of the IWW. In a card he tells me, "I was strongly influenced by the writings of Eugene V. Debs and Ausker Ameringer."

I thought *Socialist Worker* readers might like his poems. Here is one of them, "A Laborer Looks at Life."

John Anderson
Detroit, MI

A LABORER LOOKS AT LIFE by Floyd Hoke-Miller

Let's rest our task and look ahead
And weigh the hard-earned lessons of the past;
Let's leave no stone unturned, no word unsaid
That would our bonds release, our chains unfast.

Let's bow our heads in sorrow for workers' blood,
For loss of limb and life they gladly gave,
For broken bodies tramped beneath the mud—
Those that lie within a martyr's grave.

Within the maw, beneath the face of Mother Earth,
We toil where damp and ebony darkness reigns,
For coal, for ore, for sparkling gems of worth—
The miners they say, but men of forgotten names.

We feed the furnace and pour the molten metal
Into the gaping moulds of wire and sand;
We stack the stock and keep the factory fettle
By sweat of brow and strength of human hands.

From little shops to factories tall and wide,
In heat, and din and dust, our hands they need
To shape ten thousand things, there inside
Those walls where profit rules along with greed.

We track the furrow to the end, we stack the hay,
We shock the wheat and milk a herd of cows,
Yet this does not complete a normal working day
For many's the tasks life on the farm endows.

Both day and night, we work, with eye and hand,
On trucks, on planes and other cargo carriers;
On roaring trains that speed across the land—
You'll find our apt and ready institution.

We take the mails and watch the graph and key.
Against all odds, your wishes and your wares
We carry, cross the land, the air and sea
To lighten burdens and lessen cares.

And last of all, but surely not the least
Are we, the ones that do domestic work
For friend and foe, for man and lowly beast—
The kind of task the proud are prone to shirk;

Still the hoarded wealth that man amasses
From minted metal to gems that radiate
None was gained without the working classes
To ply their trade—with brawn and skill create.

Letters



KEEP LETTERS TO SOCIALIST WORKER SHORT AND TO THE POINT...

Defend affirmative action

Dear Socialist Worker,

I am deeply disturbed by Eleanor Trawick's letter in last month's *Socialist Worker* on affirmative action and seniority.

The civil rights, Black power and women's movements of the 1960s spurred many battles against discrimination in hiring and promotions. Blacks, women and other oppressed nationalities scored some victories in breaking into new and higher-paying jobs. These gains were often the result of affirmative action plans. While the results were by no means earthshaking, they were a step in the right direction—a step towards equality.

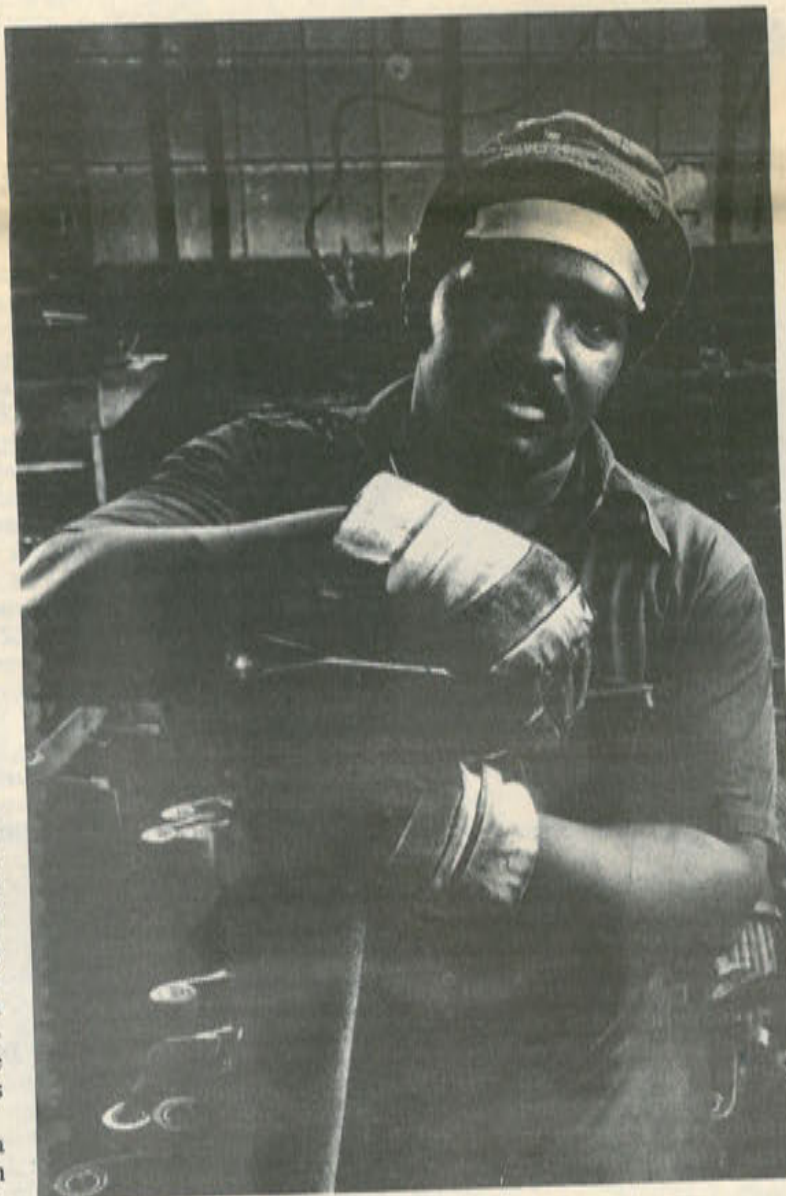
Today, massive lay-offs have reversed that process. Instead of preferential hiring, there is discriminatory firing as hundreds of thousands of women and Blacks lose their jobs at a disproportionate rate.

A wide debate has been going on in the labor movement over how to protect jobs. Trawick's arguments sound uncomfortably similar to those of the labor bureaucrats. She starts off rightly condemning the recent Supreme Court decision as being an attack on women and minorities. However, as soon as she gets to the subject of seniority, she begins waffling.

It is true that seniority is a "limited" gain of the union movement. But it has both positive and negative aspects to it. Seniority prevents the boss (or at least makes it harder) from firing whom he pleases—thus protecting union militants, other "troublemakers" and, to a degree, older workers—whom bosses often like to replace with younger workers whom they can work harder for less pay.

It's true, this limited degree of control unions have won—the seniority system—is valuable and should not be surrendered.

But there is another side to seniority—strict seniority can be used to preserve and perpetuate discrimination. The



fact is that women and minorities have been frozen out of jobs and promotions for decades by discrimination. It is hardly their fault that they have been last hired, so they should not be forced to suffer under "last hired, first fired." Seniority does not cause discrimination, but it can perpetuate its effects.

And seniority can be used to uphold the "relative" privileges of white male workers in opposition to the legitimate aspirations of women and Blacks.

Another mistake Trawick

makes is by counterposing "building unity" with the fight to end discrimination.

They are not counterposed—they go hand in hand. It is true that we will need the united strength of all sections of the working class to take on our common enemy—the capitalists. We need to overcome the divisions that exist. We need to win the support of the young, unemployed, women, Blacks, minorities. That can never be done by upholding racist and sexist privileges. It will be done by being the most committed fighters against discrimination.

It can not be done by surrendering to the backwardness of white or male workers at the expense of women and Blacks. Socialists and the union movement must show we are able and willing to defend the rights of those most cruelly discriminated against—those most vulnerable to victimization and exploitation by unscrupulous employers.

There is no better time, no better place to start than by supporting affirmative action programs that have been won in the past.

The basic issue here is defending the equal right to a job for women and minorities. Trawick is, in reality, ducking the issue. Insisting that seniority is a sacred principle means to accept lay-offs based on racist and sexist discrimination.

Probably the most ludicrous argument Trawick makes is the one that white male workers will "resent" Blacks and women—fearing they will rob them of their jobs. Any worker who is laid off, young or old, Black or white, male or female, finds nothing "fair" about it.

Every worker should have the right to a job—the truth is 10 million workers are deprived of that right by the capitalist system. Anybody who gets laid off is going to be resentful. No one is more resentful than women and Blacks. They've been resentful for a long time about being laid off first. If resentment could guarantee a job, we'd all be working.

We must not yield on this issue. Jobs taken from Blacks and women today will belong to whites and males tomorrow. And as history teaches us, tomorrow is a long time.

Socialist Worker was right to come down squarely on the side of affirmative action like it did. Where the seniority system comes into conflict with affirmative action gains, seniority should be modified to protect those gains.

Larry Bradshaw
Oakland, CA

Leon Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution was a major breakthrough for the marxist movement of the early twentieth century.

PAUL D'AMATO argues that Trotsky was right in stressing the central role of workers, even in less developed countries.

PERMANENT REVOLUTION



Leon Trotsky, 1920.

When socialists use the phrase "permanent revolution" it conjures up the image of endless revolt. If that is what it means, then right-wingers are right to call us fanatics. But permanent revolution means nothing of the kind. Permanent revolution refers to a revolution that does not stop halfway, but continually moves forward until all exploitation and oppression is eliminated.

Marx was the first to use the term in an article he wrote evaluating the experience of the abortive 1848 revolutions in Europe. He noted that in these revolutions against absolutism and feudalism, the German bourgeoisie refused to take the lead as their French counterparts had done in 1789. Their fear of being overtaken by the working class made them cowardly and servile towards the German absolutist state. Marx observed that the only class willing to go all the way, to smash absolutism, was the new urban working class.

He wrote: *It is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent until all the more or less propertied classes have been driven from their ruling positions, until the proletariat has conquered state power.*

Marx concluded the article by saying, "The battle-cry must be: permanent revolution."

DEFEAT

The German revolution never materialized in the way Marx had envisioned, but ended in defeat

The strength of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is its emphasis of the centrality of the working class.

and the restoration of absolutism. But its very failure indicated that the direction of Marx's thinking was correct. As Trotsky later wrote:

Capitalism had developed sufficiently to render necessary the abolition of the old feudal relations, but not sufficiently to bring forward the working class, the product of the new industrial relations, as a decisive political force.

The antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had gone too far to allow the bourgeoisie fearlessly to take up the role of national leader, but not sufficiently to allow the working class to take up that role.

The difference between the Germany of 1848 and the Russia of the early twentieth century was that in Russia, the working class was economically and politically developed enough to fill the gap that the bourgeoisie had vacated.

It was out of his experience as a leading participant in the 1905 Russian revolution that Leon Trotsky developed his theory of permanent revolution. Trotsky saw the power of the mass general strike that shook tsarism and witnessed the emergence of institutions of working class democracy—soviets.

The revolution failed and tsarism was granted a breathing space, but

to Trotsky the course of the next revolution was clear: only a workers' revolution could destroy tsarism. Thus he argued, "It is possible for the workers to come to power in an economically backward country sooner than in an advanced country."

ARGUMENT

Trotsky's argument went like this: Russia—a semi-feudal country dominated by a massive autocracy—had had a slow historical development. Capitalism had thus arrived in Russia relatively late, and not at all in the same manner as it had developed in England and parts of Europe.

Rather than repeating all the stages of capitalist development that the advanced capitalist countries had been through, Russia's development was telescoped. Intermediate stages were skipped, and the most modern industry, built up through foreign investment and state intervention, was grafted onto an economy which was still semi-feudal and peasant-based.

Even though the industrial working class of Russia constituted about 3-5 million out of a population of about 150 million peasants, its urban concentration in some of the most modern and massive factories made it a potentially explosive force, far more powerful than mere numbers would suggest. That the working class of Petrograd and Moscow played such an impressive, militant role in the 1905 revolution meant that this was not idle speculation on Trotsky's part.

Many Russian marxists believed that Russia needed a "bourgeois" revolution, similar to the one in France in 1789. They argued that the Russian capitalists had not yet achieved political rule; it would therefore be up to them to lead a revolution against the tsar and establish agrarian reform and a democratic republic. Only after a period of extended bourgeois rule would the working class be ready to assume power, and only after a sustained period of capitalist economic development would Russia be ripe for socialism.

Trotsky completely ruled out the possibility of the bourgeoisie carrying out their "own" revolution. The working class had become far too independent-minded and militant. The ties of the capitalists to the tsarist state and the landlords were too strong for them to even consider sponsoring an agrarian revolt.

Thus the working class would play the leading role in the revolution, supported and augmented by a rebellious peasantry. And having overthrown the tsar, the working class would be compelled to take power and create a workers' government. The "bourgeois" revolution would grow over into a socialist revolution.

PEASANTS

To those marxists who argued that the peasants would, as a majority of the population, play an equal if not more prominent political role in the revolution, Trotsky pointed out that, historically, peasants have never been able to play an independent role. They have always followed the lead of the town.

Peasants form a class insofar as similar interests bring them together into conflict with their landlords, but their localism and individualism make it impossible for

them to unite politically as a class. As Marx wrote, the peasants "are therefore incapable of asserting their interests in their own name . . . They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented."

In contradistinction to the peasantry, the working class produced by industrial capitalism is collectivized into cities, compelled to work together in large units of production. Because of this, workers can only feel their strength as an organized collective.

They learn through the day-to-day struggle against the bosses that they have great power—power to shut down the system, if sufficiently organized, and to refashion the way wealth is produced in society. A peasant's class interest is to have his own plot of land. But a worker's class interest is to take over production as a whole and run it in the interest of human society.

INTERNATIONALISM

The last, but crucial aspect of Trotsky's theory was its internationalism. Revolution can begin in an economically backward country, but it must be finished in the more advanced. The revolution would have to spread, would have to be a prelude to world revolution, or else the fledgling workers state could not survive. Foreign invasion and the economic weakness of Russia would destroy the revolution. Content with having his own plot of land, the peasant would turn his back on the working class. The workers' government would become isolated—incapable of building socialism.

The workers will have no alternative but to "link the fate of its political rule, and hence, the fate of the whole Russian revolution, with the fate of socialist revolution in Europe."

The 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia confirmed the correctness of Trotsky's theory. The working class toppled tsarism through mass strikes and street demonstrations and created its own organs of popular rule—the soviets—which in a

The last three decades have seen the massive growth of working classes in less developed countries. Below: A mass workers' demonstration in Santiago, Chile.



matter of months pushed aside a weak bourgeois "provisional government" (that only existed through the blessing of the workers' soviets anyway) and established workers' power.

But the revolution degenerated as a result of its isolation. The German workers' revolution failed, a mass working class upsurge in Europe subsided without achieving socialism, and 16 armies moved in to try to crush the Bolsheviks. The result: the disintegration of workers' democracy and the rise of a state capitalist bureaucracy committed to socialism only in name. Trotsky's analysis that the revolution would have to spread internationally was thus confirmed in the negative.

WEAKNESS

The only weakness in Trotsky's theory, which he later corrected, was that he spoke of the permanent revolution as though it was inevitable—regardless of the actions of organized revolutionaries. He downplayed, if not ignored, the necessity of building an organization of revolutionary socialists which could create a working class leadership out of the day-to-day experience of the class struggle—a leadership that could argue and organize for working class power.

The role of the Bolsheviks in the revolution was indispensable in leading the way to workers' power. The course of the Russian revolution of 1917 confirmed Trotsky's analysis that the workers would lead the revolution, but the workers' councils (soviets) in Russia would never have won out if it had not been for the guiding role of the thousands of worker-militants in the Bolshevik party of Lenin.

The experience of national revolts against imperialism since the second world war has also shown that Trotsky's theory failed as a prediction of what must happen when a less developed country carries out a revolution against imperialist domination.

The experience of Cuba in 1959 and Nicaragua today and a host of other nationalist revolutions show that the bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is too tied up with the interests of world capitalism to lead a nationalist revolution against imperialism. But neither has the working class stepped in to play a leading role in these revolutions, as happened in Russia in 1917.

In the case of Cuba, the leadership of the revolution was taken up by nationalist urban intellectuals who were driven to revolution by the chronic stagnation of their country, U.S. economic domination and the inability to win any reforms from the repressive and corrupt Cuban state. Castro and his supporters aimed at using the lever of state power to carry out national economic development.

In Cuba, Castro and a band of 800 guerrilla fighters were able to topple the decrepit Batista regime, while the working class remained a passive onlooker. In Nicaragua, a combination of guerrilla struggle in the countryside and mass urban uprisings in the towns finally destroyed the bloody Somoza family dictatorship.

Workers played a fighting role, but they did not act independently as a class, creating structures of workers' power. They were subordinated to a cross-class coalition of Sandinista guerrilla leaders and a section of the capitalists opposed to Somoza. The professed aim of the Sandinista leadership is to create a fully nationalized economy—state capitalism.

CENTRAL

Socialism—democratic workers' power based on elected delegates which uses its power to eliminate exploitation and to create a classless society—cannot be confused with state capitalism, in which a ruling class—synonymous with the state bureaucracy—maintains its national position vis a vis the world economy through exploitation of the labor of workers and peasants.

The strength of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is its emphasis of the centrality of the working class in the struggle for socialism—that it is the only class whose interest is to eliminate all forms of exploitation and oppression.

Since the second world war, capitalism has mushroomed on a world scale, and with it has developed a massive world working class, from Brazil to Poland, from Russia to the Philippines. We have seen its potential power in the revolt of Solidarity in Poland and the miners strike today in Britain.

The job of revolutionaries everywhere, but in the U.S. especially, is to build for a future where permanent revolution truly does become the battle cry of the workers of the world. □

WHERE WE STAND

WORKERS' CONTROL

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

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

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

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

A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

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

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

FIGHT OPPRESSION

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

BLACK LIBERATION

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

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

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

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

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

RANK AND FILE ORGANIZATION

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

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

INTERNATIONALISM

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

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

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

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

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

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



What's ON

BALTIMORE

Chris Harman on *The Permanent Arms Economy and the Crisis*. Sunday, September 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Celia Petty on *Women's Rights and the Struggle for Reproductive Freedom*. Sunday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m. Call 235-4620 for details.

BOSTON

Sharon Smith on *The Simpson-Mazzoli Bill and Why We Oppose Immigration Controls*. Sunday, September 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Chris Harman on *Party and Class*. Sunday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m. For details, call 427-7087.

CHICAGO

Alan Maass on *Is Socialism Possible?* Monday, September 3 at 3:00 p.m.

Chris Harman on *Class Struggles in Eastern Europe*. Tuesday, September 11 at 7:30 p.m. For details, call 878-3624 or 288-7572.

CINCINNATI

Bill Roberts on *The Election*. Thursday, September 26 at 8:00 p.m.

Study Series: *Introduction to Marxism*. Monday nights in September. For details, call 751-1871.

CLEVELAND

Chris Harman on *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism?* Thursday, September 13 at 8:00 p.m.



Available from:

HERA PRESS

Box 16085
Chicago, IL 60616

Glenn Perusek on *The Rainbow Coalition: Where Do We Go From Here?* Sunday, September 30 at 1:00 p.m. Cleveland State University. Call 651-9827 or 651-5935 for details.

DETROIT

Chris Harman on *The Crisis of the Revolutionary Left*. Friday, September 14 at 7:30 p.m. Call 527-2180 or 561-8856 for details.

MADISON

Chris Harman on *The Meaning of Marxism Today*. Wednesday, September 12 at 7:30 p.m.

Trotsky, *Permanent Revolution and Central America*. Friday, September 28 at 7:30 p.m. Call 251-5982.

NEW YORK

Sharon Smith on *The Fight Against Immigration Controls*. Saturday, September 1 at 7:30 p.m. Call (201) 332-8855 for details.

Chris Harman on *Class Struggles in Eastern Europe*. Friday, September 7 at 7:30 p.m. Call (201) 332-8855 or 624-1698 for details.

ROCHESTER

Jack Porcello on *Reform or Revolution?* Sunday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m.

Brian Erway on *The Politics of International Socialism*. Wednesday, September 19, R.I.T. at 7:30 p.m.

Mike Ondrusek on *The Trade Union Bureaucracy*. Sunday, September 30 at 7:30 p.m. Call 235-3049 for details.

SAN FRANCISCO

David Siddle on *The Lessons of Portugal*. Wednesday, August 29.

Larry Bradshaw and Tim Wicks on *The Myth of American Democracy*. Tuesday, September 25.

Duncan Hallas on *The Meaning of Marxism*. Friday, October 5 at 7:30 p.m. Call 285-4057 for details.

SEATTLE

Socialist Weekend. Two days of discussion, talks and fun on Lake Farnish. September 7-9. Call 324-2302 for details. Sponsored by Seattle ISO and Vancouver IS.

Discussion Series on Women's Liberation. Beginning Tuesday, September 18. Call 323-0701 for details.

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

— Karl Marx

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

- Baltimore, MD
- Indianapolis, IN
- New York, NY
- Bloomington, IN
- Kent, OH
- Northampton, MA
- Boston, MA
- Los Angeles, CA
- Portland, OR
- Chicago, IL
- Madison, WI
- Rochester, NY
- Cincinnati, OH
- Minneapolis, MN
- San Francisco, CA
- Cleveland, OH
- Muncie, IN
- Seattle, WA
- Detroit, MI
- New Orleans, LA
- Youngstown, OH

ISO National Office, P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616

FROM "A WAR ON POVERTY" TO POVERTY TOURISM

The New American Poverty, by Michael Harrington. New York, Harcourt, 1984.

Review by Glenn Perusek

On the first page of Michael Harrington's new book he describes himself as a "poverty tourist." This, really, is the high point of the book.

The point of the book is this: Harrington wrote *The Other America* 22 years ago. It was about poverty amidst plenty in the U.S.

Harrington informs us not once but twice that *The Other America* was a profoundly influential work in the 1960s. It was discussed at chic cocktail parties and eventually found its way into John F. Kennedy's hands, prompting the president to initiate the programs which Lyndon Johnson would call "The War on Poverty."

But, of course, the problem has not gone away. Indeed, today, it has new and more pernicious forms than ever: the displacement of thousands of workers due to plant closings, technologically-created unemployment and so on.

Harrington's solution is simple enough: we should have a government which promotes full employment.

The essence of what he proposes is, "An anti-poverty politics (which) must be coalitional, with full employment as a central goal, and (which) must awaken the latent moral idealism of the nation in the service of a very specific program."

Otherwise, he threatens, the middle classes won't like what they get: "There could be a revolution without revolutionaries, an unwitting transformation of the conditions of human existence that would preserve the worst of the past in a fantasy future."

What is he talking about? He rejects the possibility of actual politi-

cal transformation of the system by the working class itself—the suggestion here is that either we have full employment policies or by the 1990s the U.S. will be an utterly divided society: the well-paid high technology based elite and the vast mass of unemployed, poor and criminal elements.

For Harrington, poverty is not something endemic to capitalism—it is something that the right policies, coming from the right leaders in Washington, could abolish.

The political strategy is to rely on

moral arguments and persuasion of the middle class elements—the professionals, engineers, college students—who themselves are not poor, but whom Harrington sees as the fundamental force in any new war on poverty.

CONTORTIONS

He has to go through serious contortions to make the argument. Why, he asks, would sections of the population who have middle class, professional jobs want to help in the fight for full employment?

Consider college students: in the 1960s, they were carefree. They joined the Peace Corps, they could "take a couple years off after college." Today, due to rising unemployment and insecurity about jobs, they have to be serious. Study accounting. If there were full employment, they could be carefree again.

Such are the heights of reasoning to which this "poverty tourist" soars in the account of his vacation.

At several points in the last chapter, where Harrington outlines his

proposals, he defensively inserts that he realizes that all of this talk of full employment might sound radical and utopian, but that the problems are serious, so we need drastic solutions.

What Harrington cannot comprehend is that full employment cannot ever exist while there is capitalism. He does grope for the dynamic of the system. But Harrington doesn't think of the state as the capitalist state, but simply the "state under capitalism." The right leaders could be elected: socialist politics, for Harrington, could coexist with capitalist economics.

Such a conception reduces socialism to, at best, a stable welfare state. But worse than this reduction is the utter failure to understand the power of the capitalist class. The state is not a neutral institution, as the reformists argue, but one which is used by the capitalist class to run society. Its central cores, the military and the bureaucracy, are in no way controllable by elected officials. No one elects the generals at the Pentagon, and they are not answerable to any elected officials.

REFORMIST

What this means is that when reformist socialists have been elected to power, as they have countless times in this century, the result is necessarily one of two things. Either the social democrats keep their hands off the military and the bureaucracy, or these foundations of the state do away with the social democrats.

This latter scenario was played out in grizzly fashion in 1973 in Chile. Salvador Allende, the duly elected president of the "most democratic country in Latin America" was executed in the coup of General Pinochet. Dying along with him were thousands of working class militants.

Another scenario is being played out in France today. When Mitterand was elected in 1981 he brought with him a set of radical sounding reforms.

He promised the 35-hour week with no reduction in wages, an increase in the minimum wage by 10%, political rights for immigrant workers and a larger voice for workers in management decisions.

But, in part due to the world economic recession, and in part due to a lack of confidence by businessmen in France, investment did not increase. There was a run on the franc, and by 1982 the government was forced to borrow massively.

Today, unemployment in France hovers near the 10% mark—higher than at any time since before the second world war. And real wages in France have declined for the first time in the post-war period.

RETRENCHMENT

All this was part of a massive retrenchment—an austerity program which has resulted in, among other things, the elimination of 200,000 jobs in heavy industry.

Michael Harrington was in France last year. He wrote his new book there. He commented at the Democratic Socialists of America convention last October that, "You can't go around France today and think that socialists have the answers."

Harrington was right to the extent that reformist socialists are today unable to offer any answers. Impoverished politically, he has been reduced to tourism. His new book is testament to the poverty of the tradition of reformist socialism. □



There are officially more than 35 million poor in the United States.

Shelley: a revolutionary

Red Shelley, by Paul Foot. Bookmarks, 1984. \$7.50. Available from Hera Press.

Review by Christina Baker

For most people, the name Percy Bysshe Shelley only vaguely brings to mind one of those romantic British poets from a century or two ago. Even students of literature familiar with his work generally have only read his "acceptable" verse.

In *Red Shelley*, Paul Foot unearths the other Shelley—the revolutionary poet who hated the ruling class from which he had come, and who envisioned a very different world. Shelley dreamed and wrote of a world in which workers would enjoy the fruits of their own labor, in which wars would be a thing of the past, in which women would be the equals of men.

Shelley's adult life (1810-1822), though brief, coincided with a period of unrest in Britain. His most prolific and most political writing came at the three high points of working class resistance during his adult life.

In the wake of the Luddite uprising—a workers' revolt against the "new technology" and control over their lives—he wrote "Queen Mab" which became one of the bibles of the nineteenth century workers' movement. In that poem he lambasts the ruling

class, the church, the legal system and politicians in such passages as this:

*War is the statesman's game,
the priest's delight,
The lawyer's jest, the hired
assassin's trade,
And, to those royal murderers,
whose mean thrones
Are bought by crimes of treachery
and gore,
The bread they eat, the staff
on which they lean.*

In 1817, after another working class uprising, he wrote "The Revolt of Islam," a brilliant poem in which he tells the story of a revolution in which women as well as men play a major role. In one passage he links women's oppression with the question of human freedom by asking, "Can man be free if woman be a slave?"

Two years later, the Peterloo Massacre occurred—in which a cavalry charge on a workers' demonstration left 11 dead. In response, Shelley wrote two major poems: "The Mask of Anarchy" and "Peter Bell the Third," and several other pieces.

In "Mask of Anarchy," Shelley rhetorically asks why workers should sweat to support the idle few:

*Wherefore feed, and clothe,
and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones*

*who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink
your blood?"*

Shelley's work was a response to the world in which he found himself, and to the ideas dominant at the time. When in school at Oxford University in 1811, Shelley wrote the first atheist pamphlet ever published in English. He was promptly expelled from school.

There are contradictions in Shelley's writing as to how the problems he so clearly described could be solved and how the new world he dreamed of could be won. But despite his hatred for violence, Shelley understood that workers should claim what is rightfully theirs, and that the ruling class would not give it up without a fight. In "Mask of Anarchy" he wrote some of his most stirring lines:

*Men of England, heirs of Glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty Mother,
Hopes of her, and one another,
Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth
like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you
—Ye are many—they are few.*

Getting his political poetry published during his lifetime was a struggle. But with his death, even those political poems which had managed to see their way into



print were buried with him. What was left was the work of a poet who had seemingly confined himself to exploring personal relationships or the beauty of nature. Buried was the revolutionary who wanted to change the world.

Paul Foot's book unlocks a treasure of work that is eloquent, but also accessible. Because Shelley wrote for people—rather than for critics or scholars—his poetry has the potential for inspiring people about their own collective potential.

As Foot puts it: "If Shelley's great revolutionary poetry—all those glaciers and winds and volcanoes—can get to work on the imaginations of the hundreds of thousands of people who have had enough of our rotten society and of the racialism and corruption off which it feeds; if that poetry can inspire them to write and talk with a new energy, a new confidence and a new splendor, then there is no telling what will happen."

"Certainly the police will have to be sent for." □



on the picket line

Contract sell-out at General Ship in Boston

BOSTON, MA—There are very few workers who believe that the contract recently ratified by members of Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers Local 25 at General Ship in East Boston is a "good" one. At best, people are resigned to the fact that it's all they could get under the circumstances. But for others, there is resentment about the way union officials shoved such an anti-union contract down their throats.

The contract—like many others being signed across the country—establishes a two-tier wage system with new hires being paid just over half the rate paid under the old contract. Seniority rights have been dealt a heavy blow, with management winning the right to lay off according to skill level rather than time served.

But the worst thing about the new contract is that it

didn't have to happen this way. One week prior to the ratification, union officials called a meeting to ratify the company's proposal. The proposal, almost identical to the one ratified later on, was overwhelmingly rejected by the rank and file, who gave the union another week to negotiate.

CAMPAIGN

Negotiate they did, but not with the company. On the morning after the rejection, union officials began their campaign among the rank and file to scare them into accepting the proposal as it stood. The word was put around that "Yes, we could strike, but it would probably drive the company bankrupt."

Or that we were already overpaid anyway—never mind that shipyard work is very hazardous, that we are exposed to dangerous chemicals, fiber

glass and asbestos day in and day out, that we can count on being laid off three or four months a year, or that many workers put in a 60 or 70 hour workweek in order to make ends meet.

This is bad enough coming from union officials, whose job is supposedly representing our interests. But on top of this, officials pulled individuals aside to feel them out on how they would vote. Several workers who said they didn't like the two-tier system, were told by the local president to "fuck that union brother shit." Union pins were given out by the officials to those they considered a yes vote.

In the end their campaign worked, but still forty workers voted against the proposal. The important thing is to draw the lessons from this sell-out.

It is obvious that the union and company work hand in hand against the interests of

the rank and file. When we rejected the contract on the first vote, the union regarded it as an inconvenience—we ruined their day. This will not change overnight. What is needed is some kind of rank and file organization independent of the union officials.

ORGANIZE

In the here and now we have to organize against the management harassment that began the day after the contract was signed, and it also means solidarity.

If PATCO had won, if Greyhound had won, if there was a large group of workers standing up against concessions, it would have strengthened us in our workplace. Next time you hear of workers on strike, get out and give them your support. □

by B.K.,
Member Local 25



HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTES

by MATT FILSINGER

Postal Hazards

Postal workers, currently fighting a difficult contract battle with the U.S. Postal Service, have faced a variety of health and safety problems for a number of years.

We all know about the dangers mail carriers face from vicious dogs. For instance, in Canada it is estimated that 5,000 carriers are bitten each year. Little publicity is given to the other health and safety problems which are due more to the vicious bosses, and the pace they set for the workers.

Both mail carriers, and people who work in the bulk mail centers, suffer from a high incidence of back injuries. Speedup has played a large role in this.

Additionally, there is a growing awareness that many workers who have to use letter-sorting machines suffer from something called carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). CTS occurs when there is pressure put on the median nerve, a major nerve passing through the wrist. It results in intense pain and a feeling of numbness of the fingers and hand. Often the person is awakened in the middle of the night with this pain. It becomes impossible to do such simple tasks as tying one's shoes.

According to Dr. Barry Johnson of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, "repetitive flexing and extension of the wrist cause the tendons to swell and thereby increase pressure in the bony tunnel." Johnson stated that automation and job specialization are factors which have caused an increase of carpal tunnel syndrome.

People who work at the post office's multi-position letter-sorting machines are at great risk. Each operator depresses from two to four keys on a keyboard for each letter that passes before the operator's eyes. The machine automatically sends letters past the operator at a rate of one per second. In an average year the worker will hit 11 million to 12.5 million key strokes, with a minimum accuracy of 95%.

Last year, 482 postal workers filed worker's compensation claims for carpal tunnel syndrome, or tendonitis. This is certainly only a small fraction of the people who have had similar problems, but decided they couldn't afford to miss work.

Fight speedup! Gain control of the workplace! Support the postal workers! □

TALKIN' UNION BY JOHN ANDERSON

Eliminate forced overtime in the auto plants



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

"I'm wondering why they can do this in Cologne and Frankfurt but not in the United States."

THOUSANDS

As a worker at Fleetwood Fisher Body for more than 30 years I remember several workers died either on job, coming to work or going home from work. No statistics are kept on these deaths but I believe they number in the thousands.

Many who are forced into retirement do not live very long to enjoy their retirement. There are no indictments for working people to death. Corporation profits come before the life of a worker. The profit system permits the employer to literally work people to death. What did the union do about these deaths? They bought the widows of the deceased a bible.

Excessive overtime has continued during the past four years when millions were unemployed. Overtime in the Big Three deprived 97,000 unemployed of jobs. The UAW-GM contract allows the company to do this.

If the 1984 negotiations are to bring about greater job security they must not only eliminate overtime work but must fight for the shorter work week. □

The following quotations are from the June, 1973 issue of *Solidarity*, but they ring just as true today:

"I've been in the personnel office when widows would be telling the personnel people straight out, 'You people killed my husband.'"

"We've had 50 deaths this year, while men were working heavy overtime," reports Local 863 president Tracy Ingram. One man had worked 40 hours straight, 12 hours a day.

A St. Louis Chrysler worker writes: "I guess my marriage went on the rocks because my wife finally got fed up with me being at work all the time."

TIRED

A General Motors woman worker in Flint, Michigan describes the effect on her life: "I've got six children at home. Working ten hours a day, I'm tired all the time. I feel guilty because I can't go anywhere with the kids."

A Chrysler worker on ten hours, seven days: "My worry is my two boys, ten and twelve. I missed their childhood because of overtime."

It isn't surprising, then, that many workers, including this Ford worker at the transmission plant, Sharonville, Ohio, believe that "getting us voluntary overtime would be the best thing the union could do for us."

"Supervision is getting tougher about

excusing overtime on medical grounds," reports Recording Secretary, Genevieve Nestor. And compelling personal reasons for refusing overtime do not move pressure-ridden foremen off their tough stances. She tells of a woman worker whose mother was dying of cancer. The Local 651 member had made arrangements for nursing care at home during regular working hours, but the company insisted on overtime hours when she was needed at home, and penalized her when she refused. "It's what we need that counts, not what you need," the supervisor told her.

Says William Hoffman, alternate shop committeeman at Fairfax: "I collapsed at work with a heart attack and wound up in hospital because of the 7-day schedule."

"I got a doctor's excuse, so the foreman said he wouldn't do anything to me this time," Don Bennett reports wryly after taking a day off his 12-hour, 6-day workweek at the Sharonville plant. "He gave me the distinct impression that I had better not do it again."

And it needn't be this way. Heinz Ruhnau, a former Metalworkers Union regional leader points out: "Voluntary overtime is no problem for us. Ford and General Motors are producing cars in Germany, but they cannot say to the workers you have to work more than 40 hours a week."



MACY'S WORKERS FACE FUTURE BATTLES

by DAVID SIDDLE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—2,000 workers at Macy's department stores lost their six-week strike on August 20. They voted 3 to 1 to call off the strike and accept the company's final offer.

In so doing, they rejected the recommendation of their bargaining team. The workers accepted a cut in real wages. They will receive a dollar per hour increase in pay, but they will have to pay for their own health insurance. In addition, a two-tier wage structure has been forced on them. The new employees will receive much lower pay.

STAY-AT-HOME

Only 300 of the 2,000 strikers were regular picketers. Many of these militants were bitter at the stay-at-homers who voted down the strike. They insisted that had these people picketed, then Macy's operations would have been paralyzed.

But why did the majority of the workers not picket?

The chief factor in undermining that confidence in the strike was not Macy's gigantic advertising campaign, the biased press or the police. It was the workers' own union bosses. The International union leaders who intervened in the strike—not working for solidarity, but making statements which were eagerly published in the press condemning the local union for not accepting the cutback contract. They could not envisage themselves leading a successful strike, so they could only think of one way to hold onto their precious dues base.

It was also rumored that Teamsters working in the warehouses alongside department store union members were willing to strike in support. They asked for one assurance—that store workers wouldn't return to work without them. This was not given.

Another reason for the lack of confidence was the inconsistency of solidarity of the local labor movement. Initially, there was a solidarity rally of 2,000 workers, but on the last Saturday of the strike, the numbers attending the solidarity rally had dwindled to fifty.

WAR

This battle is over, but the war goes on. Macy's and San Francisco's Emporium Capwell, which locked out its employees during the strike, will continue to press their advantage. The rest of Macy's California is non-union, and they busted the union in New York. The workers fought so well during the strike, but they must not waste their time in recriminations against the stay-at-homers.

There will be many small fights in the days ahead on such issues as overtime and working with scab supervisors. The militants must rebuild the union to win these battles and turn the faint hearts into fighters. □

New York 1199 strike ends: "the problem was organization"

NEW YORK, NY—Workers voted to approve a settlement in the longest hospital strike in the city's history, on August 27. The strike, called by District 1199 of the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) involved 52,000 workers at 33 hospitals and 17 nursing homes.

By all standards, the settlement must be viewed as a defeat for the workers. The union had originally demanded a 10% increase per year in wages over the next two years. The settled increase will be 5% per year, much closer to the hospitals' offer of 4%.

FREEZE

In addition, the union has agreed to a freeze in minimum starting salaries for new em-



by DAN CAPLIN

ployees, in effect establishing a two-tier wage system. This will divide the union between new and experienced workers, weakening their ability to fight future strikes.

The League of Voluntary Hospitals, the bargaining association for the hospitals, did agree to one of the key demands of the union—every other weekend off. However, this cannot compensate for the lower standard of living that will be the inevitable result of the settlement in rent-crazy New York City.

Certainly one element in the defeat was the gall of the hospitals. Numerous forms of intimidation were used—threats to permanently replace the strikers, a court-ordered fine of \$45,000 per day against the union, and the arrests of 60 strikers.

This was compounded by the daily pressure from Governor Cuomo and mediator of Basil Patterson to end the strike with a low-wage settlement. Both have high aspirations: Cuomo might run for president in 1988 and Paterson will probably run for mayor next year as a "rainbow coalition" candidate.

Those who see these liberal politicians as "lesser evils" worth supporting should recognize the side they have taken in this very important strike.

Teamster officials bungle WOKR strike

by MIKE ONDRUSEK

ROCHESTER, NY—The workers at WOKR, channel 13, have effectively been coerced to go back to work with a 27-7 vote after six weeks on strike. The strike crumbled because Teamsters Local 791 carried on bargaining behind closed doors (even the stewards were not allowed to be present), and because they had not fostered direct involvement of the strikers in negotiations or strike-winning tactics, except for an isolated picket.

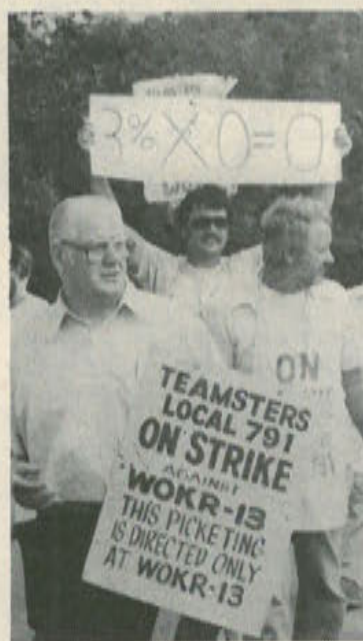
NERVE

The union had the nerve to bring back a contract little changed from the first—except for tone and jargon. The union's "concern" for its rank and file members is suspect. And the union leaders showed their true colors in the course of the strike.

"Why keep the employees on strike for six weeks when they can get the same in two?" asked a striker.

Many of the employees said they felt they had no control over the situation. Many of the others could not stand to accept unemployment compensation.

Finally, the union revealed its powerlessness by telling the workers that if they did not accept the contract, they



would all be fired and new employees would replace them.

LETTERS

In accepting this contract, all employees will get their jobs back, even those who are getting letters on their records documenting their violent and unruly behavior on the picket line towards staff and management.

These letters are to be made available to any company the workers in question may be seeking to find employment with. The union also offered to write one as well, documenting the workers' good record. □



Striking 1199 member

Pictures: A. Smith

However, these factors are not the total explanation because they fail to show why the hospitals and the state were able to successfully intimidate the workers. They only had the confidence to do so because the union was as weak and ineffective as it was.

SMALL

For instance, picket lines were generally small and uninspired. They appeared more like people simply milling about than like pickets. In many hospitals, pickets were outnumbered by police.

Few attempts were made to block entrances and deliveries of non-union truckers came in unheeded. The hospitals, staffed by thousands of unpaid volunteers, as well as doctors and nurses, remained open, threatening the lives of patients, but maintaining the administrations' profits.

Only once did the union leadership threaten to shut the hospitals down, concentrating pickets at four key hospitals on August 14. The pickets became little more than rallies to showcase New York City's labor bureaucracy.

At Columbia Presbyterian, for example, 25,000 workers began to block the main entrance but were then whisked to the rally site 200 yards away.

The total effect was to demoralize the strikers. Most felt isolated and there were few attempts to build solidarity either within the union or with other unions. And the workers felt betrayed because the union had left them without a strike fund or direction on the picket lines. Pressure for a settlement at any cost, especially at the smaller hospitals, increased rapidly.

The blame for this disorganization must lie with the union president Doris Turner

and the top leadership of the union. She was very good at appearing militant in front of the camera, but her whole approach was to rely on secret negotiations and ignore the pickets.

She can now add this sellout to her already corrupt history. This includes the betrayal of a wildcat strike in upstate New York in 1981 and three years of using dictatorial means to win an internal fight in 1199. That fight left 1199 split between the New York local, affiliated with the RWDSU, and the others, affiliated directly with the AFL-CIO nationally.

There can be no question that the strike ended in defeat. The hospitals' main goal was to begin the long process of demoralizing and weakening the union. This they have done. A number of strikers are even considering strikes to be outmoded. Yet the problem was with the way the strike was organized, not with the strike itself.

KEY

The key to winning future battles will be to organize at the rank and file level and to be prepared when the bureaucracy begins to sell out. If there had been rank and file organization prepared before the strike, and if its priority was the building of mass pickets to shut down the hospitals, the strike would have been short and all the demands won.

This lesson should not be lost on the transit and other city workers whose contracts come up in the next eight months. It was stated in the New York press many times that the hospital settlement would be a trendsetter. But it doesn't have to be—if the beginnings of rank and file organization are made now. □

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PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION

FIGHT THE TEAMSTERS SELL-OUT AT UPS

by BEN BLAKE

Teamsters working for United Parcel Service received a surprise in the mail at the end of August—a new union contract offer. It was a surprise because it was negotiated in secret, behind the backs of the membership, nine months before the current agreement was set to expire.

It was also a surprise because it expanded major concessions won by the extremely profitable corporation in 1982 in exchange for a mickey mouse wage increase and bonus.

PREEMPT

Apparently, Teamster President Jackie Presser and the UPS top brass wanted to preempt any battle against the extension of concessions next year. As one Teamster official put it to the media, "Both sides were deathly afraid that otherwise we'd have 90,000 people on strike for no telling how long." For Presser, it's clear that labor peace and good relations with management take priority over defending the living standards and working conditions of UPS rank and filers.

The proposal itself is a total disgrace. After a two and a half year wage freeze in which UPS profits climbed from \$327.8 million in 1981 to \$331.9 million in 1982 and \$489.8 million in 1983, UPS Teamsters are to receive a 33¢ base wage increase in 1984 and then 50¢ in 1985 and 1986.

So, after UPS profits were up 47.6% in 1983, UPS wages



are to go up a puny 2.5% from an average base wage rate of \$13.50 an hour for senior employees in 1984, not even enough to keep up with the low rate of inflation. It is likely that the 1985 and 1986

wage increases would also be below inflation levels as the recovery continues.

The cost of living allowance would essentially be eliminated. And contrary to what Presser says, the \$1,000 bonus for full-timers and the \$500 bonus for part-timers would not make up the COLA money diverted to pay benefits over the last two years because it does not increase the base wage rate. It is simply a bribe to get the membership to vote for the agreement.

In addition, a three-tier wage structure for part-timers would be set up. For example, sorters hired before July 1, 1982 would make \$13.82 an hour, those hired July 1, 1982 to September 4, 1984 would make \$9.33 an hour and those hired afterward would earn \$9.00 an hour and then would receive the 50¢ raises based on years of service rather than calendar dates. This continues the practice of unequal pay for the same work, dividing the rank and file and giving UPS an economic incentive to fire senior employees.

Despite these glaring problems with the proposal, Presser claims that it "cor-

rects the inequities contained in the present agreement and offers our UPS membership significant economic gains."

OPPOSITION

Interesting logic, but not a position shared by many UPS Teamsters. Since the proposal was announced, membership meetings in 18 cities have come out against the deal, including locals in Seattle, Sacramento, Denver, Cleveland, Columbus, Springfield, Massachusetts and Hartford. The large New York UPS local has even threatened to pull out of national negotiations in protest over the offer.

Opposition to the contract proposal is being coordinated by Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a national reform organization in the union. Although the necessary two-thirds rejection vote will be difficult to obtain, campaigning against this sellout can provide the basis for the solid rank and file organization necessary to stop future concessions and defend the membership on the job. Vote no! Equal pay for equal work! Stop concessions! □

KROGER'S USW DEAL

PITTSBURGH, PA—When Kroger Co. closed 44 area grocery stores in February, it blamed the shutdown on the "high costs" of its labor contracts with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 23.

But the company that bought and reopened four of the stores has found a way around "high labor costs." It negotiates with the United Steelworkers of America.

The USW and the stores signed a minimum wage contract that runs for an astounding nine years. Workers get a tiny 5¢-an-hour raise every 6 months. There are no benefits.

PROTEST

UFCW workers, who have reorganized six other reopened stores, have picketed USW District 15 offices in protest. But the USW says it plans to continue its food store organizing drive.

Food workers stress that they have nothing against rank and file steelworkers. Many see it as an attempt by USW bureaucrats to save their own necks. Steel mill shutdowns and layoffs have slowed the flow of dues into the union, and a nine-year contract could help solve that problem—at the expense of the rank and file. □

UPI CUTS WAGES 25%

NEW YORK, NY—Many journalists like to put themselves in that wonderful category of "professionals." After all, they wear white collars, sometimes even suits and ties, and don't do manual labor.

But 2,000 employees at United Press International (UPI) have found out precisely where they fit into the world. Their union, the Wire Service Guild, has agreed to a 15-month plan that slashes wages 25%, eliminates 200 permanent and temporary jobs and delays for one year any company contribution into employee retirement funds.

RED INK

In return, UPI employees get stock worth 6.5% of the company's equity. Which is to say, they get to dip their fingers in a lot of red ink. UPI, which hasn't shown a profit in 20 years, lost about \$23 million in 1982-1983, and this year faces debts worth \$16 million.

Like workers in other industries, journalists at UPI have found out that they are the ones made to pay for their bosses' mistakes, and that all too often their union officials cooperate. □

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